

ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND RESOURCES MANGEMENT COUNCIL

Minutes-April 11, 2013

Conference Room B, Second Floor, DOA

Call to Order: Chairman Ryan called the meeting to order at 3:45. Do to a lack of a quorum; this is not an official EERMC Meeting but rather a Work Session.

Members Present: Paul Ryan, Joe Newsome, Joe Cirillo, Jennifer Hutchinson, and Marion Gold

Staff Present: Charles Hawkins, Rachel Sholly and Danny Musher and Chris Kearns

Consultants: Scudder Parker and Mike Guerard

Others Present: Rachel Henschel, Jeremy Newberger, Karen Bradbury, Jenny Pereira, Brian Kearney, Bill Ferguson, Charity Pennock, Michael McAteer, Jeff Broadhead, and Dan Carrigg

Discussion of Proposed Streetlight Legislation

Jeff Broadhead, Executive Director of the Washington County Regional Planning Council (WCRPC) was introduced to give this

presentation. The WCRPC, utilizing URI Energy Fellows, did a baseline study of what the eleven WCRPC towns were paying for streetlights and found it was over \$1,200,000. The towns were also unable to install more energy efficient (EE) LED lighting because it was not included in the tariff. More EE lighting could save the towns 15-20% on electricity. The WCRPC approved a resolution making streetlights a priority.

The WCRPC then assembled a team that included Ken Payne, Seth Handy and Dan Carrigg to draft legislation that would remove the mandate that municipalities must use the utility for street lighting and allows them to purchase their fixtures from the utility. It also defines the purchase pricing mechanism, basing it on the actual original purchase price of each component. It will require a new streetlight tariff based on the current

PUC-approved tariff for transmission & distribution, but eliminating the facility charge, since O&M will be managed locally. It is modeled after Massachusetts legislation that has allowed 70 towns to purchase their own streetlights.

Joe N. asked if anyone has expressed opposition to this legislation. He wanted to know how this would be implemented. You would need to get the new tariff approved by the PUC. Scudder P. said the Consultant Team has provided the Council with a memo, not taking a position, but advising the Council on the legislation. There are some concerns about maintenance. Do municipalities have the resources

and expertise to manage a streetlight system? Other states do have models for effective maintenance. The EERMC should consider supporting the legislation because it may result in greater EE savings quicker than would have been the case otherwise. It could also be an opportunity for NGrid to provide Energy Efficiency Program Plan (EEPP) incentives for these measures and claim the savings.

Joe C. asked if it is possible to illustrate to people what is the state's responsibility as opposed to the town's. This could make it easier to sell if the towns see that the state is also making an effort. Michael M. acknowledged that this concept is becoming popular with municipalities in part because of the advances in LED technology. This is not as simple as you would think. There are issues around safety. NGrid wants to lead the effort to do this in a comprehensive, holistic manner.

Marion G. said that the OER supports the legislation and the process. Joe N. said that Marlton, New Jersey upgraded their street lighting by putting solar panels on most of the lights. He wanted to know if those models were experimental. Jeff B said that it was a great technology but it is significantly more expensive. These panels aren't just powering the lights, but are feeding power back into the grid.

Executive Director's Report

Marion G. began by introducing Jennifer Hutchinson who will join

Michael M. as NGrid's ex-officio representatives on the EERMC. The deliverable fuels representative will be the Oil Heat Institute's Julie Gill. She also mentioned that Kate Brock started last week as Governor Chafee's policy person for energy, transportation and the environment. She was the Executive Director of Ocean State Action. There is a bill in the General Assembly (GA), which is similar to one introduced last year, that would expand EERMC representation to include a voting member representing municipalities and a non-voting member from the Department of Labor and Training.

Marion G. said that a PUC docket on the Toray combined heat and power (CHP) incentive was filed on March 4th. A public hearing has been held and parties have until May 17th for discovery. If necessary, a public hearing will be held on June 20th. Tec-RI's Bill F. said that he sees no problem with this docket. OER has met with Senator Whitehouse's office to discuss if RI can take advantage of the ARRA funded Qualified Education Construction Bonds (QECB). RI has a \$10.9M allocation and hasn't used any of it yet. Only a small portion of this funding has been used nationwide, however, because states have been working to get other ARRA funding out the door. Terms of the bonds have been impacted by sequestration so they are no longer as attractive.

PACE legislation which would give home owners the chance to finance RE & EE improvements that go beyond those offered in the EEPP. The financing stays with the property and can be repaid with

your property taxes. It has received positive feedback from legislators. Once the bill is posted the OER may need Council members to testify on its behalf.

