



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
**ENERGY EFFICIENCY &
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

EERMC FULL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, February 21, 2019 | 3:30 - 5:30 PM

Conference Room B, 2nd Floor, Department of Administration, Providence, RI

Members in Attendance: Betsy Stubblefield Loucks, Carol Grant, Anthony Hubbard, Jennifer Hutchinson, Roberta Fagan.

Others Present: Rachel Henschel, Mike Guerard, Mark Kravatz, Becca Trietch, Sara Canabarro, Dr. Carrie Gill, Ron Gerwatowski, Sam Ross, Erika Niedowski, Kai Salem, Matt Chase, Angela Li, Michael O'Brien, Chris Porter, Raquel Webster, Stefan Nagy, Alice Hourihan, John Richards, Peter Gill Case, Tim Roughan, Craig Johnson, Jon Hagopian

All meeting materials can be accessed here: <https://rieermc.ri.gov/meeting/eermc-meeting-february-2019/>

1. Call to Order

Vice Chair Stubblefield Loucks called the meeting to order at 3:41PM.

2. Approval of Council Meeting Minutes

Ms. Stubblefield Loucks requested to postpone the approval of January's meeting minutes since they did not have a quorum at this time.

3. Executive Director Report

Commissioner Grant reported that the Revolution Wind offshore wind contract has been filed with the Public Utilities Commission, and they should have a decision by mid-June. She also noted that the bids were closed for the other 400MW Procurement Class 1 Renewables procurement and she will keep the Council informed as things move along. Commissioner Grant stated that the Governor's 1000MW Goal is going well and they are making great progress with the help of these large-scale procurements.

Commissioner Grant also informed the Council members that Ms. Stubblefield Loucks is stepping down as EERMC Vice Chair but will continue to be a member of the Council. She announced that Mr. Hubbard has stepped up to take the Vice Chair role and this change will be effective starting the next Council meeting in March.

4. Vice Chair Report

Ms. Stubblefield Loucks stated that the Council members name tents have been reformatted to indicate their seats on one side and to list the four (4) EERMC responsibilities on the other – hopefully this helps all members to remember their objectives as they work.

Ms. Stubblefield Loucks reported that during today's meeting the Council will hear from National Grid about their 2018 Quarter 4 report – although not all of the programs met their energy savings goals, the overall portfolio of programs did achieve more savings than expected.

After National Grid's presentation, time was allocated to brainstorm about Council priorities for the 2020 EE and SRP Plans. However, with such few Council members present, that may need to be postponed.

Ms. Stubblefield Loucks stated that after they learn a bit more about SRP and the timeline for this year's Plan development, the Council will receive an update from the C-Team about the Potential Study. She reported that they will need three Council members to participate in the evaluation of the Potential Study proposals when they are submitted. She noted that OER will be reaching out to Council members individually to create an evaluation team of at least three Council members and the C-Team since not enough members are present today to volunteer.

The special topic presentation for today is focused on energy storage, and then the Council will round out the meeting with some Council business about the budget and annual report to the general assembly.

Ms. Stubblefield Loucks noted that due to no quorum today, they cannot vote on the meeting minutes, and no other votes are scheduled for today. Like last time, for those that would like to provide public comment, the comment period has been moved to early in the agenda this month, so those that need to leave early can do so – the sign-up sheet is near the food and drinks.

Lastly, as a reminder for Council members, Ms. Stubblefield Loucks noted that when Council members are scheduling their one-on-ones with the C-Team and OER, they can have a skype or phone call if that is the easiest for their schedule.

5. Program Oversight

a) Preliminary Results from 2018 Energy Efficiency Programs

Mr. Richards gave a brief summary on the Savings Goals, highlighting the overperformances of: EnergyStar Lighting, Multifamily, and Home Energy reports.

Ms. Li went over the Residential Q4 Overview stating that under Market Rate they reached: 118.2% of the annual electric goal and 143.3% of the annual gas goal. She stated that under Income- Eligible they reached 89.0% of the annual electric goal, and 127.8% of the annual gas goal.

Commissioner Grant noted that she is disappointed with the Income-Eligible results – this really needs to be a focus for this upcoming year. Mr. Hubbard agreed with this statement.

Ms. Stubblefield Loucks added that she is confused about National Grid wanting to expand their lighting efforts when they are struggling to find locations that don't already have LEDs or CFLs installed.

Ms. Li then covered some additional Quarter 4 highlights focused on the following programs/initiatives: EnergyStar HVAC, Lighting, and Income Eligible Services. She also went over the Residential Pilots overview, and the Zero Energy Pilot.

Ms. Hourihan went over the Quarter 4 Commercial highlights, and gave a brief overview of the New Construction, Retrofit, and Small Business Goals. She spoke to the Small Business Direct Install, Large Commercial Retrofit, Large Commercial New Construction, and Finance programs as well.

(Please refer to [Fourth Quarter 2018 Results Presentation](#) and [Fourth Quarter 2018 Highlights](#) document).

b) Initial Discussion of Council Priorities for the 2020 Energy Efficiency Plan

Ms. Stubblefield Loucks stated that due to the small number of Council members present they will postpone this discussion until the next Council meeting in March.

c) Presentation on System Reliability Procurement (SRP)

Dr. Gill quickly introduced herself and the other presenters – she gave a brief introduction to the Presentation focused on System Reliability Procurement (Please refer to [SRP 101](#) presentation). She then provided an overview of Non-Wires Alternatives, how they help to support grid management, and provided some examples.

