



**Draft Meeting Minutes
April 19, 2023
Middlebury, Vermont**

The Vermont System Planning Committee held a quarterly meeting on April 19, 2023. Shana Louiselle called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Steve Litkovitz moved to approve the January 25, 2023 minutes, and Bill Powell seconded. The minutes were approved without objection.

Introductions

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

Load Forecasting Subcommittee

Philip Picotte, Load Forecasting Subcommittee Chair, reported that the subcommittee met in April to continue discussions on the draft load forecast and discuss technology trends and policy considerations to include in the development of the 2024 Vermont Long-Range Transmission Plan. Itron presented its update to the Vermont long-term forecast and reviewed the system load, baseline assumptions, forecast drivers (e.g. solar, heat pumps, electric vehicles), and modeling challenges. Itron's presentation is available on the VSPC website [here](#). The final forecast will be ready in June 2023.

The distribution utilities reviewed their varied approaches to customer load management and highlighted incentives being tested across the state including time of use rates and bill credits. The discussion also addressed the challenges implementing management programs such as network communications, lack of Automated Metering Infrastructure, and the rapidly changing landscape of software providers.

Generation Constraint Subcommittee

Shana Louiselle, VSPC Facilitator, reported that the Geographic Targeting Subcommittee will meet in May or June to complete the annual project review and determine if any issues screen in for further analysis. Ms. Louiselle added that no new transmission constraints have been identified by VELCO.

Coordinating Subcommittee

Ms. Louiselle noted a change to the July 2023 quarterly meeting sharing the meeting will be rescheduled to July 12 to accommodate a conflict with the NEPOOL meeting schedule. The October 2023 meeting will be held on October 25 at the Killington Grand Hotel in Killington.

The 2024 VSPC meeting dates are as follows:

- January 24, 2024 – South Burlington
- April 17, 2024 – Middlebury
- July 17, 2024 – Stowe
- October 23, 2024 – Killington

Ms. Louiselle shared that the following public member terms will expire on July 13, 2023:

- Residential representative primary & alternate
- Commercial representative primary & alternate
- Environmental representative primary & alternate
- Regional planning representative primary & alternate

VSPC staff will notify the Public Utility Commission and request that public seats be appointed before the VSPC July Quarterly meeting. Ms. Louiselle noted that she will distribute the PUC solicitation for candidates when it is released.

Regional Update

Sarah Adams, Vermont External Affairs Representatives for ISO-NE, provided an overview of initiatives underway at the ISO-NE including Forward Capacity Auction #17, the Winter Outlook, the Vermont Needs Assessment, transmission planning updates, reliability and market enhancement projects, and FERC filings. The full presentation is available [here](#).

Grid Resilience Innovation Partnerships (GRIP) Program

As part of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Grid Deployment Office is administering federal funding under the Grid Resilience and Innovating Partnerships (GRIP) Program to enhance grid flexibility and improve the resilience of the power system against growing threats of extreme weather and climate change. A number of Vermont entities submitted applications to receive funding. The following panelists highlighted their organization's application and shared their project summaries:

- Lou Cecere, Vermont Public Service Department Planning Engineer, shared the Department is submitting a Topic Area 3 application on behalf of Vermont Utilities to receive funding for a statewide energy storage project to be placed in vulnerable communities. The Department is working with the utilities to finalize a project scope. It is a cost match program with 50% funding to come from the federal government and 50% from the utilities. The application is due May 19.
- Maddie Murray Klassen and Josh Castonguay from Green Mountain Power shared that GMP submitted an application to Topic Area 1 (Grid Resilience Grants) for their Bethel Zero Outage Circuit Project, which would enable resilience upgrades in Bethel, VT over five years to help prevent unplanned outages. Bethel was chosen for the application as it is one of the top 15 towns in the municipal vulnerability index, and has a Justice40 designation. The project would divide the Bethel circuit into four zones, and tailoring the resiliency solutions to each zone. Resilience upgrades would include distribution line upgrades, underground and relocation, installing a microgrid close to the substation and downtown Bethel to serve the emergency shelter and fire station, battery storage in homes and businesses, and vegetation management using the latest technology with AiDash to target and remove hazard trees before they fall.
- James Gibbons from Burlington Electric Department shared two of BED's concept papers were

encouraged to advance including a Topic Area 2 application for an advanced distribution management system and a Topic Area 3 application for end use metering and load control solutions.

