

# UTILITY CONSUMER PARTICIPATION BOARD

June 7, 2021

12:30 p.m.

Teleconference

## Regular Meeting Minutes

Present: Paul Isely (Board Chairperson, Kent County), Elise Matz (Board Vice Chair, Houghton County), Sam Passmore (Board Member, Ingham County), Mike Troupos (Board Member, Kent County), Chris Bzdok (MEC), Jocelyn Krueger (LARA), Tanya Paslawski (CUB), Douglas Jester (Five Lakes Energy), Kelly Jo Kitchen (Assistant to the Board), Mike Moody (Attorney General), Shawn Worden (LARA), Don Keskey (RCG, GLREA), Dan Horn (LARA), Heather Johnston (LARA), Jan Beecher (MSU), Charlotte Jamieson (MEC), Shay Gaffey (LARA), Holly Hillyer (Olsen, Bzdok and Howard), Mike Byrne (MPSC), Bob Nelson (CUB), Dan Dundas (MAGA), TJ Andrews (Olsen, Bzdok and Howard), Margrethe Kearney (ELPC), Richard Sedano (RAP), Shanna Draheim (MML)

June 7, 2021

### I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Paul Isely established a quorum and called the meeting to order. He reviewed the statutory requirements and protocols regarding the meeting.

### II. Approval of Agenda

**Motion** by Elise Matz, Seconded by Sam Passmore

**Roll Call Vote:** Elise Matz, yes; Sam Passmore, yes; Mike Troupos, yes; Paul Isely, yes

**Motion Carried**

### III. Approval of Minutes from the meeting of April 12, 2021

**Motion** by Mike Troupos, Seconded by Sam Passmore

**Roll Call Vote:** Elise Matz, yes; Sam Passmore, yes; Mike Troupos, yes; Paul Isely, yes

**Motion Carried**

### IV. Consent Items

#### a. Correspondence (Received and Placed on File)

##### 1. Attachment 1

#### b. LARA Budget Update

Shawn Worden provided the budget update and stated that there is \$135,325 available in spending authority remaining.

The board discussed the spending authority.

### V. Business Items

#### a. MPSC Staff Presentation

Mike Byrne suggested having additional advocates in cases especially representation on behalf of the residential rate payer makes for a more robust record for the Commission to

review and discuss. the expected timing of cases for this year and into next fiscal year were presented to the board.

Mike provided an overview of My Power Grid phases and what the MPSC is doing regarding equity and accessibility to meetings post Covid.

The board discussed the PSCR process and reconciliation. Sam Passmore requested input from Mike Byrne regarding IRP cases participation. Mike stated that every IRP is unique to each company although some commonalties exist. He emphasized that the timing of these issues is what is important. Understanding what will be available regarding federal funding for the infrastructure is important for future planning.

b. Attorney General Update

Michael Moody provided an overview of the cases the AG is participating in and reviewed joint litigation agreements with UCPB intervenors. The UPPCO acquisition case was a great win for residential customers.

Mike Troupos asked about the Alpena Power case. Mike Moody provided an overview the investor-owned aspect of smaller utility companies, and when the AG gets involved in these types of cases.

The board discussed increase in spending authority approval and what is needed.

c. CUB/MEC presentation on revising the standard rate application

Douglas Jester discussed the participation of CUB, MEC and others on compiling comments for the MPSC.

TJ Andrews provided an overview of the comments compiled in (U-18238) and highlighted the overlap among groups.

Mike Troupos asked about why the rate cases have changed so much. TJ Andrews answered that the scope of interest has broaden and the amount of data needed has increased for cases. Douglas Jester added that rate cases used to be based on historical costs and now they use projected costs which is impacted by their plans and their forecasts. The transparency and the consumer advocacy in the comments were appreciated by the board members.

d. Environment Law and Policy Center (ELPC) Introduction

Margrethe Kearney, Senior Attorney for ELPC, stated the focus of ELPC is on fair treatment of affordable alternative energy options and consumer advocacy.

e. Discussion and vote to request increase to UCRF

Elise Matz gave an overview of the statute and the ability for the UCPB to request an increase in funding based on CPI calculation. Shawn Worden stated that the CPI calculation is done routinely, but the legislature has not increased the spending authority. Mike Troupos inquired how the process works. Paul Isely stated that the funds would increase about \$35,000 per year. Mike Moody discussed options to have access to those

funds. Dan Horn recommend the board table the discussion until further information is collected.

e. Review 2022 Grant Application

Jocelyn Kruger discussed the change made to the 2022 grant application.

**Motion** by Sam Passmore to accept the 2022 grant application has submitted and have it published, seconded by Elise Matz

**Roll Call Vote:** Elise Matz, yes; Sam Passmore, yes; Mike Troupos, yes; Paul Isely, yes

**Motion Carried**

f. Board Assistant Statement of Work

Elise Matz added language, to assist the Board in administrative tasks that may arise.

