



**Draft Meeting Minutes  
April 29, 2020  
Virtual Conference**

The Vermont System Planning Committee held a virtual conference on April 29, 2020. Shana Louiselle called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Bill Powell moved to approve the January 29, 2020 minutes, and Michael Wickenden seconded. The minutes were approved without objection.

### **Introductions**

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

### **Generation Constraint Subcommittee**

Ed McNamara, Director of the Planning and Energy Resources Division of the Department of Public Service, provided an update on the status of the Generation Constraint subcommittee. Green Mountain Power assembled data on the Vergennes distribution constraint, and shared it with a technical subgroup for review. This data will be presented at the next meeting of the Generation Constraint subcommittee on May 7.

### **Forecasting Subcommittee**

Hantz Pr sum , Manager of Transmission Planning for VELCO, reported the subcommittee has met three times since the last meeting of the VSPC. On February 6, ITRON reviewed data requirements for the forecast, including discussion of the economic outlook, the impact of behind-the-meter generation and how it pertains to load reconstitution, and assumptions around electric vehicle and heat pump deployment. On April 1, as the COVID-19 crisis had begun to take shape, ITRON reviewed with the subcommittee their preliminary observations on the impact of the crisis to system load, along with system energy impacts and demand trends. On April 17, a technology-specific subgroup of the Forecasting Subcommittee convened to review forecasting considerations for electric vehicles and heat pumps, for which the DUs, VEIC, and Drive Electric Vermont provided data. The next meeting of the subcommittee is planned to take place in mid-May.

### **Geotargeting Subcommittee**

Ms. Louiselle updated the committee on the activity of the Geotargeting Subcommittee, with the last annual project review having taken place in May of 2019. A meeting was deemed unnecessary, as there were no identified reliability issues. The next meeting of the subcommittee will take place in May of this year, at which participants will review potential reliability issues. If any issues were to screen in, further

analysis would need to be undertaken during the summer and presented to the VSPC for review in October.

## **Coordinating Subcommittee**

Ms. Louiselle reported that the July 15 meeting of the VSPC is presently slated to occur at the Trapp Family Lodge in Stowe. However, if an in-person meeting at that time is not possible or not safe due to a need to continue physical distancing practices, the meeting would likely be moved to a virtual conference.

The Regional Planning Commission primary member of the VSPC, Taylor Newton, recently transitioned employment from the Northwest Regional Planning Commission to Chittenden Regional Planning Commission. As he was appointed to his VSPC position in 2018, he will retain that appointment through the remainder of his term. A letter detailing Mr. Newton's employment status change will be sent to the Public Utility Commission, and will be filed on the VSPC website. [Note: The letter was filed with the PUC on May 5, 2020.]

## **Load Impacts of COVID-19**

Mr. Pr sum  presented the load impacts seen on the transmission system as a result of COVID-19. Energy consumption from March 15 to April 18 was significantly lower, approximately 10%, than the same period in the previous years, with a 6 to 7% decrease in energy for the spring. About 1% of this decrease can be accounted for by the amount of behind-the-meter generation installed from 2019 to 2020. There is some difficulty in drawing a direct conclusion from time series load charts at the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis, but as time progresses, net loads become increasingly different from previous years. The largest decrease occurs in the middle of the day.

Mike Leach, Supervisor of Billing & Analytics for Burlington Electric Department, reported that BED had seen slightly lower loads for the UVM spring break week, and that the loads were slightly lower than expected beyond that week. Commercial loads in Burlington were seen to be consistently lower than forecasted. BED expects to see loads begin to increase again with the prevalence of cooling load during warmer weather months.

Melissa Bailey, Legislative and Regulatory Affairs Representative for Vermont Public Power Supply Authority, informed the committee that VPPSA expected overall sales to decrease, with a 10 to 11% variation between member towns. This difference is largely due to the differing make-up of the customer base in each town.

Bill Powell, Director of Products and Services for Washington Electric Coop, noted that WEC serves mostly residential load. As a result, the difference in the load levels for WEC from 2019 to 2020 had been small.

