

# **NORTH COUNTRY TRANSMISSION COMMISSION**

**March 26, 2010**

## **Public Utilities Commission Hearing Room A**

### **MINUTES**

#### **Commission Member Attendees:**

Senator Martha Fuller Clark	NH Senate
Representative Naida Kaen	NH House of Representatives
Representative William J. Remick	NH House of Representatives
Amy Ignatius	Commissioner, NH Public Utilities Commission
Michael Harrington	Senior Policy Advisor, NH Public Utilities Commission
Joanne O. Morin	Director, Office of Energy and Planning
Laura Richardson	ARRA Coordinator for SEP, Office of Energy & Planning
Richard Ober	Chair, Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Energy Board
Hon. Frederick W. King	For US Senator Judd Gregg
Joseph Staszowski	Northeast Utilities
Terron Hill	National Grid
Stephen Barba	For Congressman Sununu, Plymouth State University
Steve Zuretti	NEPGA
Bill Gabler	Clean Power Development
Terry Beyer	Congresswoman Carol Shea Porter's Office
Tom Colgan	Wagner Forest Management
Michael Licata	NHBIA

#### **Other Attendees:**

Max Makaitis	Androscoggin Valley Economic Development
Heather Manypenny	New Hampshire Electric Coop
Barbara Tetreault	Berlin Daily Sun
Edith Tucker	Coos County Democrat/Salmon Press
Adam Schmit	Bianco PA
Donna Gamache	Public Service Company of NH
Deb Hale	National Grid
Sarah Holmes	Senator Shaheen's Office
Allison Smith	Anbaric Transmission
Steve Conant	Anbaric Transmission
Rachael Goldwasser	TransCanada

## **Agenda Item 1: Welcome and Introductions**

Senator Martha Fuller Clark opened the meeting of the Transmission Commission (Commission) at 1:15 P.M. and welcomed both Commission members and interested parties in attendance. Commissioner Amy Ignatius reminded the group that the primary purpose of the meeting was to consider recommendations of the RFP subcommittee regarding a consultant. She suggested that the Commission may need to go into Executive, non-public session at which time non-Commission attendees would be asked to leave the room and would be invited back at the end of the Executive, non-public session. Attendance was taken and old business was discussed, including Minutes for the January meeting. Mr. Staszowski suggested minor revisions to the Minutes, a motion was made and seconded to accept the Minutes with revisions; no one opposed and the motion carried. See link to the January 22, 2010 Minutes: [North Country Transmission Meeting Minutes](#). Self-introductions were made.

## **Agenda Item 2: Discussion and Selection of Consultant for Economic Study**

Ms. Ignatius summarized the activities of the RFP Subcommittee prior to this meeting. She also discussed that the standards for selection of a contractor under an RFP are that until the final selection has been made and listed on the agenda for the Governor's and Council meeting (April 28<sup>th</sup>), it remains confidential. All state agencies are under these restrictions and are not allowed to divulge the name of a recommended consultant or contractor. Senator Fuller Clark discussed the process the subcommittee used for scoring the consultants, as well as the interviewing subcommittee process (Fred King, Joanne Morin, Michael Harrington, Bill Remick, and Joe Staszowski).

A motion was made by Ms. Morin and seconded by Senator Fuller Clark to move into a confidential Executive Session; unanimously carried.

{CONFIDENTIAL, NON-PUBLIC EXECUTIVE SESSION}

At 2:40 p.m., motion was made and seconded to return to public session of the North Country Transmission Commission; unanimously carried.

Ms. Ignatius reminded the room that during the non-public session the Commission discussed the recommendation of the RFP subcommittee for a consultant and explored in greater depth consultants' qualifications.

Senator Fuller Clark added that it was a very rich and helpful discussion. There were many questions asked about the choice and qualifications of each of the candidates. It was a very helpful and deep discussion prior to the vote. The Commission took the process and decision of selecting an applicant very seriously, and a lot of good analysis was brought to that discussion. Senator Fuller Clark reminded the group that by statute, it is necessary that the Commission keep confidential the results of the selection until notice of the Governor and Executive Council meeting in which the consultant is approved.

### **Agenda Item 3: Reports on Transmission Matters**

Ms. Ignatius introduced Steve Conant, Senior VP, and Allison Smith of Anbaric Transmission a/k/a New England Independent Transmission Company to give a brief report on ideas they are exploring regarding transmission alternatives in the North Country. Ms. Ignatius cautioned that these ideas were still on the drawing board, and nothing is finalized.

