Vermont System Planning Committee

Draft Meeting Minutes
July 17, 2019
Trapp Family Lodge
Stowe, VT

The Vermont System Planning Committee held a regular meeting on July 17, 2019, at the Trapp Family Lodge, Stowe, Vermont. Shana Louiselle called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m.

Steve Litkovitz noted that the new D-VAR at Hinesburg was installed on the 28G2 feeder, not at the Hinesburg substation, and requested that this be reflected in the April 24, 2019 minutes. Mr. Litkovitz moved to approve the minutes with this change, and Cyril Brunner seconded. The revised minutes were approved without objection.

Introductions

Participants introduced themselves. A list of attendees by sector appears at the end of these minutes.

Geographical Targeting Subcommittee

Hantz Présumé, Manager of Transmission Planning for VELCO, reported that the subcommittee met on May 31 to complete the non-transmission alternative (NTA) screening process for identified subtransmission reliability issues. No new issues were found to have "screened in" for any further analysis. The VELCO Sand Bar substation project was also reviewed; as it is an asset condition project, and cannot be avoided by use of an NTA, it also screened out of the process.

Forecasting Subcommittee

Mr. Présumé reported that the next meeting of the Forecasting Subcommittee is scheduled for September, and that the subcommittee plans to meet more regularly this year than it has in previous off years of the Long-Range Transmission Plan. Discussion topics at the next meeting will include revisions to the subcommittee charter, and new technologies that affect load, such as solar PV, energy storage, energy efficiency, electric vehicles, and cold climate heat pumps. Additionally, Efficiency Vermont will present the load forecast that they have developed for their Demand Resource Plan, and seek comment from the subcommittee.

Generation Constraint Subcommittee

Ms. Louiselle reported that the Generation Constraint subcommittee met on May 21 and July 3 to identify the subcommittee's objectives through a draft charter and discuss the current state of generation constraints in the Vermont. Green Mountain Power presented on the Addison County area, which the subcommittee intends to evaluate as an example of a generation constrained area. The subcommittee also discussed how to prioritize the measures to minimize generation constraints, and

agreed to begin the focus on distributed energy resources. Ed McNamara asked for suggestions of applicable reading materials. Finally, the draft charter for the subcommittee was brought to the VSPC for approval. Steve Fitzhugh moved to approve the charter, and Bill Powell seconded. The charter was approved without objection.

Public Utilities Commission Electric Vehicle Report

Tom Knauer, Policy Director of the Public Utility Commission (PUC), presented the findings of the PUC investigation on barriers to electric vehicle adoption as required by Act 158. The PUC released its report on June 27, after a yearlong stakeholder process. Mr. Knauer noted that electrification of the transportation sector is critical to reducing Vermont's greenhouse gas emissions, and the report contains recommendations to state government, electric utilities, and third parties to help promote the ownership of electric vehicles (EV). The full presentation and report is available on the VSPC website.

Regional Update

Molly Connors, Vermont External Affairs Representative for ISO-New England (ISO-NE), reported that ISO-NE released its 2019 Summer Outlook on May 15, and that New England is expected to have sufficient generation resources to meet summer peak demand. The 2018 Annual Markets report was released by the Internal Market Monitor, which determined that markets functioned competitively. ISO-NE's fuel security interim proposal previously submitted to FERC is still pending. Costs for the proposal, if accepted, are estimated at $112 to $158 million.

On July 16, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) held a staff-led public meeting to discuss ISO-NE's proposal without the constraint of ex-parte communications. ISO-NE presented on proposed changes to the energy markets including new ancillary services and realignment of energy markets with operating procedures. ISO-NE also began a quantitative and qualitative analysis to proposed changes on how it will affect the system, with another proposal to FERC expected by October 15.

As a result of the findings of the Boston Needs Assessment, ISO plans to issue the first competitive RFP for transmission solutions in December, on which subject a webinar is planned.

Sheffield-Highgate Export Interface Working Group

Doug Smith, Power Supply Director of Green Mountain Power, provided an update on the effort of the distribution utilities to mitigate generation curtailment in the Sheffield-Highgate Export Interface (SHEI). It is expected that a limited package of subtransmission solutions could largely mitigate congestion that occurs when all lines are in service with a simple payback of about a few years. An Automatic Voltage Regulator (AVR) has been installed at the Sheldon Springs plant, while design and power system modeling work is progressing on an AVR at the Sheffield plant. A CPG filing for the Lowell to Morrisville upgrade, or the B20/B22 project, is expected to be filed later this summer.

Efficiency Vermont Presentation

Rebecca Foster, Director of Efficiency Vermont, and Barry Hulce, Program Manager for Efficiency Vermont, presented the new strategic direction of EVT. The organization has undergone an evolution in their mission, with a shift towards defined goals that support other organizations in the state. EVT recognizes the need to adapt to a rapidly changing energy system, while addressing the climate crisis

and keeping energy affordable for all Vermonters. As mentioned earlier in these minutes, EVT has developed a preliminary forecast for their Demand Resource Plan, and will present it to the Forecasting Subcommittee for feedback on the plan's assumptions and models.

