EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, November 1, 2023
Virtual Meeting: Zoom

Executive Committee Members Present: Greg Abbe, Commissioner Mahony, Emmett Lyne, Kyle Murray, William Rose

Executive Committee Members Absent: Dennis Villanueva

Other Attendees: Adrian Caesar, Ina Dasso, Jo Ann Bodemer, Gretchen Calcagni, Eric Belliveau, Elliott Jacobson, Abby Malmud, Kate Peters, Rachel Evans, Benjamin Silverman, Sam Nigro, Jerrold Oppenheim, Brian Beote, Bill Graham, Paul Johnson, Leah Cohen, Maggie Downey, Steve Menges, Audrey Eidelman Kiernan

1. Call to Order

Bodemer, acting on behalf of the Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:02 AM.

2. Executive Committee Updates and Business

Bodemer shared the Executive Committee and EEAC meeting schedule and topics for 2024, which included a 30-minute reduction for Executive Committee meeting time. Bodemer said that the Council may schedule an additional meeting on June 26, 2024 in order to finalize the EEAC Resolution on the 2025-2027 Plan.

Bodemer indicated that the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) is drafting the EEAC priorities for 2024, with the intent to make them more targeted and actionable than the 2023 priorities.

Lyne expressed support for the development of actionable priorities and said that the program administrators (PAs) address the EEAC priorities in the quarterly reports, but the 2023 priorities are broad. Lyne suggested that targeted priorities will improve the effectiveness of the quarterly reports. Bodemer said that the Council should develop solutions-based, actionable priorities to provide more guidance for the PAs. Murray agreed.

Peters said that she appreciates the focus on productive dialogue to improve and adjust programs, and added that the Council should consider the lag between programmatic changes and improved results.

Johnson commented that he appreciates Bodemer's proactive approach and leadership in improving the Council process.

Bodemer stated that DOER is developing a survey on the EEAC workshops. Bodemer said that Councilors should list topics for which they want briefings by subject-matter experts. Dasso added that there are survey questions regarding 2023 Council meetings, 2024 priorities, and strategies to run more efficient meetings.

Jacobson seconded Peter's comment and said that everyone should consider project pipelines when looking at results, to avoid overreacting to apparent underperformance. Bodemer agreed that there are nuances to consider in quantitative review of performance.

Johnson recommended that DOER review the prior evaluation that the Council had conducted by Jonathan Raab to improve Council processes. Bodemer replied that the prior evaluation is outdated, but DOER used the report to inform questions included in the survey.

Bodemer announced that DOER received strong interest from potential candidates for open seats on the EEAC, so DOER will conduct interviews and make a recommendation to the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) for approval. Bodemer also said that DOER will provide a more detailed update in December or January.

Lyne noted that the PAs expect National Grid and Eversource to submit Mid-Term Modifications (MTMs) for Council review this Friday to inform a vote in January.

3. December EEAC Meeting – Finalize Agenda

Bodemer stated that the December EEAC Meeting agenda would include a vote on EEAC recommendations for the 2025-2027 Plan, review of the 2023 third quarter (Q3) Mass Save data report, 2022-2024 MTMs, and discussion of draft EEAC priorities for 2024.

Peters said that the PAs will include weatherization updates in the presentation on the Q3 report so they can include additional detail.

Johnson asked how the Council will finalize its recommendations on the 2025-2027 Plan if people propose additional modifications. Bodemer responded that the recommendations reflect all Council discussion and feedback to date, so there should be no further substantive changes.

Murray asked if the PAs will provide an update on vendor performance for instant rebates, because he is aware of one contractor who is burdened with $60,000 in rebate costs and is not seeing improvements on the instant rebates. Bodemer said that the PAs have worked to improve rebate processing and are managing 10,000-15,000 new rebates each month in addition to the backlog. Bodemer suggested that Murray connect the contractor with DOER and the PAs. Lyne

agreed and said that the PAs will provide updates on rebate processing. Commissioner Mahony noted that the PAs have been developing consumer-facing materials to help customers understand the rebate process and requested that the PAs share these materials.

4. January EEAC Meeting – Draft Agenda

Bodemer announced that the January EEAC Meeting agenda would include review of 2024 EEAC meeting topics and dates, the EEAC Consultant workplan, the Avoided Energy Supply Cost (AESC) Study, the PA potential studies, and votes on the EEAC priorities and MTMs.

Menges asked if the AESC Study vendor, Synapse, or the PAs and EEAC Consultants should present an update on the AESC Study. Bodemer said that the PAs and EEAC Consultants can probably cover AESC updates and rely on Synapse for any detailed questions if needed.

Johnson asked if the PAs will complete their market-potential studies, assessments of available energy savings, in January or share the results at a later time. Johnson also asked if the Council will be prepared to vote on 2024 priorities in January. Bodemer said that DOER will present draft 2024 priorities in December to inform the Council vote in January. Menges replied that the PAs should be able to present draft results from the potential studies in January, including scenarios aligned with "business-as-usual" assumptions and mandates from the Massachusetts Clean Energy and Climate Plan.

Beote and Mahony left the virtual meeting at 10:32 AM.

Abbe asked the degree to which the DPU Order on The Future of Gas (DPU 20-80-B) is meaningful to Council work and requested a summary of the Order. Bodemer said that DOER will provide an overview of the Order.

Murray suggested that the DPU Order warrants significant Council discussion as it is broad and impacts the programs on all levels. Bodemer said DOER will determine the best approach to disseminate this information with the Council.

Evans noted that the PAs should thoroughly review the DPU Order as it has implications on the March Draft Plan. Evans also noted that the Council has a strict timeline for plan review. Bodemer said that the Council should understand how the DPU Order may change the PAs response to the EEAC recommendations on the 2025-2027 Plan.

Lyne requested the draft schedule for 2024 EEAC meetings so the PAs can plan in advance. Dasso responded that the draft schedule and topics will be posted with the December EEAC Meeting materials.

5. Adjournment

Bodemer, acting on behalf of the Chair, adjourned the meeting at 10:39 AM.

Meeting Materials

- Official Meeting Notice
- Agenda