MA ENERGY EFFICIENCY ADVISORY COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, January 28, 2026
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Councilors Present:	Commissioner Elizabeth Mahony, Greg Abbe, Brian Beote, Kyle Murray, William Rose, Sharon Weber, Meg Lusardi, Brooks Winner, Martijn Fleuren, Cindy Carroll, Maggie Downey, Kate Peters, Amy Vavak, Kim Dragoo, Jillian Winterkorn, Paul Johnson, Steven Miller, Alexis Washburn, Tim Costa, Mary Wambui, Robert Rio, Michael Ferrante
Councilors Absent:	Daniel Leary, Audrey Hettinger, Tim Costa
Consultants Present:	Adrian Caesar, Gretchen Calcagni, Griff Keating, Margie Lynch
DOER Staff Present:	Jo Ann Bodemer, Ina Dasso, Rachel Evans

1. Call to Order

Bodemer, acting on behalf of the Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:01 PM.

Virtual Meeting Procedure
Bodemer reviewed the virtual EEAC meeting procedure:

1. The Council meeting will be recorded, for administrative purposes only.
2. All attendees except for Councilors and presenters will remain muted for the duration of the meeting.
3. Councilors should hold comments until the end of presentations, but Councilors and other participants should speak instead of using any chat function.
4. Councilors who disconnect from meetings need to announce when they rejoin.
5. All Council votes will be taken by roll call.

2. Public Comment

Julie Curti (Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC))
Curti said that she wished to raise concern about the ongoing challenges with the Community First Partnership (CFP) rollout, noting that municipalities were presented with new contractual data sharing agreements and MOAs that exceed the legal capacity of many municipalities. Curti said that the CFPs have been informed that they will lose their funding if the contracts are not

signed or considerable progress is not demonstrated soon, but MAPC believes that CFPs should be able to participate without data sharing agreements. Curti said that MAPC hopes that the PAs will be flexible to allow the CFPs to continue serving their communities and encouraged the PAs to discuss and collaborate on additional changes with the municipalities to avoid unnecessary disruptions in the future.

Weezy Waldstein (Action for Equity)
Waldstein said that Action for Equity is working with the PAs to open the background check exclusion and developed a document regarding fair chance hiring and the necessary steps to apply the principles. Waldstein said that Action for Equity provided public testimony on examples of where the DPU used fair chance systems in hiring for rideshare apps, and she appreciates the EEAC's support for fair chance hiring systems and the steps needed to implement them.

Maggie Downey joined the virtual meeting at 1:11.

Jim Nail (Massachusetts Interfaith Power and Light (MAIPL))
Nail said that MAIPL works with faith communities on energy efficiency and reducing carbon emissions, noting that they are piloting the 100% incentive for weatherization. Nail said that MAIPL has completed 141 projects, saving $277,000 in energy costs, and another 140 buildings that are in the assessment process. Nail said that 20% of the buildings served so far are in Environmental Justice communities, and an additional 17% within one mile of Environmental Justice census tracks. Nail said that this program has helped Mass Save meet its goals and helped communities in making energy more affordable, noting that houses of worship are integral in equity communities.

Jean Marie Thebaud
Thebaud said that he is a returning citizen and has firsthand knowledge of the difficulties in finding fair chances at employment opportunities. Thebaud said that returning citizens receive technical training during incarceration, but they are denied second chances and fair opportunities once they leave. Thebaud said that society does not support rehabilitation in reality.

Sharon Weber joined the virtual meeting at 1:21.

3. Council Business and Updates

October 1, 2025, Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
Bodemer asked if the Executive Committee had any revisions to the October EEAC Executive Committee meeting minutes. No Executive Committee members proposed edits. DOER, as Chair of the Executive Committee, approved the October EEAC Executive Committee meeting minutes as submitted.

November 5, 2025, Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
Bodemer asked if the Executive Committee had any revisions to the November EEAC Executive Committee meeting minutes. No Executive Committee members proposed edits. DOER, as Chair

of the Executive Committee, approved the November EEAC Executive Committee meeting minutes as submitted.

October 22, 2025, EEAC Meeting Minutes
Bodemer indicated that non-substantive edits were made for clarity in advance of the meeting. Bodemer asked if the Council had any revisions to the October EEAC meeting minutes. No Council members proposed edits. DOER, as Chair of the Council, approved the October EEAC meeting minutes as amended.

November 19, 2025, EEAC Meeting Minutes
Bodemer indicated that non-substantive edits were made for clarity in advance of the meeting. Bodemer asked if the Council had any revisions to the November EEAC meeting minutes. No Council members proposed edits. DOER, as Chair of the Council, approved the November EEAC meeting minutes as amended.

