

The EERS Committee of the Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Energy Board

Minutes: January 12, 2017, at the Public Utilities Commission building

Prepared by Richard Minard, Committee Chair

Present: Richard Minard, NH OEP; Becky Ohler, NH DES; Kate Peters, Eversource, Dennis Labbe, NH Legal Assistance (EESE Board Vice Chair); D. M. Kreis, Office of the Consumer Advocate; Liz Nixon, NH PUC; Eric Stanley, Liberty Utilities; Scott Albert, GDS Associates (telephonically); David Borden; Christine Donovan, VEIC; Brianna Brand, NH Sustainable Energy Association; Brian Ramsey, NH Business & Industry Association rep, Jodie Lucci, Lightec; Ben Frost, NH Housing Finance Authority (EESE Board Chair); Les Stachow, PUC.

The committee convened for its fourth meeting at 2:30 pm and adjourned at 4:30. The meeting had been duly posted and was open to the public.

Minutes Approved: The committee approved without amendment the minutes from the previous three meetings (August 30, September 7, and December 16, 2016).

Next Meeting: Friday, January 27, 9 to 11 am, PUC Hearing Room B (Room 121)

Planning Consultant: Rick Minard introduced Christine Donovan of the Vermont Energy Investment Corporation (VEIC) as the person selected to work with the EESE Board and PUC on the EERS process. Rick noted that the PUC staff and EESE Board members who comprised the selection committee had worked together amiably and productively and were unanimously pleased with the outcome. The Commission has approved the selection and staff is drawing up a contract. Christine described her extensive experience in New Hampshire and VEIC's ongoing work on energy efficiency across the United States.

Stakeholder engagement in the utilities' draft EERS plan: The committee refined its understanding of the challenges of involving stakeholders in a meaningful way in the development of the utilities' draft EERS plan. Christine helped clarify issues and approaches, leading to changes in some of the conclusions reached by the committee at its December meeting. Kate Peters and Eric Stanley circulated a sheet, "workshop topics," that proposed five sessions in February. Points that emerged from the discussion:

- The workshops would be open to the public and seek to engage other experts but would be primarily designed to deepen the dialogue between utility planners and EESE Board members and their constituents.
- Christine will play an active role in shaping the workshops, facilitating the discussions, and bringing subject-matter expertise to the table.
- The workshops will focus on program design. For example, with the C&I programs, how best to allocate funds (when 2016 funds were exhausted by April); how to avoid stop-start problems; how to adapt programs used in neighboring states and to maximize collaboration across utilities; how to learn from Energy Services Companies' experience.

- There may be value in conducting some of the process on-line with webinars that could allow frequent polling of participants.
- The utilities expect to submit to the EESE Board in April a detailed and complete three-year plan. The engagement process is intended to maximize consensus on its content.
- The discussions should also consider the broad themes that surround the work: is the EERS plan a bold leap forward or a gradual shift; should the plan include a fallback of some kind in case funding for efficiency is reduced; how will the plan foster economic development and jobs; how will the plan affect electric bills; what incentives will drive utilities to maximize performance.

Next steps: The PUC staff and VEIC will focus on getting a contract in place as soon as possible. Once that is settled, Christine will work closely with a small group of PUC staff and EESE Board members to discuss priorities and particular assignments. Among the first will be to engage with the utilities on a design for the stakeholder sessions. The EERS committee will meet in approximately two weeks to finalize that process. The Chair noted that OEP is likely to replace its representative to the EESE Board by the end of February.

Next meeting; Adjournment: The members agreed to reconvene during the week of January 22. The Chair will solicit advice for the best time and location.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30.