

Residential Ratepayers' Advisory Board
March 18, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Present for the Board:

Tom Moses, Vice Chair
Dana Nute
Herb Vadney
Matt Kfoury
Kenneth Mailloux

Present for the OCA:

D. Maurice Kreis
James Brennan
Brian Buckley
Jamie Breen

Guest Speaker: Rep. Robert Backus, Chair, House Committee on Science, Technology and Energy

Guest: Patricia Martin, representing the public

Mr. Moses called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. Chairman Backus introduced himself, and introductions were made around the room.

1. Minutes of January 28th Meeting

Mr. Moses moved to approve the minutes. Mr. Kfoury seconded the motion. The Board members agreed unanimously.

2. Presentation by Rep. Backus

Rep. Backus provided the Board with his perspective on energy history in New Hampshire dating back to the 1970's, when as a lawyer in private practice he represented organizations opposing the construction of the Seabrook nuclear power plant. He noted that these were times when growth in electricity generation was viewed as essential for economic growth, with nuclear and coal power generation representing the long term sources of New England's base load generation. Nuclear power was 50 percent base load at the time, but it was also very expensive to build and costly to get rid of the waste. Rep. Backus made a historical comparison to today where natural gas generation is the most economically viable generation option given current market realities. Rep. Backus mentioned that an early influence on his thinking as an energy policymaker was a classic 1976 essay by Amory Lovins, "Energy Strategy: The Road Not Taken?" in which Lovins contrasted the then-prevailing "hard path" (reliance on large central station generation, then predominantly nuclear and coal) with the more desirable "soft path" (reliance on energy efficiency, demand response, and small-scale renewable generation).

3. Legislative Update

No questions were asked by the Board regarding the Legislative Update list provided. Mr. Kreis elaborated on following bills:

- **SB 284** An act establishing a statewide, multi-use online energy data platform. This bill introduced at the OCA's request adopted by the Senate, by voice vote, on March 14th. This bill will be heading to the House for its next review.
- **SB 206** Excluding the cost of lobbying and political activity from the rates of public utilities. Mr. Buckley testified at the hearing in support of this bill on March 12th.
- **SB 13, SB 159 and HB 365** Regarding an increase in the maximum size of net metering installations from 1 megawatt to 5 megawatts.

4. **Case Update**

The Board had no questions regarding the Case Update list provided. Mr. Kreis further updated the Board on the following dockets:

- **DG 17-198** Liberty Utilities Granite Bridge Project
- **DG 18-140** Liberty Utilities Renewable Natural Gas Supply/Transportation Contract
- **DE 18-142** EnerNoc Approval of Use of Live, Online Reverse Auction in Electric Procurement
- **DE 16-576** Electric Distribution Utilities Grid Modernization
- **DE 18-002** Eversource Default Service Solicitation (relative to the implementation of last year's SB 365, currently the subject of a constitutional challenge at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission)

Mr. Kreis informed the Board the OCA had three contracts go before the Governor and Executive Council, which were approved on March 13th. These contractors will be actively involved in the upcoming electric rate cases concerning Eversource and Liberty Utilities beginning this year.

5. **Any other topics or issues that the Board wishes to discuss**

Mr. Moses briefly stated to the Board members that the consumer advocate reappointment process is on schedule and the committee appointed to make a recommendation to the Board was continuing to move forward as planned and expects to wrap up this summer so that the Board can consider the recommendation at its July meeting.

6. **Public Input**

Ms. Martin asked whether participants in the Eversource HeatSmart program are required to take default energy service from Eversource as opposed to using a competitive supplier. She also inquired about whether the renewable power option offered by one competitive supplier (Arcadia) is limited to the use of locally produced renewable electricity. Mr. Kreis said he would research and respond to her.

Mr. Moses moved to adjourn. Mr. Mailloux seconded the motion, which was adopted unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.