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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

January 7, 2016 - 10:11 a.m.
Concord, New Hampshire

NHPUC JAN22'16 PM 4:26

RE: DE 15-271
ELECTRIC DISTRIBUTION UTILITIES:
Examination of Electric Distribution
Utility Interconnection and Queue
Management Processes for Net-Metered
Customer-Generators.
*(Hearing to receive comments on
NHPUC Staff's memo of 12-03-15)*

PRESENT: Chairman Martin P. Honigberg, Presiding
Commissioner Robert R. Scott
Commissioner Kathryn M. Bailey

Sandy Deno, Clerk

APPEARANCES: Reptg. Eversource Energy:
Matthew J. Fossum, Esq.
Richard Labrecque

Reptg. Liberty Utilities (Granite State
Electric) Corp., d/b/a Liberty Utilities:
Heather Tebbetts
Jill Fitzpatrick

Reptg. Unutil Energy Systems, Inc.:
Patrick H. Taylor, Esq.
John Bonazoli

Court Reporter: Steven E. Patnaude, LCR No. 52

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APPEARANCES: (c o n t i n u e d)

Reptg. Borrego Solar Systems:
Chris Anderson

Reptg. Revision Energy:
Jack Ruderman

Reptg. NHSolarGarden.com:
Michaela Cote

Reptg. N.H. Sustainable Energy Association:
Elijah D. Emerson, Esq. (Primmer, Piper...)

Reptg. Residential Ratepayers:
Nicholas Cicale, Esq.
James Brennan
Office of Consumer Advocate

Reptg. PUC Staff:
David K. Wiesner, Esq.
Karen Cramton, Dir./Sustainable Energy Div.
Liz Nixon, Sustainable Energy Division
Michael Sisto, Consumer Affairs Division

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I N D E X

PAGE NO.

Summary by Mr. Wiesner

9

COMMENTS PROVIDED BY:

Mr. Labrecque

8

Mr. Ruderman

12

Ms. Tebbetts

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Mr. Cicale

13

Mr. Taylor

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Mr. Anderson

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P R O C E E D I N G

1
2 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: We're here this
3 morning to take public comments in Docket DE 15-271.
4 Comments are to be directed to Staff's memo of
5 December 3rd, I think, of 2015, and the proposal that was
6 attached to that memo. I'll ask Mr. Wiesner to set the
7 scene a little bit in a minute or just a few minutes.

8 But I'll tell you what we're going to
9 do, since we're in a DE docket, there are parties. So,
10 we're going to take appearances from the parties who are
11 here, which is not exactly going to be the order in which
12 people signed up. Could do this any number of ways. But,
13 I think, in terms of the order of comments, we'll probably
14 just go in the order that people signed in. It's going to
15 be easier for me to keep straight, and I can tell you
16 who's going to be next.

17 So, before I turn to Mr. Wiesner, let's
18 take appearances. And, I'm going to go through the
19 secretarial letter that lists all of them.

20 Off the record.

21 *[Brief off-the-record discussion*
22 *ensued.]*

23 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: All right. So,
24 let's see if we can get all the parties who are listed

1 here. New Hampshire Solar Garden?

2 *[No verbal response]*

3 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Not here. Is
4 somebody? Yes. Who's here for New Hampshire Solar
5 Garden?

6 MS. COTE: I'm here, but I'm not
7 speaking.

8 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: That's okay.
9 You're entering an appearance for New Hampshire Solar
10 Garden. What is your name?

11 MS. COTE: Michaela Cote.

12 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Michaela Cote.
13 Thank you, Ms. Cote.

14 MS. COTE: You're welcome.

15 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: New Hampshire
16 Sustainable Energy Association?

17 MR. EMERSON: Here.

18 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: And you are?

19 MR. EMERSON: Eli Emerson, from Primmer,
20 Piper, Eggleston & Cramer.

21 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Thank you. Borrego
22 Solar Systems? Yes?

23 MR. ANDERSON: Chris Anderson.

24 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Revision Energy? I

1 saw Jack Ruderman.

2 Freedom Logistics? Freedom Energy
3 Logistics? Anybody here?

4 *[No verbal response]*

5 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Mr. Rodier?
6 Anybody?

7 *[No verbal response]*

8 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: No. Okay, nobody
9 is here for them. Is Clifton Below here?

10 *[No verbal response]*

11 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Don't see him. No.
12 Vital Communities?

13 *[No verbal response]*

14 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Actually, is
15 that -- Mr. Wiesner, Mr. Below represents a bunch of these
16 intervenors, right?

