

STATE OF VERMONT
PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD

Docket No. 8875

Investigation into the possibility of adding an)
additional seat representing the interests of towns and)
regional planning organizations to the Vermont System)
Planning Committee)
)

Order entered: 12/27/2016

ORDER OPENING PROCEEDING AND ESTABLISHING COMMENT DEADLINE

The Vermont System Planning Committee (“VSPC”) was established by the Vermont Public Service Board (“Board”) in Docket 7081 to promote public engagement, long-term planning, and effective collaboration in addressing Vermont’s electrical transmission needs. In particular, the VSPC serves to enable the timely identification of future transmission needs and address these needs by utilizing cost-effective non-transmission alternatives such as efficiency and distributed generation. To help promote public engagement in this process and ensure that the interests of residential, environmental, and commercial/industrial users of electricity are appropriately represented, the VSPC includes three public members representing each of these categories.¹ The VSPC structure and purpose are set forth in a Memorandum of Understanding, most recently approved by the Board in its November 6, 2013, Order in Docket 8073 (“VSPC MOU”).²

On July 1, 2016, Act 174 of 2016 took effect. Sections 1 through 10a of Act 174 seek to expand the role of towns and regional planning organizations in the planning process for the

1. Although not specifically spelled out in the Memorandum of Understanding establishing the VSPC, the Board has also selected three alternate public members to serve in the event that the principal representatives are not available.

2. The initial Memorandum of Understanding establishing the VSPC was approved by the Board in its June 20, 2007, Order in Docket 7081. This Memorandum of Understanding has been subsequently amended with the approval of the Board. The version approved by the Board in its Order of 2/20/13 in Docket 7081 reflects the cumulative changes approved by the Board and is what we refer to here as the VSPC MOU.

development of Vermont's electricity infrastructure. Specifically, Act 174 establishes a mechanism under which municipal and regional plans that have been approved under the Act are given greater weight in the Board's review of requests for approvals to build and operate electric generation and transmission facilities.

In light of the expanded role of regional and municipal planning organizations under Act 174, the Board is opening this proceeding to consider the possibility of establishing an additional public member of the VSPC representing town and regional planning organizations. Pursuant to the VSPC MOU, amendments may be made by order of the Board, following notice and opportunity for a hearing. Accordingly, the Board establishes a deadline of January 13, 2017, for comments on the possible modifications to the VSPC contemplated in this Order, and directs any interested person or entity seeking a hearing, or otherwise proposing further processes in this matter, to make such a request in its comments.

SO ORDERED.

Dated at Montpelier, Vermont, this 27th day of December, 2016.

<u>s/James Volz</u>)	
)	
)	PUBLIC SERVICE
<u>s/Margaret Cheney</u>)	
)	BOARD
)	
)	OF VERMONT
<u>s/Sarah Hofmann</u>)	

OFFICE OF THE CLERK

FILED: December 27, 2016

ATTEST: s/Judith C. Whitney
Clerk of the Board

NOTICE TO READERS: This decision is subject to revision of technical errors. Readers are requested to notify the Clerk of the Board (by e-mail, telephone, or in writing) of any apparent errors, in order that any necessary corrections may be made. (E-mail address: psb.clerk@vermont.gov)

Appeal of this decision to the Supreme Court of Vermont must be filed with the Clerk of the Board within thirty days. Appeal will not stay the effect of this Order, absent further order by this Board or appropriate action by the Supreme Court of Vermont. Motions for reconsideration or stay, if any, must be filed with the Clerk of the Board within ten days of the date of this decision and Order.