Doug Smith, Power Supply Director for Green Mountain Power, described the changes in load observed by GMP. From April 1 to April 26, the largest load decreases relative to 2019 were in the small C&I sector, some decreases in the large C&I sector, and an increase in the residential load sector. These changes gave a net decrease of about 5% when normalized for weather and some changes in business status. The load shape of large C&I customers remained largely unchanged, but small C&I customer load shapes exhibited large decreases in the evening. Residential load has not been decreasing after the

morning peak but rather is continuing to increase in an “extended morning peak.” On the whole, GMP system load has been similar to last year, but with lower temperatures in 2020, loads have been somewhat inflated.

Craig Kieny, Manager of Power Planning for Vermont Electric Coop, updated the committee on VEC’s recent load behavior. Overall, VEC saw a decrease of a few percent, with a slight decrease in industrial load and a slight increase in residential load. Mr. Kieny reflected that, due to the rural nature of its service territory, VEC had not been as severely impacted by COVID-19 as other Vermont utilities.

## Regional Update

Molly Connors, Vermont External Affairs Representative for ISO-NE, reported that ISO was, for the first time, performing independent forecast estimates for growth in electric vehicle and heat pump deployment. Nearly all ISO employees are presently working from home, while ISO continues to complete its reliability, market, and planning functions. New England has seen demand drop by 3 to 5%, with a markedly slower ramp up in usage in the morning, somewhat resembling a snow day. ISO-NE has filed its Energy Security Improvements (ESI) proposal with FERC; ESI would give ISO additional capability to incentivize the procurement of fuel ahead of expected generation shortage events, instead of on a just-in-time basis. NEPOOL filed an alternative proposal, which differs mainly by limiting the applicability of Replacement Energy Reserves (RER) to only the winter months. ISO has requested feedback from FERC by November of this year, and seeks to implement the new program by June of 2024.

## Project Updates

**Hinesburg:** Steve Litkovitz reported that GMP filed a reliability plan addressing a potential deficiency on the 8-mile distribution line serving the town of Hinesburg from the GMP Charlotte substation. Consideration of available solutions, paired with lower than expected load growth, led GMP to select a DVAR (a voltage control device) as the solution. Since installation of the DVAR, no voltage problems due to motor starting load have been observed. If expected load growth necessitated the construction of a reliability project in the area, GMP would plan to move forward with the installation of a battery energy storage system.

## Attendance

\* Indicates voting member

\*\* Indicates alternate

### Public Sector

- \*Michael Wickenden, Residential representative
- \*Michael Kirick, Commercial representative
- \*\*Jeff Forward, Commercial representative
- \*Johanna Miller, Environmental representative
- \*Taylor Newton, Planning representative

### Transmission Utility (VELCO)

- \*Hantz Pr sum , VELCO

### Distribution Utilities Providing Transmission (GMP, VEC)

- \*Steve Litkovitz, GMP
- \*\*Doug Smith, GMP
- \*Cyril Brunner

### Large Transmission-Dependent Distribution Utilities (BED, WEC)

- \*Munir Kastj, BED
- \*Bill Powell, WEC

### Transmission Dependent Distribution Utilities (Municipals)

Melissa Bailey, VPPSA

### Supply & Demand Resources

- \*Dave Westman, EVT
- \*\*Derek Moretz, Supply representative

### Non-Voting Members

Ed McNamara, DPS

### Staff

Shana Louiselle, VELCO  
Lou Cecere, VELCO

### Guests

Andrea Cohen, VEC  
Craig Kieny, VEC  
Dan Kopin, Utility Services  
Doug Smith, GMP  
Jay Pilliod, EVT  
Julia Leopold, VPPSA  
Kim Jones, GMP  
Mark Sciarrotta, VELCO  
Mike Leach, BED  
Molly Connors, ISO-NE  
Jeff Monder, GMP  
Olivia Campbell Andersen, REV  
Phillip Picotte, DPS  
Ryan Darlow, VERA  
Sean Foley, DPS  
Shawn Enterline, VPPSA  
TJ Poor, DPS  
Tom Dunn, VELCO  
Tom Lyle, BED