



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES, AND ENERGY

LANSING



LIESL EICHLER CLARK
DIRECTOR

UP ENERGY TASK FORCE MEETING

Lake Superior State University
Walker Cisler Student & Conference Center – Superior Room
650 W. Easterday Ave., Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
October 1, 2019; 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

MEETING MINUTES

Attendees:

Kris Bowman
David Camps
Liesl Clark, Chairperson
Mike Furmanski
Tom Harrell
Jennifer Hill
Douglas Jester
Jim Kochevar
Michael Larson

Mike Nystrom
Tanya Paslawski, Secretary
Mike Prusi, Vice Chairperson
Tony Retaskie
Dan Scripps
Dr. Roman Sidortsov (via videoconference)
Chris Swartz
Tonya Swenor

Welcome, Introductions, Task Force Business

Meeting commenced at 10:15 a.m.

Task Force members introduced themselves and shared affiliations.

Task Force business was addressed:

- Agenda was discussed. A motion was made and seconded to approve the Oct. 1 agenda. The motion was approved unanimously by the Task Force members by voice vote.
- A motion was made and seconded to adopt the Sept. 20 meeting minutes. The motion was approved unanimously by the Task Force members by voice vote.

Presentations

Michael Moody with the Michigan Attorney General's office provided an overview of the consumer protection functions within the AGs office. The discussion on utility issues included:

- Case selection is primarily driven by statute and for regulated utilities. Propane pricing is unregulated and is governed by general consumer protection statutes.
- The office is involved in rate cases, working to keep rates as low as possible for customers. They focus on affordability, renewability, and sustainability; and working toward early retirement of coal plants and carbon reduction. Mike noted that residential customers pay higher rates than commercial and industrial customers.
- The AG is advocating for automatic outage credits that would be possible with smart meters.
- A Task Force member commented that the propane industry is regulated in other ways, but not regulated in price.

Dennis McShane, Executive Director at Chippewa, Luce, Mackinac Community Action Agency presented on Energy Assistance and Weatherization Programs. The presentation is available on the UP Energy Task Force web page at: https://www.michigan.gov/documents/egle/egle-exe-upetf-2019-10-01-Chippewa_Luce_Mackinac_Community_Action_Agency_Presentation_667565_7.pdf

Jamie Curtis, Grant Administrator at Michigan Public Service Commission, presented on the Michigan Energy Assistance Program. The presentation is available on the UP Energy Task Force web site at: https://www.michigan.gov/documents/egle/egle-exe-upetf-2019-10-01-MEAP_Presentation_667566_7.pdf

Public Comments

Public comments were heard.

Work Session

Key discussion points:

- Task Force members discussed developing strategies for public outreach about renewable energy as a long-term solution and how to allay resistance about new sources of energy.
- Chris Swartz shared that the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community did a feasibility study on wind and solar. They determined solar was far more feasible in that area. Then they educated the local communities, informed constituents about the wind and solar energy, and let the communities make the decision themselves.
- Information on energy assistance programs is available through 211.
- Kris Bowman shared EIA data on propane pricing among Midwest states and the US average that show the UP is not high relatively.

Suggestions for future sessions:

- Examine process to receive utility bill payment assistance, including what triggers qualification and concerns that a shutoff notice is required.

- Having an EIA representative give presentation on pricing.
- Examination of alternatives to Line 5 as public comment has been largely opposed. Include other energy sources and addressing resistance to renewables. Include prioritization of weatherization/energy efficiency to provide long-term relief. The transportation sector should also be included.

Liesl Clark asked members to share any additional thoughts on future topics after the meeting.

A tour of Plains' Rapid River facility in conjunction with the next meeting was discussed. Dan Scripps will reach out to see if he can set that up. If tour is arranged, the Nov. 13 meeting may start a bit later.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 3:20 p.m.

Approved at the UP Energy Task Force Meeting on Nov. 13, 2019