DOER Updates
Bodemer said that DOER is having its third annual DOER town hall on Friday from 12:00 to 1:30, noting that the meeting information and registration link are available on the Mass Gov website. Bodemer said that DOER will discuss its progress in 2025 and plans for 2026.

Program Administrator (PA) Updates
Willingham and Jaslowich, on behalf of the PAs, presented PA updates, including examples of project success stories and an update on the heat pump water heater online marketplace.

Johnson asked how quickly the PAs can replace water heaters with heat pump water heaters. Jaslowich said that contractors can typically install a heat pump water heater within a few days, but the program does not support emergency replacements at this point. Jaslowich said that the PAs understand that this is a gap and they are working to address it moving forward.

Johnson said that he has heard from contractors that they have received minimal work since November and asked how many audits RISE has generated in that time. Peters said that the weatherization dashboard, located in the appendix of the PA updates presentation, shows that 42,000 weatherization jobs were completed as of November, and the PAs would need to follow up with the individual contractor to establish why they have not received work. Peters said that weatherization performance was on pace through November, and the PAs have no reason to assume that it has dropped off since. Peters said that the data through December will be reported next month.

4. EEAC Councilor Spotlight

Councilor Spotlight
Rose shared the academic, personal, and professional experiences that shaped his path to becoming an environmental lawyer, with a focus on the clean energy transition. Rose shared his top bucket list items, skills he would like to learn, and other personal anecdotes.

5. EEAC 2026 Priorities

Bodemer reviewed the Draft Council Priorities for 2026, which had been updated to reflect Councilor feedback.

Council Discussion

Winner said that the reporting is the best it has ever been in the current term, and he understands not wanting to increase the reporting burden on the PAs. Winner said that there are emerging issues where measures are falling behind, so there will be situations where the Council requires additional information to determine if program delivery is being effectively managed. Winner continued that this may mean that the PAs will need to reserve some reporting capacity for emergent issues. Bodemer said that reporting on underperforming measures is captured within the draft Priorities.

Johnson asked why the PAs cannot provide zip-code level data for Small Business program performance. Bodemer said that the PAs are providing zip-code level participation data annually for Residential programs, and the Council can ask the PAs what this type of reporting would entail for Small Business, but that is an additional data ask that the Council had not previously negotiated. Bodemer said that the PAs have a metric for Small Business that is reported in the quarterly workbooks, and it is a focus for the PAs because it is considered an equity population. Bodemer said that zip-code level data for Small Business may raise privacy concerns when there are few small businesses within a particular zip-code. Johnson asked if the PAs could respond to this.

Wambui said that the Council has been locked into discussing spending when they cannot clearly understand what spending translates to in terms of measure performance, especially in the Income Eligible sector. Wambui said that she needs the Priorities to reflect increased transparency in reporting in order to vote in favor of them. Bodemer said that this is characterized in the second bullet under the first priority, but DOER could add additional language to improve clarity. Bodemer said that the information that Wambui requested will be further covered in the February meeting, largely due to Wambui's advocacy.

Abbe agreed with Wambui's comments, noting that there is a lot of turmoil in the Income Eligible program due to the current budget constraints. Abbe asked if Income Eligible data could be included in the PA updates semi-regularly so that the Council does not lose sight of them. Bodemer said that regular updates could be a sufficient compromise.

Winner said that data suppression policies may alleviate any privacy concerns associated with zip-code level Small Business data and asked if the PAs were asserting that the appropriate data suppression procedures would remove so much from the Small Business data that it would no longer be useful. Winner said that if this is not the case, geographic data would be useful for analyzing Small Business program performance. Winner said that regular quantitative updates on Income Eligible performance are necessary for the Council to help course correct in the current term and fix any significant issues in the next plan term. Peters said that pipeline considerations are inherent to the budget forecasts that the PAs provide in their quarterly reports to the DPU, so there may be an opportunity to bring those discussions to the EEAC. Peters said that the PAs would like to tie in additional data asks with existing processes to avoid creating new reporting

efforts, especially those which are tied to metrics that are very fluid in the field. Peters said that the PAs do have additional information and insight, and they hear the clear requests from the Council.

Wambui said that the data request is not just about data, it is about people. Wambui said that the program serves people and is funded by ratepayers, and the Council is asking for more transparency so that it can understand the motivation behind the decisions that the PAs make regarding implementation and CFP guidance. Wambui said that the relationship between the PAs and the Council is not meant to be suspicious or overly bogged down by complexities, there just needs to be transparency between the two parties.

