



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

ENERGY EFFICIENCY & RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

EERMC FULL COUNCIL DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, October 20, 2022

Full Council Meeting | 3:00 - 5:00 PM

Department of Administration Conference Room 2B, Providence, RI 02908 with additional audio/video participation available through Zoom.

Members in Attendance: Kate Grant, Brett Feldman, Kurt Teichert, Tom Magliocchetti, Peter Gill Case, Bob Izzo, Harry Oakley, Chris Kearns, Joe Garlick

Others in Attendance: Sue AnderBois, Nelson DiBiase, Craig Johnson, Josh Kessler, Karen Verrengia, Cheryl Boyd, Nathan Cleveland, Alyssa Bailey, Sam Ross, Bryan Evans, Rachel Sholly, Marisa Desautel, Adrian Caesar

1. Call to Order

Chairperson Oakley called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

2. Chair Report

Chairperson Oakley provided an overview of the meeting agenda and provided instructions for making public comments.

3. Executive Director Report

Interim Commissioner Kearns provided an update on the request for proposals (RFP) for the administration of the air source heat pump program from the Office of Energy Resources. He also noted that Rhode Island Energy has issued the RFP for the required offshore wind procurement of up to 1,000 megawatts. Interim Commissioner Kearns announced that the State now has a dedicated website (<https://dhs.ri.gov/programs-and-services/energy-and-water-assistance-programs/energy-support-ri>) for all energy support programs to assist customers through this winter. He provided an update on the latest proposed Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative funding proposal and how the Council and public can comment on those funding allocations. Lastly, an update was provided on the expanded DRIVE program to include rebates for e-bikes.

4. [Meeting Minutes - September 29, 2022](#)

Council Member Teichert motioned to approve the September 29th meeting minutes. Vice Chair Gill Case seconded. All in favor, none opposed.

5. Council Business (30 Minutes, 3:10 - 3:40 p.m.)

- a. [Presentation on the Open Meetings Act](#) (15 min, 3:10 - 3:25 p.m.)

The Council's legal counsel, Marisa Desautel provided an overview of the Open Meetings Act. She noted that the Open Meetings Act is triggered when a quorum of a public body has a meeting. Council Members discussed and asked questions regarding what kind of virtual participation is allowed for public meetings.

b. Planning Discussion for the Council's Learning, Education, and Advancement Discussion (15 minutes, 3:25 – 3:40 p.m.)

Based on Chairperson Oakley's suggestion to improve the flow of the meeting, Vice Chair Gill Case motioned to move this agenda item to be 6.c. Council Member Teichert seconded. All in favor, none opposed.

6. Program Oversight (50 Minutes, 3:40 – 4:30 p.m.)

a. [Regulatory Updates on the Annual 2023 Energy Efficiency Plan](#) (15 min, 3:40 – 3:55 p.m.)

Mr. Ross provided an overview of the regulatory update presentation from the Consultant Team. He shared the energy efficiency docket schedule with the Council and noted that the Council's budget documentation is a new requirement in the filing process. Mr. Caesar presented on major changes to the final 2023 energy efficiency plan as filed. The removal of the fuel cell project in the electric portfolio was the most significant change for the final plan filing.

b. [Council Discussion of Priorities for the 2023 Energy Efficiency Plan](#) (35 min, 3:55 – 4:30)

The Council's Consultant Team led a discussion to identify the Council's priorities for the 2023 energy efficiency regulatory proceedings. Mr. Ross explained that the Consultant Team will be submitting a summary of the Council's budget development process, a summary of the Council's engagement in the plan development, areas where cost increases were not adequately justified, and potential comments on the Technical Resource Manual as pre-filed testimony. He listed the progress on equity, the choice to use the social cost of carbon, the Company's resource constraints, and the budget reduction as additional topics worth considering for possible inclusion in additional testimony. Ms. Desautel explained to the Council that if there are topics that they feel are noteworthy, then they should bring those topics forward so that they could be taken into consideration in the docket proceedings.

Vice Chair Gill Case noted that he feels that the projected cost increases are unsatisfactory and that he would like to see that issue raised through the Council's testimony. Next year, a new Three-Year Plan will be developed, and the Council will have an opportunity to incorporate new priorities in that process. Council Members discussed the amount and level of detail of topics to include in the Council's testimony to the docket. Vice Chair Gill Case would like it to be conveyed that the Council is monitoring the use of the social cost of carbon with the Plan.

Vice Chair Gill Case asked for the Consultant Team to explain what happens with annual underspends from the Company. The Consultant Team explained that underspends can result in decreases in the System Benefit Charges in the following year and that other stakeholders have also inquired about the Company's projected underspend in 2022.

- c. [Planning Discussion for the Council's Learning, Education, and Advancement Discussion](#) (15 minutes, 3:25 – 3:40 p.m.)

This agenda item was originally listed as 5.b., but was moved to 6.c. by a Council vote.

Ms. Sholly led a discussion about the potential topics to explore at the Council's LEAD meeting in November. Council Member Teichert suggested that the Council focus on moving into the Three-Year Planning process as effectively as possible. The Council's Consultant Team will lead a discussion to identify topics for further discussion at the Council's fall Learning, Education, and Advancement Discussion (LEAD) meeting. She noted that the Council Member Handbook has been updated and that topics not covered at the LEAD meeting may be covered in more detail in the Handbook. Council Members suggested that concrete examples are helpful for understanding how the values are calculated for efficiency measures. Council Members expressed a preference for conversations at the LEAD meetings rather than presentations.

7. Special Topic (20 Minutes, 4:30 – 4:50 p.m.)

- a. [Equity Working Group Facilitator Presentation](#) (20 minutes, 4:30 – 4:50 p.m.)

Mr. Evans of the Green and Healthy Homes Initiative presented on the Rhode Island Equity Working Group. In 2022, the Equity Working Group and its subgroups met 11 times. In 2023, GHHI would like to have even more organizations and residents participating in the Working Group.

Council Member Feldman covered the recommendations and metrics from the Equity Working Group that the utility will be incorporating into their 2023 Plan. Council Member Teichert would be interested in seeing contractors represented in the Equity Working Group. Vice Chair Gill Case would like to see quantitative metrics to help track baselines and how the Company is doing with efficiency outreach. Mr. Ross noted that the Massachusetts equity working group does track and report on some specific metrics at regular intervals and those could be replicated in Rhode Island.

Chairperson Oakley reminded the Council that there are still vacancies on the Council and that he would like to see those seats filled in 2023. Recommendations for new Council Members can be submitted to the Office of Energy Resources and anyone is welcome to sit in on a meeting to experience them in person.

8. Public Comment

None.

9. Adjournment

Vice Chair Gill Case motioned to adjourn the meeting. Council Member Teichert seconded. All in favor, none opposed, and the meeting was adjourned at 5:02 p.m.