A public hearing on the 2012 RGGI allocation plan to spend the 2011 RGGI auction proceeds will be held on April 23rd. The plan proposes that \$1.4M should support the RI Public Energy Partnership (RIPEP), some of which would go through NGrid, and \$860,000 should go to the System Reliability (SR) Pilot. David Hill of VEIC has been working with the OER on how to integrate small scale DG into demand response and SR. Senator Reed is holding an Environmental Roundtable on April 22nd, which will be held at Utilidata in Providence. The focus will be on how RI can remain competitive through EE. It will showcase the work of the EERMC and its Annual Report (AR).

Discussion and Vote on the 2013 Annual Report (AR)

The AR cannot be voted on at this meeting because of lack of quorum. Paul R. suggested voting on the AR as a draft so it can be e-mailed to the GA and officially vote on it in May.

Bill F. asked if the AR was an action plan for the Three Year Plan. Jeremy N. said that the goals of the Three Year Plan have to be submitted to the PUC this September and then the Council will work to develop a plan for these goals to be submitted in

September 2014.

Bill F. said he has had discussions with Chris P. about looking at a transition in the EEP model from a grant program to a revolving fund approach that can be self-sustaining for large C&I. They feel this could stabilize the System Benefit Charge (SBC) and maybe lower it. Paul R. said it would not go into this year's AR. Marion G. said that Chris P. asked that the C&I financing language be beefed up in the AR policy recommendations. Scudder P. said it was an idea that the Council should discuss as one of the EEP goals but it should not be in this AR because no consensus has been reached on it. He said that the Council should look at other jurisdictions that have tried that approach. Bill F. felt that the Council should look at this in a formal way in the next year.

Scudder P. recommended sending an e-version of the AR to the GA with a cover note saying it has not been formally approved by the whole Council. It was agreed to do this and print the AR after the next meeting.

Discussion of the Energy Expo RFP

Rachel S. said the RFP language has been sharpened to comply with statewide purchasing requirements and to specify that the event organizer is fully responsible for successfully administering the overall event. The key question for the Council revolves around the

language for the budget. Michael M. volunteered NGrid's event person Paul C. to assist Rachel and said that EE events NGrid have run have been successful. He said NGrid wants to be a part of the expo. Scudder P. was concerned that the RFP is not clear that the oversight & conduct of the entire event is the planner's responsibility. He is worried that the OER could get stuck doing more work than it can handle. Rachel S. will amend the RFP to make this role clear. For the record, Joe N. wanted to know about the financial goal of the expo. Rachel S. said the goal was to break even.

Rachel S. has contacted Hannah M. at the Renewable Energy Fund (REF) to see if they might consider contributing funds for the expo. Hannah M. said all expenditures must be approved by the Economic Development Corp. (EDC) Board. She said, however, that the REF has funded conferences in the past, and is funding an offshore energy conference in June, so there is precedent. The Council should draft a formal letter to the REF that she can present to the EDC Board.

Marion G. said it might be easier to procure certain types of services, like media, through the EERMC and have the OER do the consultant procurement. Paul R. said that the Council authorized spending \$60,000 for planning the event and the OER should keep going forward with the planning.

VEIC Monthly Report (Attached)

Paul R. commented that having Mike G. in RI has influenced the council in a positive way.

Public Comment

Jenny Periera of the RI Foundation thanked the Council for allowing her to sit in on the meeting and wanted to express support for the Green and Healthy Homes Initiative and the Emerald Cities Program. Marion G. mentioned that she has had conversations with Jenny P. on how the RI Foundation can help with the URI Master Energy Program, perhaps using it as training for local energy committees.

Paul R. asked about the timeline for the RI State Energy Plan. Marion G. anticipates a fall completion and OER will give a formal presentation to the Council at a future meeting. Paul R. also said that the Council should be looking into scheduling a mandated joint meeting of the RECB and the EERMC.

RISE's Brian Kearney said that on May 11th NGrid's EnergyWise Program is sponsoring the COX Road Race and is looking forward to a good turnout. They will be promoting energy audits at the race.

Charity Pennock of the RI Clean Energy Council said that her organization is willing to help with the energy expo. She also mentioned a corporate sustainability initiative in Boston her

organization was participating in.

Adjournment

The work session was adjourned at 5:00 PM

Respectfully submitted

Charles Hawkins

Secretary Pro-tempore