Policy Update

Net Metering (S.95): Melissa Bailey, Legislative and Regulatory Affairs Representative for VPPSA, reported that the cap of 500 kilowatts of solar PV per customer was raised to one megawatt per customer for schools and school districts, though there are not many schools that have yet reached 500 kilowatts of installed solar capacity.

EVs/Transportation (H.529): Ms. Bailey reported that the new transportation bill excludes public EV charging infrastructure from PUC and DPS regulation, such that the owners of such infrastructure will be allowed to sell electricity. Included in the bill are provisions for EV incentives for low- and moderate-income Vermonters, though the incentive amount was not determined. Additionally, the bill directs the PUC to study a replacement for the gas tax for EVs on a per-kilowatt hour basis, despite recommendation of the PUC to not yet levy such a tax.

Broadband (H.513): Ms. Louiselle reported that the broadband bill set aside $700,000 for feasibility studies of broadband development in rural underserved areas. Two distribution utilities will be selected to conduct a feasibility study in their service territory.

Weatherization (H.63/Act 62): TJ Poor, Director of Efficiency and Energy Services for the DPS, reported that an upcoming PUC proceeding will consider an expansion of energy efficiency utility responsibilities to include demand response, load management, energy storage, electrification, and weatherization. It will also consider whether any utility should be an all fuel utility, and whether full life-cycle analysis of energy policies (with respect to greenhouse gas emissions, health impacts, and other environmental impacts) should be included in evaluation.

Storage (H.133): Anne Margolis, Renewable Energy Development Director for the DPS, reported that H.133, signed into law in May, will require any proposed energy storage device larger than 500 kilowatts exporting power to the grid to obtain a certificate of public good. It also recommends review of storage devices less than 500 kilowatts.

Interconnection (Rule 5.500): Ms. Louiselle reported that PUC Rule 5.500 is undergoing revision to account for issues in interconnecting new generation. The proceeding was opened on May 15, and stakeholders (including the distribution utilities) provided comments to the PUC.

NPCC DER Guidance Document

Dan Kopin of Utility Services provided an overview of a guidance document to be released by NPCC regarding regulation on distributed energy resources (DERs) connected to distribution systems. As DERs have reached a level of penetration on some systems that they could collectively affect the Bulk Energy System (BES), they could fall under NERC regulations. As such, the NPCC document recommends several activities for managing DERs. The public comment period for the document lasts until the end of July.

Project Updates

Hinesburg: Mr. Litkovitz reported that the D-VAR installed at Hinesburg is a fast, smart, flexible reactive power device that will allow large motors to start on a weak system without affecting power quality. However, it was recently found that the D-VAR was creating electrical noise on nearby telephone lines. The issue will be further investigated, and subsequently mitigated. Additionally, based upon a review of the VEC Hinesburg substation site, GMP has determined that it would not be interested in expanding the substation as a combined effort with VEC. This was previously the plan to address potential future load-serving reliability issues in the area. GMP will begin to consider other sites for a future GMP substation.

Substation Condition Assessment Program (SCAP): Mr. Présumé reported that asset condition projects are underway at both the Barre and St. Albans substations. Additionally, a Section 248 filing has been submitted for an asset condition project at the Berlin substation. Equipment to be replaced at these substations includes devices such as breakers, switches, buses, relays, and others.

Transmission Line Refurbishment (TLR): Mr. Présumé reported that the TLR program is progressing as scheduled, with plans to replace anywhere from 100 to 200 transmission line structures a year on the basis of structure condition. Through TLR and the program that preceded it, SCI, VELCO has replaced 1500 structures over the last six years.

Attendance

* Indicates voting member
** Indicates alternate

Public Sector

*Michael Wickenden, Residential representative
**Tim Duggan, Residential representative
*Michael Kirick, Commercial representative
**Jeff Forward, Commercial representative
*Johanna Miller, Environmental representative

Transmission Utility (VELCO)

*Hantz Présumé, VELCO

Distribution Utilities Providing Transmission (GMP, VEC)

*Steve Litkovitz, GMP
**Doug Smith, GMP
*Cyril Brunner, VEC

Large Transmission-Dependent Distribution Utilities (BED, WEC)

*Tom Lyle, BED
*Bill Powell, WEC

Transmission Dependent Distribution Utilities (Municipals)

Melissa Bailey, VPPSA
*Steve Fitzhugh, NED

Supply & Demand Resources

*Nathaniel Vandal, Supply representative
**Derek Moretz, Supply representative
**Olivia Campbell Andersen, REV

Non-Voting Members

Ed McNamara, DPS

Staff

Shana Louiselle, VELCO
Lou Cecere, VELCO

Guests

Amber Widmayer, MMR
Warren Coleman, MMR
Dan Kopin, Utility Services
Ryan Darlow, VERA
David Carpenter, Facey Goss & McPhee
Barry Hulce, EVT
Rebecca Foster, EVT
Tom Knauer, PUC
Haley Roe, EVT
Rip Kirby, DPS
Paul Lambert, EVT
Eric Harrold, VELCO
Julia Leopold, VPPSA
Anna Valentine, VELCO
Mark Sciarrotta, VELCO
Molly Connors, ISO-NE (by phone)