



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND  
**ENERGY EFFICIENCY &  
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**Thursday, January 7, 2016**

**2:00 PM - 3:30 PM**

Conference Room B, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Department of Administration  
One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI

**Attendance:** Abigail Anthony, Ryan Crowley, Marisa Desautel, Marion Gold, Mike Guerard, Danny Musher, Jeremy Newberger, Chris Powell, Rachel Sholly, Betsy Stubblefield Loucks, Nicholas Ucci

### **1. Call to Order**

Chairman Christopher Powell called the meeting to order at 2:05p.m.

### **2. Approval of Executive Committee September & December Meeting Minutes**

Chairman Powell noted that Abigail Anthony's name needed to be added to the attendance list on the September Executive Committee meeting minutes. Ms. Anthony made a motion to approve the September and December Executive Committee meeting minutes. Chairman Powell seconded and all approved.

### **3. Executive Director Report**

Commissioner Gold informed the Executive Committee that the rate design docket proceedings begin on January 19 and are expected to conclude on January 21.

Rachel Sholly updated the Executive Committee on the conclusion of the Rhode Island Public Energy Partnership (RIPEP) program. 100 percent of municipalities, school districts and state agencies were baselined. 78 percent of school districts and 69 percent of municipalities officially signed on to RIPEP and received a thorough benchmarking. The remaining entities received a more basic inventory. All 16 state agencies and 3 higher education institutions were also included and portal will be created to make state data visible to the public and facilities managers of the agencies. RIPEP addressed 546 municipal buildings, 330 school buildings, and 900 state facilities. The goal was to implement 100 energy efficiency retrofits with 20% reduction or greater. 123 completed efficiency projects with an average energy savings is 28.6 percent. \$5 million in rebates and on bill repayment funds were utilized. Many of National Grid's existing programs were leveraged with extra incentives coming from RGGI dollars. RIPEP also developed a list of barriers that will be addressed by Efficient Buildings Fund, most notably the lack

of long-term financing. Ms. Sholly will include the average payback amount before incentives in a future update. Ms. Anthony suggested doing a story to highlight the progress made by RIPEP in the Providence Journal. She also suggested giving a presentation to the full Council in February.

Nicholas Ucci updated the Executive Committee in LED streetlight conversions throughout the state. The Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) issued an RFP to replace more than 5,000 streetlights with LEDs. The contract has a completion date of August 2016. 700-1000 remaining streetlights will be addressed over the course of the year. Rhode Island is on its way to being the first state to have all highway lights converted to LEDs. Estimates show potential savings of about \$1 million a year. There will be a central controller on the streetlights that DOT can utilize to dim or power the lights at will. Chairman Powell asked if there was any contribution from RIDOT. Mr. Ucci said RGGI dollars, utility administered incentives and some on bill refinance that DOT will do to pick up the differential.

Mr. Ucci also gave the Executive Committee an overview of the additional incentives that will be made available to municipalities to convert streetlights to LEDs. OER reworked the program to increase the CAP to \$300,000. The total amount available is 1,525,000. There are more than a handful of communities that have already filed streetlight requests to take the streetlights from National Grid.

Commissioner Gold mentioned that the Consultant team's cost of living adjustment (COLA) needs to be considered by the Executive Committee and the full council. The budget needs to be finalized based on the COLA decision. Ms. Anthony said that inflation has been near 0 percent and a 3 percent COLA would be high and would not be responsible to ratepayers. Mike Guerard said he reversed rates to 2015 levels so there was no COLA and the budget would now be \$755,000. With the importance of the savings targets in mind, the C-team would increase its hours by 110 and still come in at the \$775,000 that was originally presented and under the \$782,000 in the previous budget. Total hours prior to the increase is 4,062. Jeremy Newberger noted that the budget item needs to be included on the agenda for the full council.

Mr. Ucci stated that preliminary hearing before the state siting board regarding the proposed power plant in Burrillville is scheduled for next week. It is a controversial energy issue that the Governor is supporting. He also mentioned that Rhode Is has joined Connecticut and Massachusetts for a clean energy RFP. January 28 is the last day for bids. The goal is to identify a suite of projects that would be agreed upon by a group of states. Chairman Powell mentioned that Pfizer announced a significant sized fuel cell project in Connecticut and wonder asked if there would be more fuel cell related incentives. Ms. Anthony noted that fuel cells might be included under Commercial PACE.

