

Minutes
Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Energy Board
Public Utilities Commission, Concord, NH
9 AM – 12:00 PM
February 11, 2011 Meeting

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

Members in Attendance: Richard Ober of NH Charitable Foundation, Jack Ruderman of NH Public Utilities Commission, Meredith Hatfield of the OCA, Eric Steltzer of NH OEP, Robert Scott of DES, Wes Golomb of NHSEA, Beth Fischer for HBRANH/Build Green NH, Bob Reals, Jr. of NH DRED, Dick Henry of the Jordan Institute, Patti Carrier of BIA, Representative Naida Kaen, Karen Rantamaki, State Energy Manager, Dan Feltes of NH Legal Assistance, and Ben Frost for Dean Christon of NH Housing and Finance Authority.

Non-Voting Members in Attendance: Gil Gelineau of PSNH, Sarah Dagher of National Grid, Tom Palma for George Gantz from Unitil Energy Systems, Carol Woods for NH Electric Cooperative and Janet Ackerman of Peoples United Bank.

1. **Welcome and Introductions.** The meeting commenced at 9:05am.
2. **Minutes of the November EESE Board Meeting.**
 - The minutes of the December 14, 2010 meeting were approved with two small changes.
3. **Legislative Monitoring Process and Legislative Updates – Ben Frost**
 - Group has held two conference calls. This is the way the group is conducting the process and with the help of DES and BIA can compile the bills essential for discussion.
 - [HB 144](#) – Repeal of PACE. Bill would repeal the legislation in RSA 353F which enables municipalities to makes loans for energy improvements that are paid back through property taxes. Dick Henry of the Jordan Institute and Janet Ackerman of People’s United Bank expressed differing views of the legislation, although the advocates and bankers are working to find a compromise approach
 - [HB 302](#) – Repeals Residential Rebate Program within the Renewable Energy Fund. The law may end up that only large energy users will be eligible. The OCA will be looking at this to not go forward.
 - [HB 519](#) – Act to Repeal RGGI and to Repeal the EESE Board.
 - a) Chairman Ober and others complimented Rep. Garrity for the way he ran a daylong hearing in Reps Hall.
 - b) Ober reported that the Board voted 11-1 by email to authorize him to deliver a letter to the Committee urging them to not repeal the EESE Board and suggesting that any significant action on RGGI may be premature given the independent study being conducted by VEIC (see below).
 - c) If the bill passes it will then go to the House Finance Committee.

- d) CSNE has finished their report and testified that the lifetime energy savings for the RGGI programs will be about \$60 Million from the 2009 projects totaling \$17.7 Million.

Further discussion followed.

4. **Presentation by VEIC** – Christine Donovan and Jeff Taylor

- The Study Coordination Team has been meeting or checking in by phone with the consultants every other week. The Contractor team includes VEIC, subcontractors Jeffrey Taylor and Associates and Optimal Energy, and is supported by 7 or more in-house VEIC specialists.
- The final report will afford a spectrum of policy approaches and suggestions to overcome market barriers and maximize effectiveness – comparing NH approaches to best practices and lessons learned in other jurisdictions.
- There are seven areas of focus:
 - Utility Core Programs, Low Income Weatherization and Other EE and SE Programs
 - Utility Performance Incentives
 - Smart Grid
 - All Fuels (Thermal Efficiency)
 - Community Planning and Development
 - Public and Private Financing for Sustainability
 - Policy and Regulatory Framework
- VEIC intends to have much “stakeholder” outreach and engagement. They will meet one on one with over two dozen different stakeholders. They also intend to conduct stakeholder group sessions and utilize survey monkey to gather broad input.

Discussion followed.

Break was at 10:15 and resumed at 10:30

5. **Group Discussion Re: Energy Study**

- EESE Board members and members of the public present were asked to share thoughts on questions re what is already working well in NH, what is not working well and needs to be modified or replaced, and what is working well elsewhere that should be considered.

