

UTILITY CONSUMER PARTICIPATION BOARD

12:30 p.m.

Zoom Meeting

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Present: Present: Jim MacInnes (Board Chairperson), Sam Passmore (Board Member), Bali Kumar (Board Member), Paul Isely (Board Member), Chris Bzdok (MEC), Don Keskey (RCG, GLREA), John Liskey (CARE), Amy Bandyk (CUB), Jocelyn Krueger (LARA), Tonya Paslawski (MEGA), Joel King (AG), Greg Rivet (LARA), Suzy Westmoreland, John Richter (GLREA), Charlotte Jameson (MEC), Douglas Jester, (CARE and CUB), LeAnn Droste (LARA), Kelly Kitchen (Assistant to the Board)

Monday August 3, 2020

I. Call to Order and Roll Call of Members, housekeeping items reviewed.

a. Approval of Agenda and June Minutes (including consent items)

Moved: Paul Isely, Seconded: Bali Kumar

Roll Call Vote: Paul Isely, Yes; Bali Kumar, Yes; Sam Passmore, Yes; Jim MacInnes, Yes

Motion Carried

b. LARA Budget Update:

Shawn Worden: There was some adjustments made to the financial records. There is \$26,000 remaining for this fiscal year. There may be more money coming back in and will reported and available at the next UCPB meeting.

II. Business Items

a. Annual Report:

Presentation by Kelly Jo Kitchen

Moved: Sam Passmore to accept the Annual Report: Seconded: Paul Isely

Roll Call Vote: Paul Isely, Yes; Bali Kumar, Yes; Sam Passmore, Yes; Jim MacInnes, Yes.

Motion Carried

b. Attorney General Update:

Joel King: The opinion requested from the AG by the UCPB regarding EWR and Securitization cases should be forthcoming. Mike Moody has been in communication with the Opinions Board and should be able to present clarification on the statutory restrictions at the next Board meeting on August 24, 2020.

Jim MacInnes: Hypothetical question regarding a utility's return on investment calculation. The financial situation has changed a lot is that something the AG is looking at.

Joel King: The AG is having some internal discussions regarding that and is open to conversations with ABATE or others.

c. Mott Foundation Project

Sam Passmore: Introduction of Jan Beecher who helped prepare the report funded through the Mott foundation.

Jan Beecher: The UCPB is quite unique in how it operates nationally. Jan walked through her recommendations within the report. Emphasis on where is the limited resources going to help residential rate payers most both short and long term, streamlining the grant application, tracking grants and the annual report.

Jim MacInnes: Thinking of who would be in the best position to do that streamlining would be the question. The UCPB budget is quite small compared to other organizations and who would create new templates.

Sam Passmore: The funding of this could be looked at through other sources.

Jan Beecher: What would help the board project what they are looking at for in feedback. My vision would be a really clear template and the narratives would be clear and right to the point. Providing a statement and then a link to the case would be helpful.

The impacts of CoVid and risk sharing and revenues are going to be very important in the near term. The refinancing issues are legitimate areas of exploration as well.

Jim MacInnes: Not sure how to communicate with the MPSC and what is appropriate. The AG's office communication has been ongoing and helpful.

Jan Beecher: Looking forward what is coming on the commission's docket and understanding what issues they are looking at and how they are prioritizing would also be helpful.

Jim MacInnes: The UCPB could explore inquiring about a liaison with the MPSC that could be a point of contact

Jan Beecher: The advocacy process is reactive. Grant decision making could be done separate from the presentations. How the UCPB communicates with the public is also an area where growth can occur. Have bios up on the website of the UCPB board members. The board may also want to consider putting together a mission statement. Interactions nationally could be tapped into for board education and issues that may not be on the radar currently.

Sam Passmore: One question I keep returning to is of all the issue we could participate in is there any thoughts to prioritize the most bang for our buck.

Jan Beecher: You could look at each issue in isolation or collectively and be critical in the decision making. Grantees could present what they think is the best issues to argue. Maybe approach it as a process of elimination and put issues in a priority listing. Shifting the burden of proof onto the utility to say why their way is the most prudent or cost effective.

The Board thanked Jan for her contribution to helping the board become more efficient and forward looking.

Moved: Bali Kumar - To form a subcommittee of the board to stream-line the annual report and other reporting mechanisms. The committee shall consist of Sam Passmore and Paul Isely. Seconded: Jim MacInnes

Roll Call Vote: Bali Kumar, Yes; Sam Passmore, Yes; Paul Isely, Yes; Jim MacInnes, Yes.

