

UTILITY CONSUMER PARTICIPATION BOARD
February 12, 2024 || 10:00 a.m.
CRA Building (previously MRA) – Sun Conference Room
Please use South Entrance (Door Will Have a Sign)
2407 N. Grand River Avenue
Lansing Michigan 48906
Call-In option: 888.278.0296 (US Toll Free)
Conference Code: 4803352

MINUTES

In Attendance: Paul Isely (Board Chair), Mike Troupos (Board Member), Sam Passmore (Board Member), Nishaat Y. Killeen (Board Member), Laura Kwekien (LARA), Ashtaan Rapanos (Assistant to the Board), Dan Horn (LARA), Chris Bzdok (MEC), Amy Bandyk (CUB), Michael Moody (AG), Jackson Koeppel (Soulardarity), Aaron Walden (AG), Tanya Paslawski (Elevated Engagement), Brenda Davis (LARA), TJ Andrews (Troposphere)

Attending by Phone: Anne Polakowski (Board Member), Shawn Worden (LARA), Colleen Mulligan (MEC), Douglas Jester (CUB), Dan Dundas (MEGA)

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Paul Isely established a quorum and called the meeting to order.

II. Approval of Minutes from the meeting of November 13, 2023

Moved by Nishaat Y. Killeen Seconded by Sam Passmore.

Roll Call Vote: Paul Isely, yes; Sam Passmore, yes; Mike Troupos, abstain; Nishaat Y. Killeen, yes.

Motion to Approve Carried

III. Approval of Minutes from the meeting of December 18, 2023

Moved by Mike Troupos Seconded by Sam Passmore.

Roll Call Vote: Paul Isely, yes; Sam Passmore, yes; Mike Troupos, yes; Nishaat Y. Killeen, abstain.

Motion to Approve Carried

IV. Approval of Agenda

Moved by Mike Troupos Seconded by Sam Passmore.

Majority Consensus

V. Updates from Chair Isely

Subcommittee (Mike Troupos and Paul Isely) spent time considering the new approval criteria. A current list of approval criteria is in the application; they would like to add one more bullet to the application to include broader consumer interests (list pulled directly from relevant statute). Final changes will be brought to April meeting for a formal vote by the Board.

Mike Troupos (Board): Not including weights allows board members to assign their own weight to certain components rather than a pre-established definition.

Laura Kwecian (LARA): Would they like to add a question on the application addressing the additional information?

Board: Yes.

VI. State Administration Updates

A. LARA Updates

- Budget Update (Attachment 2)
 - Money Requested: \$606,375.00
 - Money Available: \$1,836,129.00

B. Attorney General Updates

- AG's office will be involved in all of the cases that are on the grant request agenda for today. They are working with the grantees on many of the cases, sharing experts.
- Consumers Electric rate case order is coming out soon from the Commission

VII. Public comment (Three (3) minute limit – Grantee request summary)

Amy Bandyk (CUB): 7 grant requests are submitted by CUB for today's meeting. This is a lot, and CUB is planning to work closely with AG's office. Many of the cases are coming up in March, which is the reason for making all of the requests at once. CUB represents members in all of these service territories. There are currently not a lot of details since many of them haven't been filed yet so they are anticipating what issues they think will arise. CUB has found success partnering with MEC and others in large rate cases and plan to continue to do so. CUB has been focusing on reliability issues.

VIII. Grant Requests

(General discussion re: all CUB requests)

Mike Troupos (Board): A lot of these cases are new and unknown; in the past CUB has asked for funding and then given money back after they gain more info on the case—do they anticipate the same here?

Amy Bandyk (CUB): Many of these are smaller cases and there are fewer intervenors. Often when they end up not needing all the funding the case is a PSCR case. In these smaller cases usually it will be CUB and AG, maybe a few others, so all cases will likely need testimony submitted by them.

Sam Passmore (Board): How does CUB define the budget for these cases?

Amy Bandyk (CUB): CUB looks at the history of what they've asked for before and what they've ended up using. CUB's experts and legal team provides their estimates. They prefer to ask for the full amount they need upfront so they don't have to come back to request more.

Paul Isely (Board): The amount of total funding requested by CUB is larger than the Board's previous budget, and 3-4x more than ever funded before. What resources does CUB have to manage this size of caseload?

Amy Bandyk (CUB): CUB has organically grown year over year in their capacity. The expert team has grown to be able to divide the work that goes into evaluating cases and writing testimony. It is a lot but they feel confident they can handle this caseload.

Mike Troupos (Board): What is CUB doing differently than other funded intervenors on the DTE electric rate case?

Amy Bandyk (CUB): Memo provided has detailed info on what exactly CUB will be looking at but they will work closely with MEC and other groups to make sure there isn't overlap. It is a huge case so not one can handle it all. Distribution spending is where they have carved out most of their work.

Paul Isely (Board): There are request for cases with extremely small utilities. Can CUB walk through the magnitude of possible effect?