Mr. Conant noted that the company had been following with interest what the NCTC has been looking at. He stated that Anbaric is a developer of independent transmission projects, which effectively means it is not a public utility. However, in New England the company has the designation of an independent transmission company, which requires FERC approval (anticipated completion of approval in the next month). The approval will allow it to do projects which utility companies could do regarding market efficiency and reliability. Projects they have done include Neptune, a 660 megawatt, \$600 million high-voltage DC cable project that runs between Long Island and New Jersey. It is a long-term project under contract with the Long Island Power Authority which was completed on time, on budget, two years ago. The company is in the final stages of doing a similar project with the New York Power Authority which would bring energy from New Jersey into Manhattan. It is reviewing a project in Upstate New York, which is similar to Coos County, regarding stranded winds that can't get into the market. Anbaric is also looking at a project with Vermont Electric Co. between Upstate New York and Vermont that would cross Lake Champlain. Finally, it has a project called Greenline that would connect with wind in Aroostook County, Maine, and bring it through a DC cable into downtown Boston. Anbaric's funding comes from private investors. It isn't a utility so can look a little outside the box to energy solutions. It is interested in what is happening in Coos County and thinks it can bring different ideas and solutions. It applauds PSNH's efforts and says they have been terrific in terms of upgrading the loop; Anbaric feels there may be an opportunity to do a little more, which is what it is looking at now.

Questions and Answers followed Anbaric's presentation.

Ms. Ignatius informed the Commission that Anbaric is considering making a request to the ISO for an economic study for the feasibility of some of its ideas. The ISO approves and funds three studies per year, and applications are due in one week from which ISO will choose the studies for the following year. Ms. Ignatius suggested that the Commission support Anbaric's proposal to ISO since there is no cost to the state. It is consistent with recommendations the PUC made two years ago to look at those kinds of ideas, such as ways to upgrade and enhance the existing infrastructure.

Senator Fuller Clark suggested the NCTC prepare a letter to support the proposal of Anbaric to the ISO. Representative Remick moved to prepare and send a letter of support from the Commission to the ISO; several members seconded; unanimously carried.

#### **Agenda Item 4: Update on Hydro-Quebec and New Brunswick Power Project**

Ms. Ignatius reported on negotiations between Hydro-Quebec and New Brunswick Power and Quebec. This project is no longer on the table. It would have involved the acquisition of most of New Brunswick's electric utility assets and would have had Hydro-Quebec paying almost \$5 billion all of the assets, both transmission and distribution, and the outfit of the power plants. Hydro-Quebec wanted the deal because it would open up additional markets and more capacity, but it felt the price was too high. Negotiations went as low as \$1.8 billion, and New Brunswick felt any lower than that was not in its best interest. In addition, it was an extremely unpopular deal, and the citizenry did not like it for a variety of reasons.

#### **Agenda Item 5: Brief Status Reports on North Country Renewable Power Projects**

Clean Power Development Biomass: Bill Gabler, project manager for the project being developed by Clean Power Development (CPD) in Berlin, reported that they now have all required permits; financing is arranged; and as soon as a purchase power agreement is in place they are ready to begin construction.

Laidlaw Energy Project: Max Makaitis, of Androscoggin Valley Economic Development, reported that it had completed its recommendations; a public hearing was held. The committee's statement of purpose was to create jobs and create activity, and also to come up with recommended stipulations to protect the community. He emphasized that the committee recommended deferring the Northern Loop upgrade issue because it was not qualified to address that issue. However, the committee unanimously voted to support the Northern Loop transmission line to the maximum 144 megawatts, and that it felt that the upgrade was very important to develop an alternative energy industry and create green jobs in the North Country. Ms. Ignatius added that procedural and permitting approvals were well under way.

North Country Wind Project: Tom Colgan of Wagner Forest Management updated the Commission on the Wagner Forest Management project. There is a permitting application before the Coos County Planning Board to install four additional test towers to collect data.

#### **Agenda Item 6: Next Transmission Commission Meeting**

Next meeting of the North Country Transmission Commission: June 25, 1:00 p.m. {This date has changed to June 17, 2010 a.m., Gregg Public Safety Academy on the campus of Granite State College in Littleton, Littleton Area Learning Center, 646 Union Street, Suite 600, Littleton, NH 03561.}

#### **Agenda Item 7: Adjourn**

There being no further business, the meeting of the North Country Transmission Commission adjourned at 3:20 p.m.