Peters said that the PAs are not currently reporting Small Business performance by zip-code, but they will discuss their capability for this internally.

Bodemer proposed postponing the vote on the 2026 EEAC Priorities until February to allow DOER to work on additional language with the PAs that addresses the feedback heard today. Bodemer stated that DOER would post an updated Priorities document for Council consideration in advance of the February meeting.

6. 2026 Consultant Work Plan and Council Budget

EEAC Consultant Presentation
Calcagni, on behalf of the EEAC Consultants, reviewed the 2026 EEAC Consultant Workplan, including key work areas, Consultant team members, deliverables, and proposed budgets for each work area.

Steven Miller left the virtual meeting at 2:25.

Council Discussion and Vote
Johnson asked how the workplan has changed based on the work completed during the previous year. Calcagni said that the EEAC Consultants completed a fair among of work to support the compliance filing and the residential budget reductions last year, which was not anticipated but crucial in supporting the Council. Johnson asked how the individual consultant rates compare to the rates from last year. Calcagni said that there was some rate escalation, on average between 3% and 4%, and she would follow up with the individual consultant rates offline.

Murray motioned to approve. Winner seconded. All were in favor with none opposed or abstaining. The Council approved the 2026 EEAC Consultant Work Plan.

DOER Presentation
Bodemer reviewed the 2026 EEAC Budget, which would cover costs for meeting spaces, events, a facilitator contract, and additional technical support.

Council Discussion and Vote
Evans said that once the Council approves this budget, it will be submitted to the DPU for review and approval.

Murray motioned to approve. Lusardi seconded. All were in favor with none opposed or abstaining. The Council approved the 2026 Council Budget.

Robert Rio left the virtual meeting at 2:34.

7. 2026 EEAC Meeting Topics

Bodemer reviewed the proposed meeting topics for 2026.

Council Discussion
Washburn said that it would be helpful to receive updates on some of the priority areas twice a year instead of once. Bodemer agreed and said that DOER would consider this when setting meeting topics.

Winner said that he would like to participate in an informal discussion or a lunch and learn with other Councilors about their approaches to engaging with the constituencies and stakeholder groups that are represented on the Council. Winner said that the Council received a lot of meaningful feedback from listening sessions during the last three-year planning process, and it was unclear how that feedback was communicated to the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA). Winner said that EEA attendance at listening sessions would be helpful in incorporating feedback into the secretary's letter. Bodemer agreed that the format of past listening sessions has not solicited meaningful uptake of feedback. Bodemer said that DOER is considering potential changes to encourage feedback, such as hosting the listening sessions ahead of time to inform the workshops as well as hosting listening sessions dedicated to the Council's draft recommendations before they are finalized.

Wambui said that public comments have exposed a deeper structural problem between the Council's intent and practice, citing that planning is a collaborative process, but implementation is unilateral, and asked for a dedicated discussion about this with the PAs. Bodemer said that DOER will brainstorm an opportunity to discuss this during a meeting and suggested that DOER converse further with Wambui offline to establish exactly what she is looking for.

Johnson said that there should be a discussion about the bill that is in state legislature, a presentation on the situation with small businesses, and a presentation on the upcoming weatherization RFQ. Bodemer said that the legislative matter is outside of the Council's purview, but they could discuss its implications on EEAC work after it is completed. Bodemer said small business is one of the Council's priority topics, so it will be included under Washburn's request to discuss priority items twice per year. Bodemer said that DOER will work with the PAs to develop a meeting topic on the weatherization RFQ.

Bodemer encouraged the Council to send any further meeting topic suggestions via email.

8. Office of the Attorney General (AGO) Energy Consumer Liaison: Ratemaking Basics

AGO Presentation

Sierra Moll, on behalf of AGO, presented on ratemaking basics, including an overview of Massachusetts utility regulation, key terms, an overview and background of rate cases, and opportunities for stakeholder involvement.

Council Discussion
Murray said that rate cases are a significant burden for intervenors, noting that there are thousands of pages of documents, evidentiary hearings are month-long, and it is a huge commitment. Murray said that the challenges rate cases pose for intervenors are part of the issue.

Robert Rio rejoined the virtual meeting at 3:26.

Johnson asked why 10% is considered a fair profit and said that the format encourages utilities to build out infrastructure that is not necessary because they are guaranteed profit on it, which seems like a major flaw. Moll said that the utilities are not guaranteed 10% profit, but there is a guarantee of a fair opportunity to earn a profit. Moll said that the percentage differs and is one of the most heavily litigated areas of a rate case, noting that there are several tools the DPU uses to determine an appropriate profit percentage. Johnson asked if a guaranteed profit would incentivize overinvestment in infrastructure, and Rose confirmed.