**Motion** by Paul Isely to add language, seconded by Mike Troupos

**Roll Call Vote:** Elise Matz, yes; Sam Passmore, yes; Mike Troupos, yes; Paul Isely, yes

**Motion Carried**

**Motion** by Paul Isely to accept the Board Assistant Statement of Work and Publish, seconded by Elise Matz

**Roll Call Vote:** Elise Matz, yes; Sam Passmore, yes; Mike Troupos, yes; Paul Isely, yes

**Motion Carried**

g. Annual Report for 2020

Kelly Kitchen gave an overview of the Annual Report and highlighted the changes from the previous year.

**Motion** by Elise Matz to accept the Annual Report and have it sent on to the legislature, seconded by Sam Passmore

**Roll Call Vote:** Elise Matz, yes; Sam Passmore, yes; Mike Troupos, yes; Paul Isely, yes

**Motion Carried**

h. Grant Requests

ELPC

- CECo 6t IRP (U-21090) for \$45,380.00

Margrethe Kearny provided an overview of the issues that ELPC will focus on in this case, notably modeling equity issues. She went through how the grant would be used, if approved by the board. Sam Passmore questioned what the modeling would focus on. Margrethe Kearny stated that the stakeholders would be the driver of the modeling issues, the health impacts of choosing different energy sources would probably be an important aspect.

Mike Troupos asked if there was a person within the City of Grand Rapids, Community Collaboration on Climate Change (C4) that would be working with ELPC. Margrethe Kearny stated there are 6 individuals that ELPC would work with to create the model, and a couple individuals would present testimony in the case.

Elise Matz stated that it is cutting edge stuff and hopefully in the future the affected groups would become the intervenor.

**Motion** by Elise Matz, Seconded by Sam Passmore

**Roll Call Vote:** Elise Matz, yes; Sam Passmore, yes; Mike Troupos, yes;  
Paul Isely, yes

**Motion Carried**

#### RCG

- 21-05 CEC Co PSCR-R (U-20526) for \$19,089.00  
Don Keskey gave an overview of the issues that RCG would be advocating.
- 21-05 CEC Co GCR Appeal (356330) from case (U-20209) for \$6,363.00  
Don Keskey gave an overview of the appeal.

#### MEC

- MEC requested to add Holly Hillyer as a member of MEC's legal team  
Chris Bzdok introduced Holly Hillyer and provided a brief background of Holly Hillyer's experience. Holly Hillyer provided an overview of her advocacy work to the board. The board welcomed her to MEC's legal team.

**Motion** by Elise Matz, Seconded by Mike Troupos

**Roll Call Vote:** Elise Matz, yes; Sam Passmore, yes; Mike Troupos, yes;  
Paul Isely, yes

**Motion Carried**

#### CUB

- 21-06 I & M PSCR Plan Case (U-20530) for \$15,150.00  
Bob Nelson presented an overview of the case which is a joint litigation agreement with the AG.

**Motion** by Elise Matz, Seconded by Mike Troupos

**Roll Call Vote:** Elise Matz, yes; Sam Passmore, yes; Mike Troupos, yes; Paul Isely, yes

**Motion Carried**

- 21-06 Alpena Power Company Rate Case (U-21045) for \$22,725.00  
Bob Nelson presented an overview of the issues in the case. Douglas Jester stated the board could table the decision on this case until the August meeting.

#### i. Municipal Intervenors Discussion

Richard Sedano from the Regulatory Assistance Program (RAP) provided the board with his background in RAP and as well as a public service commissioner. Richard presented on how local communities have little influence historically with the public service commission. It can be changed through distributed generation, resilience improvements, and getting communities more involved in decision making process. Not only advancing economic development, but also impacting low- and moderate-income residents.

Richard recommended two resources to the board:

1. [http://solarmarketpathways.org/innovation/utilities/Engaging Utilities and Regulators \(raponline.org\)](http://solarmarketpathways.org/innovation/utilities/Engaging%20Utilities%20and%20Regulators%20(raponline.org))
2. [https://www.raponline.org/wpcontent/uploads/2017/03/rap\\_epri\\_solsmart\\_engaging\\_utilities\\_and\\_regulators\\_2017\\_jan\\_25.pdf](https://www.raponline.org/wpcontent/uploads/2017/03/rap_epri_solsmart_engaging_utilities_and_regulators_2017_jan_25.pdf)

Sam Passmore asked if there were successes around the country where communities are being heard. Richard provided an overview of several places where communities are making a difference in decisions. Elise Matz asked how the board could work with municipalities. Richard advised the board to look toward groups like a league of cities, towns, and/or staffs to make it part of its agendas; this could promote groups to work together for common purposes.

VI. Reports

a. Grantees

RCG in (U-20220) CEC Co PSCR-R is pending a PFD. RCG did file comments in the Commission's docket on comments for rate cases.

MEC in (U-20162) DTE withdrew its appeal. In (U-20222) moving onto the exceptions phase and some disallowances are looking good. DTE IRP is coming up.

CUB discussed the Commission's energy affordability focus.

VII. Public Comment

Shanna Draheim thinks there is a role for Michigan Municipal League (MML) to play in helping inform municipalities of the UCPB and how the municipalities can get engaged.

VIII. Next Meeting August 2, 2021

IX. Adjournment

**Motion** by Sam Passmore