

VERMONT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

December 22, 2020

APPROVED MINUTES

As required under the VEC Bylaws, notice of this meeting was sent to each Director either via US Mail on December 16, 2020 or by electronic means for those Directors requesting such delivery.

CALL TO ORDER – AGENDA ITEM #1

President Rich Goggin called the meeting to order at 12:03 pm via video conference. Present were Directors Ken Hoepfner, Carol Maroni (Second Vice President), Mark Woodward (Secretary), George Lague, Charlie Van Winkle, Don Worth, Paul Lambert (First Vice President), John Ward (Treasurer), Tom Bailey, Rich Westman, and Jody Dunklee. Also present from VEC were CEO Rebecca Towne, General Counsel Vickie Brown, Chief Operations Officer Peter Rossi, Chief Financial Officer Mike Bursell, Manager of Government Affairs and Member Relations Andrea Cohen, and Project Planner Laura Kinney. Craig Kieny also joined the meeting.

SAFETY MINUTE – AGENDA ITEM #2:

Lague provided some holiday safety reminders: keep your Christmas tree well-watered, guy the tree for stability, take care with leaving burning candles, sand icy driveways to prevent slips, and put kitty litter in your car for extra traction in the snow.

APPROVE BOARD MEETING MINUTES -- AGENDA ITEM #3

Goggin asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the December Board meeting.

Hoepfner moved and Woodward seconded:

That the minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Directors held on November 24, 2020 be approved.

The minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE WITH MMR -- AGENDA ITEM #4

Cohen introduced VEC's external lobbying team, Warren Coleman and Justin Johnson.

Johnson provided an overview of the \$900 billion federal stimulus law, which includes:

- \$120 billion in unemployment benefits
- \$166 billion in direct payments to Americans
- 284 billion to revive PPP
- \$70 billion to vaccine distribution
- \$82 billion to support schools/universities
- \$7 billion on broadband, including \$2 billion for "rip and replace" efforts, \$300 million for rural broadband deployment, and \$98 million for broadband mapping
- \$25 billion for rental assistance

Related to the Vermont budget, the injection of federal stimulus into the Vermont economy has helped mitigate the revenue losses Vermont has experienced, thus making the budget process potentially less difficult than they had originally been anticipated.

Coleman summarized the new leadership at the Vermont statehouse and in committees this session. He observed that people are hoping for more collegial working conditions focused on helping Vermonters get through the challenges of COVID.

Johnson noted that three states will sign an MOU to implement the Transportation Climate Initiative, and other states, including Vermont, have not signed but continue to engage in the process. The Vermont Climate Council has begun meeting and those will include discussions of reducing greenhouse gas emissions in transportation, among other topics. This will be a several year process and it remains to be seen how the work by the Committee will intersect with regular work of the legislature.

Coleman anticipates the legislature will focus on (1) broadband, including the role of the Vermont utilities, (2) all-fuels efficiency utility, (3) expansion of Renewable Energy Standard, (4) net metering, (5) community solar, (6) arrearages on bills, and (7) expanding weatherization for low and moderate income households. He noted that any discussions of energy issues will include a focus on how low-income residents are affected and offered the ability to participate.

There were questions throughout the presentation.

Coleman and Johnson left the meeting.

RESIDENTIAL BATTERY PROGRAM – AGENDA ITEM #5

Bursell introduced Dan Potter, VEC’s Power Planning Analyst.

Potter explained the elements of VEC’s proposed residential “bring you own device” program. This will involve enrolling members who have their own residential battery into a program whereby VEC will pay for access to manage the battery to reduce peak events. The program is expected to be in place by early in the second quarter of 2021. Currently there are two types of batteries that will be eligible, and VEC hopes to add more manufacturers in the future. The plan is to partner with solar and battery installers to make member participation as easy as possible. He shared the details of the program as currently proposed.

There were numerous questions and comments throughout the presentation.

Potter left the meeting.

BREAK – AGENDA ITEM #6

There was a break in the meeting at 1:50 and the meeting resumed at 2:05.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT – AGENDA ITEM #9

This agenda item was moved up.

Cohen reported on a recent meeting of the Communications Committee. Management shared its annual communications workplan for 2021, based on the recently approved strategic plan, and took feedback from the committee to incorporate their ideas.

The Committee will focus next on planning for the annual meeting and the member survey. It is expected that the annual meeting will be virtual again in 2021 but with better production value, such as pre-recorded video and more opportunity for Q&A. The Committee also discussed holding district meetings with the members once in-person meetings are possible, including an open house at the new Newport service center.

POWER SUPPLY 101 – PART 2 -- AGENDA ITEM #5

Kieny provide the third of a three-part series on power supply, this one focused on the costs associated different power supply resources and REC classifications. He presented several different power supply strategies and the cost and rate impact of each choice. He noted that these are estimates only, and he explained the assumptions that underly the estimates.

There were numerous questions and discussion throughout the presentation and discussion will continue as the Board develops a policy that will guide VEC staff in power supply decisions and advocacy during the legislative session.

Kieny left the meeting.

MANAGERS' REPORTS – AGENDA ITEM #9

Staff fielded a few questions as to the details included in their report.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS – AGENDA ITEM #10

There was no other business.

ADJOURN -- AGENDA ITEM #11

Lague moved and Woodward seconded that the meeting be adjourned.

The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Mark Woodward, Secretary

Rich Goggin, President