



Draft MINUTES

Joint Committee of the CT Energy Efficiency Board and the Connecticut Green Bank Board of Directors

Wednesday, June 21, 2023

1:30 - 3:00 p.m.

In Attendance

Voting Members: John Harrity, Melissa Kops, Brenda Watson, Hank Webster (DEEP)

Non-Voting Members: Ron Araujo, Brian Farnen, Bryan Garcia, Lonnie Reed

Members Absent: John Viglione

Others: James Desantos, Alex Kovtunencko, Cheryl Lumpkin, Larry Rush, Ariel Schneider, Stacy Sherwood (Energy Futures Group), Patrice Gillespie, Mike Weissmann, George Lawrence, Gannon Long, , Leigh Michael (ILLUME Advising), Douglas Presley (Dandelion Energy)

Unnamed Callers:

1. Call to Order
 - Brenda Watson called the meeting to order at 1:34 pm.
2. Public Comments
 - None
3. Review and approval of Meeting Minutes from the December 21, 2022 meeting.

Resolution #1

Motion to approve the meeting minutes of the Joint Committee for December 21, 2022.

Upon a motion made by Lonnie Reed and seconded by Brenda Watson, the Joint Committee voted to approve Resolution 1. None opposed and Hank Webster abstained. Motion approved unanimously.

4. Update on the 2023 Legislative Session
 - Hank Webster summarized some of the updates to the bills proposed, passed, and not passed in the 2023 Legislative Session so far. James Desantos and Brian Farnen provided additional information as well. Melissa Kops added that SB 979 had a stretch code which was removed in Committee.

- John Harrity expressed his disappointment in the session due to the lack of support for climate change initiatives.
- Melissa Kops asked if there was a strategy or means to better support the climate change initiatives both as members of the committee and as individuals. She also asked for clarification about the process to craft and propose legislation. Bryan Garcia responded with the general timelines for the Joint Committee and policy regarding support for legislative proposals. Hank Webster commented that it always seems to come down to education of legislators. Lonnie Reed added that a “real world autopsy” of why a bill failed may be of greater benefit right now. The group discussed it further.

5. CL&M Plan and Green Bank Comprehensive Plan – Reviews and Input

a. FY24 Green Bank Comprehensive Plan

- Bryan Garcia summarized the progress to the Comprehensive Plan to be presented on July 21, 2023. He highlighted the sections on focused implementation, the Inflation Reduction Act, and governance. He reviewed details of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund as a top priority for the Green Bank. He also noted that the Green Bank staff presented a “Dream Big” strategy to the Board of the Green Bank, which received additional staffing support to achieve greater impact.
 - Brenda Watson asked about the commitment to low- and moderate-income communities and disadvantaged communities as part of the mission of the Green Bank. Bryan Garcia responded with a detailed history of how the Green Bank attained this position and that it has been a gradual evolution in commitment.

b. CY24 CL&M

- Stacy Sherwood gave an update to the CL&M Plan which includes a couple filings and awaiting determinations on those filings. The determinations are expected from DEEP soon. The 2024 Plan Update process will begin at the Annual Planning Meeting held on June 28, 2023 for filing in November 2023. She reviewed the timeline for the next few months.
 - Brenda Watson asked if there has been any efforts to incorporate water efficiency into the Energy Efficiency portion of the plan in terms of reduction measures. Ron Araujo responded that presently there are only water conservation measures that save energy, but there has not been movement beyond that. There hasn't been efforts to incorporate measures that save water but not energy and he commented on the challenges as to why.

6. Opportunities and Challenges

a. Healthy Housing

i. LIHEAP

- Bryan Garcia provided context to the Healthy Housing initiative and history. Brenda Watson summarized the key points of the ongoing discussion about the Healthy Housing initiative and how LIHEAP could be connected, especially to fund cooling measures.
 - Melissa Kops expressed her support for the concept and commented her understanding of how LIHEAP funds are used. The group discussed what possibilities are available to utilize and potential challenges.
 - Brenda Watson posed the discussion of how to define Healthy Housing so that programs and funding can remain on-track and focused. Melissa Kops questioned if there is an existing definition and examined options for how broad or narrow the definition could be if there isn't one already. The group discussed possibilities further.

ii. Inflation Reduction Act

- Alex Kovtunenکو summarized the key updates to the Inflation Reduction Act which could benefit multifamily and affordable housing which includes the Section 48 Investment Tax Credit adders. Bryan Garcia added that pursuing these efforts are part of the Dream Big initiative of the Green Bank. Mackey Dykes summarized the Green Bank's efforts in coordination with other organizations to provide recommendations to PURA regarding the implementation of affordable housing participating in the residential solar program and other relevant points to those efforts.

7. Other Business

a. Research and Development

i. Clean Energy Jobs Study

- Bryan Garcia summarized an effort to the Clean Energy Jobs Report, including the completion of the 2022 report, some of its findings, and progress to the 2023 report. He also highlighted the importance of the mentality to not just look back but also to plan ahead.
 - Hank Webster stated that a first step may be to discuss details with OWS as they work on a similar assessment. As well, examining any similar reports published by neighboring states.
 - Melissa Kops commented that one other element that may need to be identified for the report is that the funding can support the workforce, which should be hand in hand with the energy efficiency goals. Ron Araujo agreed with Melissa Kops' suggestion as one of the pitfalls of the ARRA funding was the boom-and-bust nature of the funding. Creating something sustainable and long term with consistent funding will be key.

ii. Heat Pump – Marketing Assessment

- Bryan Garcia provided some context to the focus on heat pumps and John Harray summarized the need to developing a marketing assessment for ground heat pumps due to their high cost for customers, and whether they need to be so costly. Brenda Watson agreed that a study is needed.
 - Bryan Garcia asked Ron Araujo about for the next meeting doing a section on heat pumps. Brenda Watson added that some states are using LIHEAP funding to install heat pumps in their home system repair-replacement programs. Ron Araujo said he liked the idea to use LIHEAP funding and responded to Bryan Garcia that there can be preliminary information gathered to begin examining.
 - Melissa Kops suggested investigating bulk purchasing and other ideas to make it more cost efficient. Bryan Garcia and Ron Araujo discussed possibilities to reduce hard costs versus soft costs.

b. Other Business

- John Harray expressed his concern about the issues facing off-shore wind efforts and that the solar farm in East Windsor, CT is encountering opposition due to noise pollution.

8. Public Comments

- None.

9. Adjourn

Brenda Watson adjourned the Joint Committee Meeting at 3:14 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Watson, Chairperson

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