17 MR. WIESNER: Yes. My understanding is,
18 he represents everyone down, in the list you're looking
19 at, everyone down through Marie McCormick.

20 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Okay.

21 MR. WIESNER: And, so, the next party
22 would be TASC.

23 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: All right. TASC,
24 The Alliance for Solar Choice? Is someone here for them?

1 [No verbal response]

2 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: No. Eversource?

3 Yes, I see Mr. Fossum is here for Eversource.

4 Liberty is here, yes?

5 MS. TEBBETTS: Heather Tebbetts.

6 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Thank you, Ms.

7 Tebbetts.

8 Unitil is here?

9 MR. TAYLOR: Yes. Patrick Taylor.

10 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: OCA is here?

11 MR. CICALÉ: Yes, Chairman. Nicholas

12 Cicale and Jim Brennan.

13 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Staff is here,

14 Mr. Wiesner, with a cast of thousands?

15 MR. WIESNER: Yes, we have quite a cast
16 of characters here. Karen Cramton, is the director of the
17 Sustainable Division; at the far end of the table, Mike
18 Sisto, with Consumer Affairs, who works with group net
19 metering host registration; and Liz Nixon of the
20 Sustainable Division as well.

21 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: All right. Did I
22 miss any parties? People who were either mandatory
23 parties or who intervened in this proceeding?

24 [No verbal response]

1 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: No. Okay. Good.
2 Thank you.

3 So, let's go to the list of people who
4 signed in to speak. It looks like Rick Labrecque, from
5 Eversource, is first. And, Mr. Labrecque will be followed
6 by Jack Ruderman and Heather Tebbetts. So, Mr. Labrecque.

7 MR. LABRECQUE: Good morning. And,
8 thank you. I'm Rick Labrecque. I'm the Manager of the
9 Distributed Generation Group for Eversource in New
10 Hampshire.

11 First like to thank the Staff for all
12 the effort they put in gathering all the parties on a
13 number of different occasions to develop what we believe
14 is a good set of working guidance to assist the utilities
15 and other stakeholders in understanding this process.
16 We're considering -- there's a few minor points of
17 clarification, not substantial, to the overall objectives
18 of these guidelines that we will likely submit in writing.

19 But, other than that, we support the
20 document that's the result of that process.

21 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Oh. And, I'm
22 sorry. There's two things I should have done before I
23 even turned to you, Mr. Labrecque, and I apologize for
24 that, and I apologize to Mr. Wiesner. I was going to ask

1 Mr. Wiesner to help us set the scene a little bit, I even
2 said I was going to do that, then I forgot.

3 I'll also note that we are going to be
4 accepting written comments for another period of time, and
5 Mr. Wiesner has that date, I'm sure, in the front of his
6 mind.

7 So, I made you go out of order,
8 Mr. Labrecque. I apologize. Mr. Wiesner, why don't you
9 do your thing and help us set the scene.

10 MR. WIESNER: I'll do that. And, I'll
11 note as well that the deadline for written comments is
12 next Friday, the 15th. And, I would encourage people to
13 respect that deadline. You know, this isn't -- this isn't
14 quite as hard and fast a procedural schedule as might be
15 the case in some proceedings, but we do want to move this
16 along. And, in fact, that was the impetus for
17 recommending that the Commission hold this hearing today.

18 This docket was opened back in the
19 summer at a time when Staff believed there was urgency to
20 try and develop more robust queue management procedures
21 for the net metering program, given that there's a
22 statutory limit on participation in that program. And,
23 substantial progress was made within the first month to
24 develop an outline of what those procedures might look

1 like. And, our understanding was that the utilities were
2 largely on board with a set of procedures that they would
3 all implement, and that that is reflected in what was
4 attached to the December 3rd Staff memo.

5 The formal procedures as a draft was
6 circulated back in October, but we received very little,
7 if any, substantive input and response to those
8 procedures. And, then, I think people became interested
9 in other initiatives, including potential legislation that
10 would raise the cap, and there was perhaps not as much
11 focus placed on these queue management processes.

12 But our understanding is the program
13 continues to be quite successful in the state. Liberty
14 has reached their cap. The Co-op, which is not a part of
15 this process, they had exceeded their cap previously.
16 And, our understanding is that Eversource believes they
17 may be getting close to their share of the cap as well.

18 So, these issues are still quite
19 important, in our view, and we had interest in moving the
20 process along. And, so, I guess it's fair to say we
21 recommended that this hearing be held, in order to put
22 parties on the record as to what their positions were with
23 respect to the procedures that had been developed.

