

Distributed Generation Board Meeting
Tuesday, January 19, 2016
4:00-5:30 p.m.
Department of Administration – Conference Room B

Board members present: Sue AnderBois, Sheila Dormody, Marion Gold, Kari Lang, Kenneth Payne, Ian Springsteel

Others present: Shauna Beland, Antonio Giorgi, Danny Musher, Dennis Watson, Raquel Webster

Call to Order: Chairman Kenneth Payne called the meeting to order at 4:28pm

1. Approval of October Meeting Minutes

October meeting minutes will be voted on at the February meeting.

2. Update on 2016 Renewable Energy Growth (REG) Program – Public Utility Commission Docket Proceeding

Chairman Payne updated the Commission on the REG Program. The plan is to approve the ceiling prices, but there was a question about the medium size solar class, to have stability in the class from 2015-2106. That stability came with a modest decrease of .09 cents/kW/h. When bonus depreciation was signed into law during the third week of Dec 2015, we did not amend the ceiling price in the medium class. The statute requires that federal and state incentives be considered. Chairman Payne asked if the Board would consider adjusting the medium solar ceiling prices and asked for a motion to be made so the Board may consider and discuss. *Sheila Dormody made a motion to apply bonus depreciation to medium size solar and all other classes. Sue AnderBois seconded. All approved.*

Chairman Payne said the low income, nonprofit piece is still being addressed by the PUC. The questions have been asked to OER include: should wealthy nonprofits be eligible. He said the Commissioners seem receptive; should low income households be treated as if they do not have an opportunity. Third party ownership is also being considered. Shauna Beland said the RFP for the income verifier vendor was written to say that IRS classification of a nonprofit is the definition and criteria to be used. Ms. AnderBois stated that having rules that request the amount of money nonprofits make appears to create a new set of rules that are not considered by the IRS. Ian Springsteel encouraged the Board to ask SCA to clarify that some of the companies do not pay taxes. Ms. Dormody agreed that there should not be a cutoff point but recognized the intent to get to the smaller nonprofits to participate.

3. National Grid Presentation on the results of the 2015 Renewable REG Program

Ian Springsteel presented an update of the results of the 2015 Renewable REG Program. Ms. AnderBois asked if National Grid has considered adding another open enrollment period to January or February. She noted that the time period from October to May has less activity. Mr. Springsteel and Raquel Webster confirmed that 3 open enrollment periods are required by statute. Ms. Beland reported that the quality assurance vendor will be under contract soon and announced at the next meeting

4. Approval of Reconciliation Funding Filing to Public Utility Commission for 2017 REG Ceiling Price Services

Chairman Payne said that the kind of questions that have started to come from the PUC are requiring more consulting. These additional demands have prompted OER to suggest the Board increase the amount of reconciliation fund to \$85,000 for this year. Ms. AnderBois noted that the 2017 ceiling prices must be considered in any consultant budget. She added that the motion should include the language “up to \$85,000” as a cap, meaning the total figure may not be reached. Chair Payne said the spending is largely determined by how many and what kind of questions are asked by the PUC. *Ms. AnderBois mad a motion to approve reconciliation funding for up to \$85,000. Seconded by Sheila Dormody. All approved.*

5. Systems Integration Rhode Island– REG Board Involvement in 2016

Danny Musher briefed the Board on the work the SIRI group has undertaken. The group has looked at issues of the electric grid as more demand response and efficiency resources come on to the grid. A formal presentation will take place in February. A formal adoption of the state energy plan set goals for how the electric grid would look in the future. Chairman Payne added that the board needs to consider how the system functions and how the decisions it makes affects those functions. He asked members if fellow members were comfortable with Sue AnderBois continue representing the DG board on the SIRI working group. The Board agreed Sue should represent them. Ms. Dormody asked what the output of the SIRI process will be. Mr. Musher said a framework was established to discuss the many complex issues at hand and to look at the existing policies, programs, and processes and figure out how new technologies and opportunities can be accommodated. Mr. Springsteel asked if the report is finalized. Mr. Musher said it is and will soon be sent out to stakeholders. Commissioner Gold added that the working process has been quite productive and that the Governor is very interested and invested in this area. This subject was also included in different portions of the recent Brookings report. Chairman Payne noted the DG board it is the only viable board left to review and analyze the programs.

6. Public Comments

Ms. AnderBois informed the Board that 4568 Docket has been withdrawn by National Grid. The motion was unopposed by all parties. PUC will open one or several new dockets to continue the conversation.

7. Adjourn

Ms. AnderBois made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Ms. Dormody. All approved. Chairman Payne adjourned the meeting at 5:29pm.