- Michael Lazorchak from Stowe Electric Department shared that Stowe Electric submitted a Topic Area 2 Smart Grid application to complete system mapping for two off-road distribution lines, and some of the system's underground lines that lack mapping data. Stowe plans to use that information to add sensing and communication capability to the off-road lines where they currently don't have visibility. In addition, it will also aid in the completion of a fusing study underway that will enable distribution automation on the system.
- Cyril Brunner from Vermont Electric Cooperative shared VEC submitted five applications including the following:
 - Topic Area 1 – 10 miles of #6 steel reconductoring and/or undergrounding. VEC did not move forward with the submitting a full application.
 - Topic Area 1 – feeder backup of the West Charleston circuit from the Derby Substation. Top 10 worst performing circuit and impacted by transmission related outages. VEC did not move forward with submitting a full application.
 - Topic Area 1 – 11 miles of #6 steel reconductoring and/or undergrounding. The application was submitted by NRECA and expecting a DOE response in May.
 - Topic Area 2 – smart fault finders and home batteries for low income members to reduce/eliminate outage impacts. Submitted through NRECA and expecting a DOE response in May.
 - Topic Area 2 – predictive modeling of substation transformer hot-spot temperatures and flexible demand programs. UVM and UConn submitted the application and expecting a DOE response in May.
- Sarah Braese from Vermont Public Power Supply Authority shared VPPSA submitted one application under Topic Area 1 for an energy storage solution. The project is titled “Building Vermont – Rural Resiliency & Innovative Energy Storage Network Solutions” or (REINS) proposes to design, develop, and construct 11 separate, but centrally networked utility-scale battery energy storage resilience systems across the state of Vermont, delivering roughly 50 MW of capacity and 200 MWh of available energy.
- Kerrick Johnson from Vermont Electric Power Company shared that VELCO submitted a Topic Area 2 application for a SmartValve deployment to enhance cross-regional border flows between Vermont and New York. VELCO is collaborating with EPRI and SmartWires on the application. Mr. Johnson also provided an update to the Transmission Facilitation Program, and highlighted the New England Clean Power Link project is currently waiting to be invited to participate in Phase 2 of the application process. A second Vermont-based project has been submitted by an unnamed entity, and they are also waiting to be invited to participate in Phase 2 of the application process.

Policy and Project Updates

- **PSD Energy Policy and Program Review update:** Lou Cecere, Planning Engineer at the Public Service Department, reported the Public Service Department hosted a webinar series in February and March to share information and answer questions about Vermont’s current electric system. The webinar series was the first phase of the public engagement opportunities planned as part of the process to comprehensively review the state’s renewable and clean electricity policies and programs. Next steps include polling to receive feedback from a broader stakeholder group. The DPS will undergo its own technical analysis later this year to evaluate the Renewable Energy Standard.
- **Legislative Update:** Shana Louiselle reviewed three bills currently under consideration at the Legislature including S.5 (Affordable Heating Act), competing bills introduced to revise the Renewable Energy Standard, and S.140 which proposes the creation of an energy storage study committee. The Legislature is tentatively scheduled to adjourn in May.
- **Regional NEPOOL update:** Frank Etori, Director of ISO-New England Relations, provided an update on the Mystic Cost of Service Agreement, VELCO’s comments made to FERC about Storage as a Transmission Asset, and the creation of a right-sizing process for asset condition related projects.

Attendance

* Indicates voting member

** Indicates alternate

Public Sector

- *Michael Wickenden, Residential representative
- **Tim Duggan, Residential alternate
- **Jeff Forward, Commercial representative
- *Taylor Newton, Regional Planning rep
- **George Gross, Regional Planning rep
- *Johanna Miller, Environmental representative
- **Steve Crowley, Environmental representative

Transmission Utility (VELCO)

- *Hantz Pr sum , VELCO
- **Frank Etori, VELCO

Distribution Utilities Providing Transmission (GMP, VEC)

- *Steve Litkovitz, GMP
- **Doug Smith, GMP

Large Transmission-Dependent Distribution Utilities (BED, WEC)

- *Bill Powell, WEC

Transmission Dependent Distribution Utilities (Municipals)

Sarah Braese, VPPSA

Supply & Demand Resources

- *Dave Westman, EVT
- **Derek Moretz, Alpenglow Solar

Non-Voting Members

Philip Picotte, DPS

Staff

Shana Louiselle, VELCO

Guests

Anne Margolis, DPS
Brad Williams, BED
Betsy Bloomer, VELCO
Beth Hart, Ludlow Electric
Bill Barnes, Encore Renewables
Brian Hall, VEC
Colin Owyang, VELCO
Cyril Brunner, VEC
Dan Kopin, VELCO
David Carpenter, Green Lantern Solar
James Gibbons, BED
Jasmine Rivest, EVT
Jay Pilliod, EVT
John Dasaro, Village of Enosburg
Jonathan Dowd, REV
Josh Castonguay, GMP
Kim Martell, Ludlow Electric
Kerrick Johnson, VELCO
Khalid Osman, VELCO
Lou Cecere, DPS
Luke Looman, VELCO
Maddy Murray-Clasen, GMP
Marc Allen, VELCO
Michael Gadway, Ludlow Electric
Michael Lazorchak, Stowe Electric Department
Molly Connors, NEPGA
Morgan Casella, DO
Paul Lambert, EVT
Paul Nadeau
Philip Picotte, PSD
Robert Ide, National Grid
Ryan Darlow, VERA
Sarah Adams, ISO-NE
Scott Johnsonstone, Morrisville Water & Light

Thomas Lyle, BED
Tom Petraska, Ludlow Electric
Warren Coleman, MMR
William Jerome
Zakia El Omari, VELCO

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