#### **4. Memos on Savings Targets Goal Setting Process and Legal Case for Strategic Electrification and Load Management Under Least Cost Procurement**

Mr. Guerard said the memo is an outline of what the C-team intends to present to the full council next week regarding the 2016 proposed savings target goal setting process. System Integration Rhode Island might give the council more to consider that they have in the past. Danny Musher reported that new opportunities for energy efficiency and least cost procurement infrastructure were the electrification and load management area. Strategic electrification would be switching from fossil fuel to heat pumps and load management would be demand response. Recommendations from SIRI report involved getting more information on costs, benefits and more evaluation data. It needs to be determined from a legal perspective if they are they eligible under least cost procurement policies and programs. The question to answer is does strategic electrification and load management fit under previously established

statutes. Findings would be presented in a formal legal conclusion. Initial analysis is that load management fits and strategic electrification is less certain. Mr. Newberger said a recommendations section is missing from the memo. Scudder Parker added that as new electric technologies come into the market place strategic electrification is a policy decision to promote them in the market aggressively. He believes under traditional least cost procurement there is a role to make sure those technologies are installed as efficient as possible, installed correctly, and potential interaction with demand manage is recognized. Ms. Anthony recommended that Marisa Desautel review Mr. Musher's memo and develop a legal conclusion. She said the recommendation(s) might be sent back to the SIRI group and ask SIRI to develop new recommendations. Mr. Musher said this memo was develop with consideration for trying to figure out as soon as possible what needs to be done in the 2018 and 2020 savings targets.

## **5. Finance Update**

Mr. Guerard reported that there was a good kickoff meeting with Dunsky. He noted that representatives of the Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank were in attendance. He suggested that Dunsky reprise the webinar given at the kickoff meeting to give the council a 10 minute presentation with 5-10 minutes of questions and answers. Dunsky has a good sense of what is happening in the Rhode Island market and is ready begin right away. Betsy Stubblefield Loucks noted that the work plan should be mentioned up front in their presentation to the full council and that there should also be focused questions to ensure that conversation is not derailed.

## **6. Energy Efficiency Data Request Protocol**

Mr. Guerard said that it must be consider that if council decides to move forward with this initiative, where will it be housed. Members need to determine the cost and who will take ownership of the website. Mr. Newberger stated that National Grid would like to work closely with the Council as the site is developed. Mr. Ucci added that there needs to be a central clearing house for energy state. There is a collective interest to do that. OER needs to determine the state strategy. Chairman Powell said EERMC needs to focus on the council members requests to be more transparent and determine if its data will stand alone or be incorporated in a bigger picture that would include the state's data. Mr. Guerard said to respond to requests from Council members, the C-team would develop a data request form, create a tracking sheet that would log all requests from beginning to end. Any material used for presentations by council members would be reviewed by the C-team for accuracy. Chairman Powell asked that the C-team prioritize the requests and respond based on the time and resources.

## **7. Council Membership Expirations & Recommendations**

Commissioner Gold mentioned that she has had preliminary discussions with the Governor's Office about outstanding appointments. Ms. Anthony and Ms. Stubblefield Loucks expressed their desire to remain on the council. Commissioner Gold said thought needs to be given to who should fill the two new seats on the council, one for large nonprofit institutional users and another small nonprofit institutional users. Mr. Newberger said there is a list of customers that have received RGGI money in the nonprofit sector.

## **8. Topics for Upcoming Meetings**

This discussion was abbreviated due to time constraints. It was mentioned that RIPEP should be discussed in February and there needs to be a CHP update in the coming months.

## **9. Review of Draft EERMC January Meeting Agenda**

The agenda for the full council meeting will include: finance update, status report on 2018-2020 savings targets process, PUC Rate Design Docket Proceeding Update, Presentation on Energy Expo Planning, Presentation on Building Labeling Work, Vote on Final 2016 Consultant Team Budget and Scope of Work, Vote on Final 2016 EERMC Budget.

## **10. Adjournment**

Ms. Stubblefield Loucks made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Ms. Anthony. All approved and Chairman Powell adjourned the meeting at 3:32pm.