Mr. Gerwatowski from the Division of Public Utilities and Carriers (DPUC) then went over how Non-Wires Alternatives (NWAs) support the DPUC's mission and the Power Sector Transformation goals. Mr. Gerwatowski also reported that National Grid has an online Distribution System Data Portal which is publicly available and is helping to share relevant information for NWA developers. The portal can be accessed here: <https://ngrid.apps.esri.com/NGSysDataPortal/RI/index.html>

Mr. Chase covered National Grid's Non-Wire Alternatives Pilots, the RI System Data Portal, and the Company's plan for implementing the 2019 SRP Plan.

Mr. Kravatz went over the EERMC's responsibility and role regarding SRP Plans. He also noted that the C-Team will be pushing more into this topic and is happy to answer questions Council members may have during their 1-on-1 meetings.

d) 2019 Timeline Summary & 2020/2021 Timeline Discussion

Mr. Kravatz quickly went over the RI 2019 Annual Energy Efficiency Plan Timeline (Please refer to [2019 Timeline](#) document). He noted that he's hopeful this timeline will be adopted starting this year and be replicated through 2021 as much as possible.

e) Potential Study Update

Mr. Ross provided a brief update on the Potential Study. He reported that they are on track to deliver a Scope of Work document by late March- the rough draft has been developed and reviewed and the Working Group (C-Team, National Grid and OER) has begun meeting.

Mr. Ross then highlighted key events in the Potential Study process which involve the Council. He also went over C-Team Responsibilities and the overall Potential Study timeline (Please refer to [Potential Study Update](#) presentation).

Mr. Ross stated that the Council needs to have an Evaluation Team identified prior to April 18th.

6. Special Topic

a) Presentation on Battery Storage Initiatives

Mr. Nagy from National Grid provided a presentation on Energy Storage initiatives within Energy Efficiency. He also went over the Case for Energy Storage in RI and the Avoided Cost of Capacity (please refer to [RI Energy Storage Initiative](#) presentation).

Commissioner Grant and Ms. Henschel asked for better clarification on why Battery Storage Initiatives are important for Rhode Island. Mr. Nagy responded that battery storage can support electric load management which is important for the grid.

7. Public Comment

a) Public Comment

Ms. Salem on behalf of the Green Energy Consumers Alliance thanked the Council members and everyone for their continuous hard-work.

Ms. Salem stated that she has a few comments/suggestions about the Council's 2019 Policy Recommendations to the General Assembly:

1. She believes that the Appliance Standard Bill should be one of the top priorities for the Council and should therefore not be near the bottom of the priority list.
2. There should be more specification/details put into every recommendation – including what is currently good/bad in energy efficiency today
3. There should be a recommendation that explicitly requests no scoops, or budget caps on the energy efficiency programs – she would like to see more detail in the current recommendation.

To conclude, Ms. Salem believes that the Council should rearrange the order of the current 2019 Policy Recommendations according to what's most important/ higher priority and add more detail for the General Assembly.

Mr. O'Brien on behalf of EcoMetric Consulting offered two suggestions for Council members as they begin to consider priorities for the 2020 EE and SPR Plans:

1. He recommends that new construction programs for both commercial and residential buildings support making buildings "ready" for solar, storage and electric vehicle charging. By prepping the buildings during their construction phase a lot of cost savings can be achieved.
2. He recommends looking to streamline any commercial new construction program so that it does not cause delays for developers. He notes that developers are trying to juggle a lot of different priorities so as soon as energy efficiency becomes a burden or slows down their development, it is often dropped.

8. Council Business

a) Council Review of EERMC 2019 Budget

Ms. Trietch reported that after conducting an internal audit of the EERMC Client Fund, OER was able to correct the amount of funds reported within the Council's Client Fund. She stated that through the audit process, it was discovered that a combination of at least two errors types resulted in an underestimation of the client fund balance:

1. A human error in transitioning from one spreadsheet to the next was identified in one case.
2. Budgeted values rather than actual, contracted amounts were used in some cases when calculating client fund balances. This resulted in balance values that differed from the actual client fund account.

Ms. Trietch noted that to remedy these errors going forward, the following process changes are being implemented:

1. Quarterly check-ins will be conducted in collaboration with the Client Fund manager (the EERMC's attorney), to verify not only the deposits and withdrawals from the Client Fund but also the total remaining dollar amount.

2. The Excel spreadsheet used to track the Client Fund balance will contain distinct fields that separately track approved budgeted amounts, contracted amounts, and expenses paid-to-date.

Mr. Hubbard asked Ms. Trietch what amount was found during the audit. Ms. Trietch replied they found \$116,233.80 which will be added to the \$250,000 for the Potential Study (please refer to [Audit Result/Budget](#) document).

- b) Discussion to finalize Policy Recommendations for the 2019 Annual Council Report to the General Assembly

Ms. Trietch went over the [2019 Policy Recommendations](#) document. She noted that the Council will not be voting on this today – it is simply for discussion. However, they will need to vote on the final draft of the EERMC Annual Report to the General Assembly (which includes these recommendations) in April.

Ms. Stubblefield Loucks asked Ms. Trietch if these policies are in order of priority. Ms. Trietch replied that all of these policies are equally important/same priority – no specific order.

Commissioner Grant stated that these policies are all priorities – the order shouldn't specify a prioritization. However, if Council members feel strongly about changing the order of these recommendations to prioritize them, then OER can execute the request.

Mr. Hubbard noted that he would like to spend some time during his 1:1 with the C-Team to go into more details about these priorities and then give his feedback. Ms. Trietch stated that Council members have two more meetings to go over these policies and discuss/amend them prior to finalizing the report to the General Assembly.

Ms. Stubblefield Loucks thanked the public for sharing their comments/feedback.

9. Adjournment

Vice Chair Ms. Stubblefield Loucks adjured the meeting at 5:14PM.