Abbe said that data centers will require significant capacity and asked if anyone is considering requiring significant energy efficiency work through Mass Save before data centers are constructed. Moll said that there are a few staff members who are starting to dig into data centers, and she can connect Abbe with that team to learn more. Abbe said that increased energy efficiency would require less infrastructure.

Winner asked about the frequency of rate cases and general practice for when and why a utility will initiate a rate case. Moll said that it depends on the utility, and the DPU has information on the most recent rate cases. Rose said that the general driver of a rate case is that increased costs eat away at utility profit margins, so the utility needs to increase rates. Rose said that utilities will use an escalating rate schedule to account for increased costs, but it is ultimately at the utility's discretion to initiate or not initiate a rate case.

Commissioner Mahony added that the minimum rate case frequency was established because there was a utility who had not submitted a rate case in thirty-five years. Commissioner Mahony said that the connection between earning a return and building infrastructure speaks to why energy efficiency is so important, stating that energy efficiency decreases the need for additional infrastructure. Commissioner Mahony said that DOER brings the EEAC's work into rate cases and other forums, noting that connecting Council work to other utility processes and DPU dockets is necessary to avoid unnecessary customer costs.

Fleuren echoed Johnson's concerns about the negative incentives created by tying profit to infrastructure costs, and he asked if part of the regular case includes overhead costs. Rose said that the concerns raised by the Council are the reason that the statutory ratepayer advocate exists. Rose said that base rates do not result in a dollar-for-dollar recovery of overhead costs, and the rate cases are a snapshot in time of representative costs that will increase over the years and eat into profit margins until the next case, noting that this is supposed to incentivize the utility to

contain costs. Fleuren asked if decreasing the energy efficiency charge will increase future costs at the macro level because the increased energy demand will require additional infrastructure build out. Fleuren asked if the DPU does not believe that energy efficiency investments made today benefit the economic reality of ratepayers in the future because it cut the energy efficiency budget last year. Commissioner Mahony said that she does think that the DPU recognizes the benefit of energy efficiency to overall ratepayer costs, but it must balance long-term benefits against immediate affordability challenges.

Murray said that scrutinizing utility costs is one of the DPU's roles, but there are not infinite DPU staff to do so. Murray also said that requiring data centers to use Mass Save and complete energy efficiency work would likely require legislation.

Rose said that Massachusetts has one of the largest energy efficiency budgets in the country, and it is a nation leader in energy efficiency even with the budget cuts.

9. Returning Citizens Update

PA Presentation

Saxena and Peters, on behalf of the PAs, presented an update on fair chance hiring for returning citizens, including the commitments made in the 2025-2027 Plan, key themes of stakeholder engagement, current background check requirements, and the draft fair chance hiring principles.

Council Discussion

Johnson asked if there was an explicit list of criminal convictions that disqualify applicants from working in the Mass Save program. Peters confirmed that a matrix that contains this information exists.

Winner said that the Equity Working Group (EWG) ran out of time to discuss this topic as well, so he is looking forward to a more robust discussion on returning citizens.

Weber asked if there is a sense of how many returning citizens are currently employed as a baseline for the PAs to measure progress against moving forward. Peters said that the PAs have spoken to some Heat Pump Installer Network contractors that are returning citizens, but they may not want to share their information publicly. Peters said that the PAs do not have a mechanism to track returning citizens employment levels at the moment, but they will consider how to do so.

Bodemer proposed a joint working group between the EWG and the Council to further discuss returning citizens in February.

10. Adjournment

Bodemer, on behalf of the Chair, adjourned the meeting at 4:02 PM.

Meeting Materials:

- Official Meeting Notice
- Meeting Link
- Agenda
- October 1, 2025 EEAC Executive Committee Meeting Minutes – DRAFT
- October 22, 2025 EEAC Meeting Minutes – DRAFT
- November 5, 2025 EEAC Executive Committee Meeting Minutes – DRAFT
- November 19, 2025 EEAC Meeting Minutes – DRAFT
- January PA Updates
- Draft EEAC 2026 Priorities – Redline
- Draft EEAC 2026 Priorities – Clean
- 2026 C-Team Work Plan
- 2026 C-Team Work Plan Slides
- 2026 Budget Proposal
- 2026 EEAC Meeting Topics
- Ratemaking Basics Presentation
- Returning Citizens Update