24 And, they're, you know, fairly involved,

1 in terms of timing and detail, and I think that's what we
2 were looking for. They were developed, in large part,
3 with significant input from the three investor-owned
4 utilities. But this is the first opportunity, I believe,
5 where we will have substantive comment, substantive input
6 from the installer community, as well as other interested
7 stakeholders.

8 I guess I -- I don't think this is a
9 real concern, but I do want to express it. I'm hopeful
10 that today we can stay focused on these procedures, and
11 not stray into some other areas that might seem relevant,
12 but aren't as focused on the details of utility net
13 metering queue management. For example, you know, the
14 status of the legislation, which is just starting the
15 legislative process in this new session, or what might
16 happen with respect to specific projects which are built
17 at a time when they're sitting on the net metering queue
18 wait list.

19 So, I would hope that those are issues
20 for another day, that we would not find the need to
21 address today, and stay focused on the procedures as they
22 have been proposed.

23 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Thank you,
24 Mr. Wiesner. Mr. Labrecque, in light of what Mr. Wiesner

1 has just done, do you feel the need to add anything to
2 what you said?

3 MR. LABRECQUE: No.

4 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Thank you. And, I
5 apologize again for doing that out of order.

6 Mr. Ruderman, followed by Ms. Tebbetts,
7 and Mr. Cicale.

8 MR. RUDERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
9 Jack Ruderman, on behalf of Revision Energy. I'll keep it
10 very short and sweet here. We fully support Staff's
11 recommendation as set forth in their memo to the
12 Commissioners of December 3rd. I think we've had a good,
13 healthy process here. There's been a fair amount of
14 collaboration amongst all the stakeholders and Staff.
15 And, I think the end result is a set of guidelines or
16 rules for managing the interconnection queue that will
17 serve the industry and New Hampshire residents and
18 businesses alike going forward.

19 So, we're happy to support the proposal.
20 And, we thank you for your time and attention to this
21 important matter.

22 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Thank you,
23 Mr. Ruderman. Ms. Tebbetts, followed by Mr. Cicale and
24 Mr. Taylor.

1 MS. TEBBETTS: Yes. Good morning,
2 Commissioners. My name is Heather Tebbetts, with Liberty
3 Utilities. And, today I have with me Jill Fitzpatrick.

4 We fully support the Staff's memo. And,
5 we have -- just wanted to note that we participated in the
6 docket, and we helped create the procedure filed in
7 Staff's recommendation. And, today we're here to listen
8 and answer any questions as needed. Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Mr. Cicale,
10 followed by Mr. Taylor, and maybe Mr. Anderson.

11 MR. CICALÉ: Good morning,
12 Commissioners. Nicholas Cicale, with Jim Brennan, here
13 for the Office of Consumer Advocate.

14 The OCA supports the document. The one
15 suggestion and comment that the OCA might provide is
16 that -- that this document, if it is to be implemented, is
17 all the electric customers are given fair notice of the --
18 especially ones that are on the queue allocation list.
19 And, you know, might even suggest opening up the time of
20 compliance a little longer, so that those customers are
21 given a fair opportunity to rectify their applications, so
22 that they're not bumped off the queue or lose any queue
23 positioning to get their projects off the ground. Thank
24 you.

1 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Thank you,
2 Mr. Cicale. Mr. Taylor, followed perhaps by Mr. Anderson.

3 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you. Good morning,
4 Commissioners. And, with me today is John Bonazoli.

5 We, Unitil, appreciates the hard work of
6 the Staff and the other parties in this docket, and we
7 appreciate the opportunity to have provided input as this
8 recommendation was developed.

9 To the extent that we have any comments,
10 we'll reserve those for a written submission. But, as a
11 general matter, we certainly are supportive of this
12 docket, and we appreciate it. Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Thank you, Mr.
14 Taylor. Mr. Anderson, are you interested in saying
15 anything? There's microphones up front.

16 MR. ANDERSON: Thank you. Chris
17 Anderson here for Borrego Solar. I also want to thank the
18 Commission and Staff for putting together this memo. We
19 participated in the process, and similar to Eversource's
20 comments, in general, we are supportive of the written
21 procedures. And, we probably will be submitting a few
22 minor comments in writing next week.

23 That's all I have. Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: All right. That's

1 the entire list of people who indicated that they wished
2 to speak.

3 Is there anyone else here who wishes to
4 say anything?

5 *[No verbal response]*

6 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: All right. Thank
7 you very much for your comments. As Mr. Wiesner
8 indicated, the written comments deadline is a week from
9 tomorrow, January 15th.

10 And, we will adjourn this public comment
11 hearing.

12 **(Whereupon the hearing was adjourned at**
13 **10:25 a.m.)**

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