

Residential Ratepayers' Advisory Board

October 26, 2015 Meeting Minutes

***Present for the Board:***

Thomas Moses, Vice Chair  
Ken Mailloux  
Deborah de Moulpied  
James Garrity  
Dick Weaver  
Ryan Clouthier  
John Thomas  
Amy Manzelli via teleconference

***Present for the OCA:***

Dr. Pradip Chattopadhyay  
Jim Brennan  
Jamie Breen

***Guests:*** Heidi Kroll

***Guest Speakers:***

Mr. Moses called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. Introductions ensued. Two new members, Ryan Clouthier and John Thomas, have joined the Advisory Board.

Mr. Les Stachow was unable to attend as our guest speaker to discuss Energy Efficiency Resource Standard docket IR 15-137.

1. **Minutes of April, 2015 Meeting**

Mr. Moses asked the Board if they had a motion to accept the minutes from July 27, 2015. Mr. Mailloux moved to accept the minutes. Mr. Weaver seconded the motion. The minutes were then approved unanimously, except by Ms. Manzelli, who wasn't on the teleconferencing line yet.

2. **Case Update**

Dr. Chattopadhyay and Mr. Brennan briefed the Board on the status of several active dockets, including:

- DE 14-238: PSNH Determination Regarding Generation Assets
- IR 15-296: Investigation into Grid Modernization
- DG 15-155: Valley Green Franchise Approval
- DG 15-289: Liberty Utilities Franchise Approval
- DW 15-199: Abenaki Changes in Rates
- DW 15-209: Lake Region Water Company Rate Changes
- IR 15-124: Investigation into Potential Approaches to Ameliorate Adverse Wholesale Electricity Market Conditions in New Hampshire
- DG 14-380 Liberty Utilities Transportation Agreement (Northeast Direct Pipeline)

Mr. Brennan informed the Board about the hearing scheduled in January 2016 for DE 14-238. Mr. Thomas inquired about who is allowed to attend the hearing. Mr. Brennan said that they are public hearings posted on the PUC calendar and anyone can attend. Regarding DE 15-296, Mr. Brennan stated that there is no procedural schedule set up as of this time. The PUC will hire consultants to help with this docket.

Dr. Chattopadhyay discussed DG 15-155 and DG 15-289, wherein both Valley Green and Liberty Utilities respectively have requested gas franchises to serve customers in Lebanon and Hanover. This led to the discussion of what the competition between the two companies implies for ratepayers in that region. Mr. Weaver wanted to know whether the OCA has a position on those dockets. Dr. Chattopadhyay informed the Board that the discovery phase in both dockets is still underway, and it is premature to have an OCA recommendation at this time. He and Mr. Garrity agreed that the competition between the two entities could be leveraged to get the best for New Hampshire residential customers.

Ms. Manzelli joined us on teleconference at 2:25 p.m., and was briefed that we covered the minutes, introduction to new members and discussed the case updates.

Dr. Chattopadhyay apprised the Board about two water rate cases (DW 15-199, and DW 15-209) and discussed the differences between the temporary rate phase and the permanent rate phase for both of those dockets.

Dr. Chattopadhyay also briefly discussed IR 15-124, and apprised the Board, that OCA has formally vented its concern with the potential for stranded costs with Electric Distribution Companies (EDCs) being allowed to recover through distribution rates cost associated with procuring gas pipeline capacity for use by generators. Mr. Garrity highlighted how gas procurement for the purpose of use by generators may alleviate spikes, but Dr. Chattopadhyay opined that long-term contracts have significant potential for ratepayers being captive to stranded costs, and also raised the issue of the potential adverse impact on the competitiveness of the wholesale electric markets.

Dr. Chattopadhyay also apprised the Board of the Commission order in Docket DG 14-380, wherein OCA had actively opposed the settlement between the Company and the PUC staff.

### 3. Legislative Update

An updated Legislative list was given to the Board for 2016. In the absence of Susan Chamberlin, who had been more intimately tracking the legislature, Dr. Chattopadhyay was able to only discuss about his involvement in the decoupling initiative now underway in the legislature. As for the listed LSRs in the Legislative list, Mr. Weaver noticed that some of the LSRs seemed redundant. For example, many LSR's regarding net metering and solar energy. Mr. Thomas and Mr. Garrity said that they will combine bills if they feel there is too much redundancy. There was some discussion about the NH net metering caps. Mr. Mailloux asked Mr. Brennan about solar panel owners' selling their electricity back to companies. Mr. Brennan explained that the net metering caps will be met or exceeded by the end of the year. He explained that the NHEC has already exceeded their cap, but continues to offer net metering to its members. How other utilities will view the enforcement of the caps is the real issue. Mr. Thomas said that deposits collected by utility companies from customers that are behind in their payments, should be considered by Legislation in 2016.

The following LSRs, all dealing with net metering, were discussed:

- LSR 2245
- LSR 2270

- LSR 2284
- LSR 2596

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

The Acting Chair, Mr. Moses enquired whether the Board wanted to discuss any other issue. No additional issues were raised.

5. **Status of Northeast Direct Pipeline**

As per request from the previous Board meeting, Dr. Chattopadhyay briefly apprised the members of pertinent information about the Northeast Direct Pipeline with respect to the implication for New Hampshire. Both the market path and the supply path projects were discussed. Slides from Kinder Morgan's website discussing the geography of these projects were shared with the members and discussed.

6. **Opportunity for public input**

Ms. Kroll wanted to know why the public hasn't discussed the seacoast PNGTS pipeline. She thought that it might be relevant when discussing the NED case. Mr. Garrity explained that the PNGTS pipeline is already in place, while that of NED is potentially forthcoming. The strong views in favor and against expanding pipeline infrastructure, drives much of the public interest in the NED project.

Mr. Moses motioned to go into nonpublic session regarding a personnel matter. Mr. Mailloux accepted the motion and Mr. Weaver seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to go into nonpublic session at 3:00 p.m.

NONPUBLIC SESSION

1. The Personnel Sub-Committee provided a status report regarding the Consumer Advocate position search.
2. The nonpublic session was adjourned at 3:18 p.m.

Public session was reinitiated at 3:19 p.m. and adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