Motion Carried

d. CARE

- Funds returning to the 2020 UCRF: 19-01 UPPCO IRP (U-20350) \$3,312.22; 20-01 UPPCO IRP (U-20350) \$4,074.45; I&M IRP (U-20591) \$27,132.97 and UPPCO PSCR Plan Case (U-20535) \$12,015.45. There may need to be some small changes to amounts as more information becomes available.
- UPPCO RDM (U-20150) for \$25,000.00
 John Liskey: CARE could take a starter budget and defer some this request to the Aug. 24 case. This case has gone on for a long time. CARE is trying to recoup over a million dollars back to residential rate payers. The AG is in the case, but they are representing all classes of rate payers. John Liskey walked through the court proceedings that have occurred up until this time. There is cross examination to get through, briefs, reply briefs, PFD, exceptions and replies to exceptions left.
 Sam Passmore: Why has UPPCO fought so hard on this?
 John Liskey: Embridge initiated an action arguing this issue and it went all the way to the MI Supreme Court. That case finally settled and the settlement is confidential. UPPCO may be trying to wear CARE out.
 Jim MacInnes: What are their rates currently.
 Douglas Jester: 18 cents a kilowatt hour down from 25 cents largely because of CARE's intervention.
 Jim MacInnes: What would a reasonable partial funding be?
 John Liskey: CARE could work with \$17,500 until the next meeting.

Moved: Paul Isely, Fund CARE for UPPCO RDM (U-20150) for \$17,500. Seconded: Sam Passmore

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote: Paul Isely, Yes; Sam Passmore, Yes; Jim MacInnes, Yes; Bali Kumar, Yes.

Motion Carried

e. MEC

Chris Bzdok: The DTE Case that the UCPB granted MEC \$15,000 has been delayed until next March. Looking for guidance from the board. Discussion regarding if the monies should stay within MEC or if the monies should come back to the UCRF.

Bali Kumar: is there an issue regarding granted money and how forward you could carry it.

Greg Rivet: Monies usually can be extended for one year.

Paul Isely: The Board could consider this issue and address it at the next meeting.

Board tabled the discussion until next meeting.

- CECo Electric Rate Case (U-20697) for \$5,050.00
 Need additional funding for cross examination by Douglas Jester.

 Moved: Paul Isely, Seconded: Bali Kumar
 Roll Call Vote: Sam Passmore, yes; Paul Isely, yes; Bali Kumar, yes; Jim MacInnes, yes.
- DTE Electric Rate Case (U-20561) for \$5,050.00

After transferring Expert to legal DTE has appealed the decision again, monies are needed to defend the additional appeal.
Board tabled the discussion until next meeting.

III. Reports

a. Grantees

CUB: Transition of phasing out CARE.

Amy Bandyk: Thanks to Jan Beecher and her NASUCA suggestions. Amy Bandyk volunteered to forward on to the Board NASUCA info that is sent out each Friday. The individual board members will let Amy know.

John Liskey: Gave a history of CARE and why it makes sense to role CARE into CUB. John Liskey would like to retire and is wrapping up CARE.

Douglas Jester: DTE gas case is approaching a settlement agreement, awaiting the Commissions acceptance.

Consumers gas case is ongoing and the issues are similar to the DTE gas case. Replacement of distribution mains are a big factor. This would put a greater burden on residential customers.

Jim MacInnes: When do you expect this to be resolved?

Douglas Jester: About 4 months possibly sooner if there is a settlement.

Sam Passmore: Are there other gas cases out there or are these the only two?

Amy Bandyk: UCPB funded a SEMCO gas case.

Douglas Jester: There have been other gas cases, but they many have been accessed as not as impactful when weighing the limited resources available.

Jim MacInnes: Thanks to John Liskey for your years of service.

MEC: No report because of audio difficulties.

RCG: CECO (U-20209) GCR, the ALJ entered a PFD. The issue regarded the fire and costs that came from that. Hearings are coming up in two cases, RCG will provide a written report for those cases when they move further along.

GLREA: CECO rate case deals with the value of solar and is progressing.

IV. Public Comment

Jim MacInnes: IEEE will be bringing a speaker on Static Var Compensators and how it works and regulates power. 8:00 am August 12 if anyone would like to participate contact Jim MacInnes.

V. Next meeting: August 24, 2020

VI. Adjournment: 2:55 Moved: Sam Passmore