Douglas Jester (CUB): UMERC hasn't had a rate case in a while; currently it has two rate zones which will be integrated in this case. They anticipate that they will be looking at more than a normal increase because of that (est. ~10%). Gas cases have been coming more regularly, more incremental than UPPCO/UMERC but they have been seeing pretty big increases because of pipeline replacement investments.

Sam Passmore (Board): The Board has had discussions before on the importance that intervenors not become overdependent on single funding source. Is funding information something that the Board can ask for? Typically, an organizational budget and other major sources of revenue for the last and current fiscal year would be useful.

Dan Horn (LARA): LARA will work with the Board to see what they would like to see and make sure the information they are looking for isn't duplicative.

- I. U-21534 – DTE Electric Rate Case
 - Citizens Utility Board (CUB): for \$137,775

Motion to approve request by CUB for \$137,775 by Mike Troupos, Seconded by Nishaat Y. Killeen.

Roll Call Vote: Paul Isely, yes; Sam Passmore, yes; Mike Troupos, yes; Nishaat Y. Killeen, yes.

Motion to Approve Carried

2. U-21541 – UMERC Electric Rate Case
 - Citizens Utility Board (CUB): for \$85,525

Motion to approve request by CUB for \$85,525 by Mike Troupos, Seconded by Nishaat Y. Killeen.

Roll Call Vote: Paul Isely, yes; Sam Passmore, yes; Mike Troupos, yes; Nishaat Y. Killeen, yes.

Motion to Approve Carried

3. U-TBD – NSP Rate Case
 - Citizens Utility Board (CUB): for \$85,525

Motion to approve request by CUB for \$85,525 by Mike Troupos, Seconded by Nishaat Y. Killeen.

Roll Call Vote: Paul Isely, yes; Sam Passmore, yes; Mike Troupos, yes; Nishaat Y. Killeen, yes.

Motion to Approve Carried

4. U-21555 – UPPCO Rate Case
 - Citizens Utility Board (CUB): for \$76,450

Motion to approve request by CUB for \$76,450 by Mike Troupos, Seconded by Nishaat Y. Killeen.

Roll Call Vote: Paul Isely, yes; Sam Passmore, yes; Mike Troupos, yes; Nishaat Y. Killeen, yes.

Motion to Approve Carried

5. U-21490 – Consumers Gas Rate Case
 - Citizens Utility Board (CUB): for \$73,700

Motion to approve request by CUB for \$73,700 by Mike Troupos, Seconded by Nishaat Y. Killeen.

Roll Call Vote: Paul Isely, yes; Sam Passmore, yes; Mike Troupos, yes; Nishaat Y. Killeen, yes.

Motion to Approve Carried

6. U-21540 – MGU Gas Rate Case
 - Citizens Utility Board (CUB): for \$73,700

Motion to approve request by CUB for \$73,700 by Mike Troupos, Seconded by Nishaat Y. Killeen.

Roll Call Vote: Paul Isely, yes; Sam Passmore, yes; Mike Troupos, yes; Nishaat Y. Killeen, yes.

Motion to Approve Carried

7. U-TBD – SEMCO Gas Rate Case
 - Citizens Utility Board (CUB): for \$73,700

Motion to approve request by CUB for \$73,700 by Mike Troupos, Seconded by Nishaat Y. Killeen.

Roll Call Vote: Paul Isely, yes; Sam Passmore, yes; Mike Troupos, yes; Nishaat Y. Killeen, yes.

Motion to Approve Carried

IX. Public Comment (Three (3) minute limit)

Tanya Paslawski (Elevated Engagement): Considering the new law and funding that will be available, her organization has been thinking about how to make UCPB funding accessible to all

communities and what it will take to be ready to connect with communities that are interested in engaging. Wanted to raise issues of education, outreach plans, etc. to understand what is within the Board's scope to be able to do, and offer support to make connections, get education materials out, anything that would help with that aspect of administration of the funds.

TJ Andrews (Troposphere): There is a lull right now on cases but rate cases are coming soon. Commission is taking comment on distribution plans now. Douglas Jester and herself have been pushing the Commission to wrap its arms around distribution planning dockets because it has been used as an opportunity to tell them about what they are spending but not what they are going to get from it.

Amy Bandyk (CUB): Thanks to the Board for funding these cases on behalf of the customers they represent. There is a lot of accountability built into the Board processes already which is a good thing, including the additional process of having AG review grantee reports. CUB would be happy to work with any groups Tanya works with to help educate.

Jackson Koeppel (Soulardarity): He has been talking to different frontline groups since the new law was passed. One of the things that has come up: what are the restrictions with regards to what dollars can be spent on? It takes a lot for staff to approve and review things on top of legal expertise, especially for smaller organizations that might be primarily volunteer-based; this cost can be restricting. Could organizations request funding for time used by staff in overseeing and approving staff (other administrative tasks)? This is a barrier he foresees for getting new organizations into the fold.

Mike Troupos (Board): For smaller organizations especially, open to the idea.

Paul Isely (Board): Will talk with AG's office and bring back to Board.

X. Next Meeting April 15, 2024

XI. Adjournment
Motion moved by Sam Passmore. Majority consensus.