Feedback included:

- New Hampshire is doing a great job in the low-income area coordinating programs; maybe we should do more program coordination.
- Should use actual data, not just modeling, for assessing energy savings.
- Green Launching Pad is a huge success.
- Concern that many people will stop investing in energy efficiency once public money runs out.

- Concern that there are fantastic energy people working for the state under the current menu of programs; when the funding is gone we may lose some really good minds.
- Neighbors do not know about the programs; how do you get the word out that energy efficiency is the answer?
- Streamlining needed so programs can work better with others to promote all available programs. We need a game plan. We need a reasonable call to action and there should be a list of actions to take.
- Resolution of regulatory issues is costly for ratepayers. Utilities are spending too much time in a litigation stance; not enough time for the programs.
- We are too focused on \$20 million/year for CORE programs, and too dependent on public funding. Need to develop private financing mechanisms to scale up.
- We are not hearing from the oil and propane dealers; we should engage them more.
- Need for a definition or specified scope to standardize energy audits.
- Need to focus more on marketing and helping the average person through the process.
- Should train contractors to be advisors; they should know about funding and rebates; give them the information and let them be the single point of contact.

Further discussion followed.

6. [Presentation by RGGI Grantee](#) : Plymouth Renewable Energy Initiative – Sandra Jones & Peter Adams

- Program started in 2004 and over the last seven years 425 businesses and families have joined PAREI.
- PAREI offers an abundance of community and professional services that include installation of systems through volunteer “energy raisers” modeled after traditional New England barn raisers, outreach and education for communities, and energy consulting to mention a few.
- PAREI members have installed 157 solar thermal or PV systems around the state since June of 2005.
- Received \$99,250 grant in August, 2009. With this grant 12 solar energy raisers across the state were done saving 251 million BTU’s annually. The grant also funded energy audit equipment along with training opportunities for new employees and contractors.
- Because of the work that PAREI does, three other communities are seeking to start their own energy raiser teams. These communities are in Portsmouth, Canterbury and Conway.
- With this grant PAREI was able to conduct energy raisers and train other entities to do them at several locations around the Plymouth area and in other parts of the state. More details of these Energy Raisers can be found on PAREI’s [presentation](#).

7. Outreach and Education Committee

- Mary Downes has stepped in for Meredith Hatfield and now co-chairs with Beth Fischer.

- At the next meeting the committee is going to discuss a collaborative conference that will be held in the fall on energy efficiency
- Have pick an outside consultant to help with development of strategic communications plan, subject to approval mid-March by G&C.
- The Local Energy Solutions Conference is April 2 at Merrimack High School from 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

8. Municipal Energy Working Group – David Borden

- There are a number of challenges facing the municipalities, including:
 - a) Slow learning process
 - b) Lack of available funding
- The goals of the committee include:
 - a) Continue ensuring technical support
 - b) Find additional funding mechanisms for communities
- Margaret Dillon of S.E.E.D.S. (Sustainable Energy Education & Demonstration Services) has been involved and the group is seeking funding from the NH Charitable Foundation to pay Margaret to develop guidelines for municipal energy audits

9. Program Updates

Better Buildings

- Offices set up in all three communities.
- Technical Assistants have been interviewed.
- Beginning to see projects identified.
- Close to an agreement with the banks for financing.

PUC Report: RPS/RGGI

- The PUC is conducting a statutorily required review of the RPS law and program. This is a huge undertaking and the final report will be due in November.
- The week of 2/14/11 the PUC issued an RFP for renewable energy projects in the commercial & industrial sectors, consistent with legislative directive. The review will be a two step process with an initial review of the applications being done by PUC staff with help from Eric Steltzer and Becky Ohler. Then applications will go before the PUC Commissioners for final consideration.
- Barbara Bernstein along with Chris Skoglund has been working on RGGI case studies to showcase success stories.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05.