

Minutes
Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Energy Board
Public Utilities Commission, Room A, Concord, NH
9AM – 12:00 PM
January, 13, 2012 Meeting

***Items underlined and in color are hyperlinked to documents.**

Members in Attendance:

David Borden of NH Sustainable Energy Association; Daniel Feltes of NH Legal Assistance; Timothy Fortier of NH Municipal Association; Ben Frost for Dean Christon, NH Housing Authority; Representative James Garrity; Jackie Hanscome for Karen Rantamaki, State Energy Manager; Michael Licata for Patti Carrier, BIA Designee; Dana Nute of Belknap-Merrimack Community Action Agency; Bob Reals, Jr. of Dept. of Resources and Economic Development; Jack Ruderman of NH Public Utilities Commission; Deborah Schachter of NH Charitable Foundation; Robert Scott of Dept. of Environmental Services; and Eric Steltzer of Office of Energy and Planning.

Non Voting Members in Attendance:

Michael Behrmann of Revolution Energy, LLC; Michael Bruss of Bruss Construction; Vice Chair George Gantz of Unitil; Gil Gelineau of PSNH; Debra Hale of National Grid; Kate Peters of NH Community Development Finance Authority; and Carol Woods of NH Electric Coop.

1. Welcome and Introductions

In the absence of a Chair, Vice Chair George Gantz has agreed to act as interim Chair. He introduced the new Board Members, appointed, per statute, by the PUC. In the past, PUC has provided a minute taker for the meetings, but now the Department of Environmental Services, the Office of Energy and Planning and the PUC will take turns taking minutes. The Board thanked Diane Bateman for all of her organization of the Board meetings/schedules/etc. as well as her past service as minute-taker for the Board. The breakfast was sponsored this morning by Unitil, and sponsorship of the breakfast will be open to others on a rotating basis. The cost is \$134.00. The Board thanked NH Charitable Foundation for its breakfast contribution for the past three years.

2. Minutes of December 9, 2011, EESE Board Meeting

The minutes of the December 9, 2011 meeting were approved unanimously as filed. (Ruderman/Borden)

3. EESE Board Membership

Thank you to the out-going members of the Board and welcome to the new members. Patti Carrier has stepped aside and Michael Licata is here on behalf of BIA, but we will look for the BIA input to re-designate as appropriate. The position of Beth Fischer as a representative of the Home Builders and Remodelers Assoc. of NH will need to be filled.

4. Legislative Monitoring Subcommittee – Michael Licata

The first meeting of this working group was held on Monday. The group reviewed its charter as well as discussed the bills coming up this year. It looks to be an active year on energy issues including topics connected to generation assets, RPS reform, eminent domain, and proposed repeal of RGGI.

5. Energy Study Recommendations Working Group

To better coordinate efforts, the Legislative Monitoring Working Group will provide the Energy Study Working Group with the list of legislative proposals. Upon a motion duly made/seconded (Frost/Fortier), the Board unanimously voted to authorize this Working Group to review the energy study recommendations as they pertain to the upcoming bills.

Deborah Schachter and Chris Skoglund updated the Board. The group is using a matrix to assess the time horizon, impact, cost, and other characteristics of all the Independent Study recommendations, including where there is consensus – aiming ultimately to see what rises to the top as most actionable. The group will meet monthly. Vice-Chair George Gantz offered administrative assistance from his staff to the group to help compile all of the documents submitted for review. Diane Bateman will be in the loop, and anyone wanting to be in the loop is to contact Chris Skoglund. Upon a motion duly made/seconded (Ruderman/Nute), the Board unanimously voted to have Deborah Schachter and Chris Skoglund co-chair this group.

6. RGGI Grantee Presentation – Retail Merchants Association – Joseph Lajewski & Barbara Bernstein

Provided a presentation entitled “[Giving Power Back](#)” about RMA’s energy efficiency program, which is funded by the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Fund. One of the recipients of the project was Young’s Restaurant in Durham. The energy improvements cost \$68,000 to \$72,000, and RMA provided funding in the amount of \$15,000-\$16,000. The business is now enjoying a tighter building that is more comfortable for patrons and is saving \$12,000 a year in energy costs. The one-on-one conversations with business owners will help to educate them and make them feel confident in the savings they will see. Rebates are a big driving factor for the businesses. Energy audits show businesses the potential for significant savings, so the conversion rate is extremely high. For those who decide not to move forward, it is usually because it is not financially feasible for them. The funding for this program is in place through the end of 2015.

BREAK

7. EESE Board Governance

The Board reviewed a draft handout of the Statement of Governing Principles, designed to codify the way the Board operates.

