

Grid Modernization Advisory Council (GMAC) Executive Committee

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, May 16, 2023

Virtual Zoom Meeting

Councilors Present: Liz Anderson (joined at 9:48 AM), Sarah Bresolin Silver, Jennifer Daloisio, Elizabeth Mahony, Kyle Murray

Non-Voting Councilors: Carol Sedewitz (left at 10:50 AM)

Councilors Absent: ---

DOER Staff Present: Aurora Edington, Sarah McDaniel, Joanna Troy, Anett Ludwig

1. Call to Order

Commissioner Mahony, as Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:34 AM.

2. Welcome, Roll Call, Agenda

Commissioner Mahony – Commissioner Department of Energy Resources (DOER)

Commissioner Mahony welcomed all participants to the Executive Committee (ExComm). The Commissioner took roll call for voting and non-voting members. The Commissioner asked if anyone wanted to add agenda items. The Commissioner walked through the agenda (slide 2).

3. Agenda for Upcoming GMAC Meetings

The Commissioner shared slide 3 and noted that the GMAC had discussed the list of topics for the June GMAC meeting. The topics go through all the dockets that relate to our work for either the GMAC or the ESMPs. DOER wanted to make sure that the GMAC is talking about all topics the GMAC wants to cover. She noted that the future of gas docket 20-80 has not been included yet. The Commissioner asked for feedback.

Discussion:

Murray acknowledged the good selection of topics and asked who would present on docket 20-80 and what kind of scope it would cover. The Commissioner noted that the docket summary

would be very high-level and that we'd look for a speaker who feels comfortable on the topic. Murray supported including the 20-80 docket.

Sedewitz asked for clarification if the 20-80 docket would be a new agenda item or be rolled into the agenda on slide 2. Sedewitz also asked for clarification if Liz Anderson or the utilities would cover the topic of 'Utility-owned solar energy projects'. The Commissioner explained that Anderson is planning to cover the topic.

Murray offered to summarize the 20-80 docket and will coordinate with the EDCs to give an accurate presentation. The Commissioner thanked him. DOER will add time for the new agenda item for the June GMAC meeting. Edington will follow up with the speakers about expectations and scope of the presentations.

Sedewitz suggested to consider the topic of resiliency on the topic presentation. The Commissioner welcomed the suggestion.

Murray asked if the topic list would cover performance-based ratemaking (PBR) or if it would be outside the scope. Sedewitz recommended to bring up the topic of PBR during the presentation of 'Rate cases and performance-based ratemaking'.

Agendas for Upcoming GMAC Meetings

1. Proposed June 15th meeting

The Commissioner shared slide 4 and explained that the June 15th meeting is scheduled for the utilities to present their outline.

Discussion:

Sedewitz noted that the aim is for the utilities to have an agreed outline among all utilities to be shared by June 2nd. Sedewitz noted that it is important to have a common understanding how to tell the story of the ESMPs, the complexity, how to integrate all layers (investments) and how to provide that value to customers.

2. Proposed July 13th meeting

The Commissioner shared slide 4 and explained that the July 13th meeting is scheduled for the topics of stakeholder engagement and equity.

2.1 Topic 1: Stakeholder engagement

The Commissioner noted that the statute of the GMAC requires the utilities to host two public technical sessions for the ESMPs. The Commissioner asked for advice on how to best handle that discussion on stakeholder engagement. She asked for feedback on speakers or proposals.

Discussion:

Daloisio asked how to incorporate discussion on stakeholder engagement prior to the ESMPs being due to the GMAC.

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Sedewitz noted that the public sessions don't have to be finished before the ESMP is sent to the GMAC for review on September 1st.

Anderson suggested inviting speakers from the stakeholder working group recently convened by the Attorney General's Office.

Murray supported Anderson's suggestion and recommended getting speakers from the stakeholder working group. He noted that the statute is vague on timing.

Bresolin urged to get stakeholder input sooner than July. The report that Anderson recommended would be helpful as a pre-read prior to the July 13th GMAC meeting.

Sedewitz recommended having at least 1 public session prior to submitting the ESMP. Given the tight timeline until September 1st, she recommended launching the second public session in fall 2023.

The Commissioner suggested 2 options. One option would be to add time for public participation at the July 13th GMAC meeting or at the August GMAC meeting based on the outline that was presented on June 15th.

Murray noted that the meetings are very packed and welcomed public comments at the GMAC meetings.

The Commissioner asked if ExComm could agree to explore dates for potential public stakeholder engagement with the GMAC on the ESMPs outline before end of August 2023. The Committee agreed.

2.2 Topic 2: Equity

ExComm agreed to pursue with the suggested speakers on slide 4.

4. Consultant Scope of Work and Plan

The Commissioner shared slide 5 and walked through the schedule of the consultant's scope of work and plan. The current plan is to develop the scope of work, get it checked by DPU, and develop an estimate of the anticipated costs.

The Commissioner shared slide 6 and emphasized that the main focus for the consultants would be on the ESMPs this fall.

Discussion:

Dalioisio asked for the consultant to consider how incentives and policies impact system costs and the importance of having strategies that are more cost effective.

Murray noted that the scope was sent out on short notice. He would appreciate additional time to review and provide comments.

The Commissioner acknowledged the short timeline for sending out the scope. Follow up comments will be considered.

Consultant Scope of Work and Plan

- Section A:
 - Sedewitz suggested adding a review of best practices from across the country.
 - Anderson recommended adding metrics and a focus on evaluating ESMPs and cost-effectiveness.
 - Sedewitz asked if GMAC will be an intervenor after the ESMP filing. The Commissioner assumed DPU might submit Information Requests. The GMAC will have to respond to the Information Requests and would look for help from the consultants.
 - Anderson asked for the consultant to consider and analyze modifications to key performance indicators and performance metrics.
- Section B:
 - Bresolin asked if something about frequency or deadlines should be added to B.d. for the EDCs goals.
- Section D:
 - Sedewitz recommended adding best practices from across the country for integrated distribution system planning and if the grid mod plans provided are meeting decarbonization goals.
 - Bresolin supported Sedewitz’s recommendation. She recommended adding the review of performance of the consultant itself. Strategic planning should not be an optional part.
 - Daloisio recommended considering grid investments in Massachusetts holistically.
 - Sedewitz emphasized identifying what kind of best practices from other states are or are not applicable to the Commonwealth.
 - Anderson recommended adding identifying the most cost-effective investments.

The Commissioner noted that DOER will make modifications to reflect the discussion and asked the Executive Committee members to send any additional comments in writing.

5. External Stakeholder Engagement and Public Comment

The Commissioner shared slide 8 and asked for feedback about adding time for public comments to each GMAC meeting. She referenced the EEAC has 15 minutes at the beginning of every meeting for public comment.

Discussion:

Bresolin supported the idea to add additional time to meetings. It is important to give the opportunity to comment.

Murray supported to have the GMAC meeting last a little longer to allow for stakeholder input. The Commissioner noted that DOER has an email distribution list for stakeholder outreach. She suggested reaching out to the industry, for TSRG, ESIRG, etc. to share a bigger notice. She

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suggested adding 15 minutes to the June 15th GMAC meeting and 30 minutes to the July meeting.

Anderson is supportive of dedicated time for public comment. She recommended having a process in place to track all comments.

The Commissioner concluded that this will be an iterative process and that she will give an update on the consultant procurement at the June 30th ExComm meeting.

6. Close

Commissioner Mahony, as Chair, adjourned the meeting at 11:01 PM.

Meeting Materials:

- Meeting agenda
- Meeting presentation slides