

# Grid Modernization Advisory Council (GMAC) Equity Working Group

## MEETING MINUTES

Friday, November 3, 2023

Virtual Zoom Meeting

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**Councilors Present:** Kathryn Wright, Barr Foundation (chair)\*  
Julia Fox, Department of Energy Resources  
Larry Chretien, Green Energy Consumers Alliance\*  
Chris Modlish, Attorney General’s Office  
Kyle Murray, Acadia Center\*  
Vernon Walker, Clean Water Action  
Mary Wambui, Planning Office for Urban Affairs

**Non-Voting Councilors:** Erin Engstrom, Eversource

**Councilors Absent:** —

**DOER Staff Present:** Aurora Edington  
Sarah McDaniel

**Consultants Present:** Jennifer Haugh, GreenerU  
Chelsea Mattioda, Synapse

\* GMAC members

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### 1. Call to Order

Kathryn Wright, as Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m.

### 2. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Wright moved to approve the Equity Working Group meeting minutes of October 23, 2023. Murray seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

### 3. Discussion of Equity Working Group Recommendations

Wright explained that no additional edits were suggested based on the two listening sessions of October 30 and November 1, nor were there changes based on a review from other DOER staff and Undersecretary Maria Belen Power.

Discussion:

**Larry Chretien:** I support the document right now, and we've taken this as far as we can go with the information we have with the ESMPS right now. We have been asking members of the council and the public for more detail on a lot of things, and if we had all that detail, we might have a different report from the Equity Working Group. If we were to have people look at the final ESMP and what the utilities propose at the docket stage and then open it up for public comment, we might get more comments regarding equity. We might have more things to say at that point when we have more information. I just wanted to point out that we are just in a process with a tight timeline, and these recommendations are based on what we know.

**Kathryn Wright:** I hear your point, but I want to point that the charter as it was written basically has us meeting through the end of the GMAC council process to present an initial set of recommendations. It makes sense for us to weigh in as a group again, but that's part of a larger conversation about what's next for the GMAC and its working groups.

**Larry Chretien:** That makes sense.

Wright asked for other high-level comments and went through the proposed changes from Equity Working Group members. In the background section, we made additions to talk about the process and to match some of the background that we anticipate will be in the full GMAC recommendations. We were trying to make them more parallel to make them easier to read. Other changes in the introduction are definitions of environmental justice populations as defined in Massachusetts and a definition of disadvantaged communities specific to energy. Modlish had noted that there is actually an official definition of disadvantaged communities being put forward, pending legislative approval, which was added to the footnotes.

Modlish offered one line edit on page 4, final bullet point, to indicate "including resources and alternatives administered and/or owned by third parties." No further edits were suggested.

#### **4. Vote on Equity Working Group Recommendations**

Wright moved to approve the Equity Working Group equity recommendations as amended to the GMAC. Murray seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **5. Next Steps**

Wright talked about what will happen at the November 9 meeting. The EWG will be given some time to present at the GMAC meeting. The GMAC will have the Equity Working Group's recommendations in advance. Wright will offer some comments, and then the GMAC will discuss. The GMAC has one more meeting on November 16 to vote on final recommendations, which will be sent to the EDCs on November 20.

Fox offered clarity on what the GMAC's recommendations look like. GMAC will receive the draft by EOD today. The consultants provided a draft, DOER provided edits. The chapters on stakeholder engagement and mentions of equity have been pulled in this document, but the EWG's recommendations

would remain as its own document. Goal is also to have the draft recommendations posted on the GMAC website.

Wright added that another GMAC meeting is scheduled for December, where the group will discuss the role of the GMAC and the Equity Working Group and whether to revise the charter to meet again if this group is interested. We will follow up about that meeting closer to that date. Wright reminded the group that Massachusetts requires a live vote and appreciated that folks were willing to meet.

Wright also flagged that the EDCs are hosting technical sessions that the EWG provided feedback on at our second meeting to Erin. Links are also available on the GMAC website.

## **6. Adjourn**

Kathryn Wright, as Chair, adjourned the meeting at 12:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Jennifer A. Haugh*  
GreenerU

Meeting materials:

- Meeting agenda for November 3, 2023
- Meeting slides for November 3, 2023
- Equity Working Group's equity recommendations for the GMAC