Section E. Meetings. Suggestion to amend Section E.a, last sentence, by adding as follows: “Each meeting must be noticed a minimum of “x” number of days in advance, and draft minutes made available for public inspection within five business days, in accordance with RSA 91-A.”

Section E.b.

The Board discussed whether decisions ought to be tied to consensus. The Board has in the past been cautious about taking positions when there was not full consensus; however, consensus can sometimes be impossible to achieve. If there is a single voice in opposition, that opposition can prevent the Board from moving forward. Various board members articulated pros and cons of proceeding by consensus, or by vote. It was noted that an alternative to consensus would be that the majority would rule, but that a minority opinion could be included. Of course, any board member has the opportunity to make his/her own case to the Legislature or PUC, regardless of the position of the Board. Discussion ensued regarding how to allow for the opinions of non-voting members in the event of voting, including when these members may be in the minority. Alan Linder suggested adding the following proposed language: “shall reflect the majority and minority positions as well as the position of the non-voting members.”

Section D. Member Responsibilities

There was a discussion of relevant conflict of interest language, and members sought guidance on what constitutes a private interest which may directly or indirectly affect the performance of Board duties. The Board is of a policy nature, and it is expected that the members bring their interests to the table. But the real issue is interests which are financial or pecuniary. Deborah Schachter read from a relevant Executive Branch Ethics Committee opinion. The Board seeks to create a process that is transparent.

Section C. Officers and Responsibilities.

Noted that the Secretary of the Board need not oversee preparation for meetings, nor take minutes, responsibility for which may be circulated. The Secretary position is to lighten the load of the Chair.

Section F. Committees.

Questions were raised regarding voting by voting members and non-voting members, or consensus, as these process matters pertain to operation of committees or working groups. After discussion it was agreed that when there is a stumbling block on a committee, the committee should bring the issue to the Board. A suggestion was made to have at least three EESE Board members on each committee. Committee meetings need to follow the rules of RSA 91:A. However, the primary role of the committees is to advise the full Board.

Next Steps

With input from Deborah Schachter, Ben Frost, and Chris Skoglund, Vice Chair

George Gantz will work on proposed language, and put forward for the next meeting a final proposed version of the governing principles document.

8. Municipal Energy Working Group

Julia Dundorf reported on various municipal energy efforts – including discussion about how to facilitate innovative financing.

Eric Steltzer reported that the Local Energy Working Group, not affiliated with the EESE Board, is planning on meeting quarterly as a group, with small groups meeting as needed, and will bring information to the Municipal Energy Working Group, which has not met in six months.

Tim Fortier and Kate Peters will come back to the Board with a straw proposal as to how best to create structure for the MEWG to act as a bridge to LEWG and other efforts on behalf of the EESE Board. .

9. Outreach and Education Working Group

This Group has not yet met in January. Robert Scott and Carol Woods volunteered to serve on the Working Group. The group will come back to the Board with a formal request for any needed member appointments.

10. Program Updates

The Renewable Energy Fund

Working on a draft of a new RFP to be released in two weeks with total funding of 1M dollars. Five awards were given out last time. The RFP will be similar to last year's, and it will be technology neutral.

Renewable energy rebate programs continue to operate successfully. Residential photovoltaic and wind rebate program has been very popular, with more than 600 applications since the inception of the program. It is possible that this program will run out of money before then end of the state fiscal year. Applications to the wood pellet furnace/boiler rebate program have picked up significantly; there is now a steady flow of applications.

The December auction of RGGI allowances brought in close to \$1.8 million, as compared to the September auction, which brought in less than \$500,000. The next auction will take place at the beginning of a new three year compliance period. The hope is that demand for RGGI allowances will be more robust.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Fund

The Concord Monitor published an opinion piece critical of the PUC's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Fund. The article alleged the program was engaged in deficit spending. This is not true. The program has taken in \$32 million, but it has allocated \$34 million, as some of the grants will be paid in the future using RGGI revenues that will accrue to the fund. The six grants we gave

out in 2010 are still going strong. We are waiting to see how the auction proceeds shape up for the coming year.

The Appliance Rebate Program is ending.

ARRA programs are given until June to finish all their work for both weatherization and energy programs. Approximately 2800 units have been weatherized with a hope to finish 3200-3300 by the time the money is gone. By the end of June, all projects will be completed.

BetterBuildings runs through mid-2013. The Community Action Agencies will be working with BetterBuildings to help weatherize units for those who are eligible.

Button Up – Workshops are taking place in January, February, and March.

CORE Efficiency Program – The program has been approved, and things are moving forward. There is a budget of roughly \$20 million, and programs for all customers are filling up fast.

11. Other Business

Next Meeting: Friday, February 17, 2012.

Meeting adjourned.