

# **DRAFT VELCO Operating Committee MINUTES**

**DATE:** March 19, 2020, 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**LOCATION:** Green Mountain Power Montpelier, VT

## **PARTICIPATING MEMBERS**

- **Burlington Electric Department (BED):** James Gibbons
- **Green Mountain Power (GMP):** Mike Burke
- **Stowe Electric Department (SED):** David Kresock
- **Vermont Electric Cooperative (VEC):** Peter Rossi
- **Vermont Electric Power Company (VELCO):** Chris Root, Frank Etori, Jason Pew
- **Vermont Public Power Supply Authority (VPPSA):** Craig Myotte
- **Washington Electric Cooperative (WEC):** Bill Powell

## **OTHER PARTICIPANTS**

Mary Coombs (VELCO), Tom Dunn (VELCO), Kerrick Johnson (VELCO), Dan Nelson (VELCO), Emily Stebbins-Wheelock (BED), Tina Stevens (VELCO), and additional member company representatives not specifically identified.

## **OPENING REMARKS**

Mr. Root verified a quorum and called the meeting to order at 11:03 a.m. The meeting format was modified to a conference call and all participating members were identified on the call. The meeting will be expedited to the extent possible to accommodate current pandemic work evolution.

## **SAFETY TOPIC**

Mr. Root discussed that with the amount of people working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic. Making connections with people is very important during these times as people can feel isolated. In addition to the personal health impacts, isolation could lead to distractions and unintended results.

## **DRAFT MINUTES APPROVAL**

Mr. Root offered time to discuss and or provide comments on the minutes from February 20, 2020 meeting. No comments were received.

Mr. Powell moved for approval, Mr. Johnson seconded, and the minutes were approved without objection.

## **DEEP THUNDER UPDATE**

Mrs. Coombs reported that Deep Thunder (DT) has been running at VELCO on the HPCC. Login credentials have been re-enabled and the model is accessible when desired. Additionally, Roger Hill (Weathering Heights) has been accessing DT recently and will provide an update on its accuracy and use since it has been updated and installed on the HPCC.

## **JOINT VERMONT ELECTRIC UTILITY EXERCISE (JVEUE)**

Mrs. Stevens reported JVEUE is remaining on track as scheduled. The Exercise Objectives were reviewed: exercise individual response plans, exercise state-wide response playbook, exercise authorities, escalation and information flows, and exercise communications to media,

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customers, and government.

Exercise participants who have participated in planning or plan to participate in the exercise were identified: GMP, VEC, WEC, and VELCO.

Mr. Gibbons reported that BED planning on participating in some manner. Mr. Pew responded that he has some open communication with BED and will follow-up as appropriate.

### **K42 UPDATE**

Mr. Root discussed an example of how to add an additional 100MW of renewable generation within the SHEI. What would be the most viable solution? He provided information on the B20 and B22 upgrades that are already assumed and appear to be on-track. Daymark is going to provide a report that will be shared with the SHEI Group and then determine the next steps.

By end of Q2, there will be a technical plan in development that may not necessarily move forward.

Mr. Gibbons reported that the market implications within the Daymark report require fine tuning. They have taken that feedback and made or making appropriate modifications within the report.

### **ISO UPDATE**

Mr. Etori discussed the market based fuel security plan for the winter periods. Tuesday of next week there will be vote to approve reserves into the day-ahead market, providing assurance they will be available when called upon. The Regional Utility Group (RUG) met last week and discussed what Vermont/VELCO vote would benefit the state.

Mr. Etori further reported that the proposed only looks one-day ahead and does not have longer timeframes. As such, many Transmission Owners are going to abstain from voting.

K41 and 340 line structure replacements were discussed at the PAC yesterday. Mr. Presume provided an excellent presentation.

PAC produces the results of a study of 8k MW of offshore wind being connected to existing infrastructure. The study revealed considerable transmission investments were needed in order to support that amount of offshore wind.

Mr. Root discussed that it is more than increased conductor size. Those improvements would likely require additional lines and ROW. As a result, adding lines to existing ROWs would exceed the acceptable amount of lines and could lead to contingency corridor losses in excess of 1200MW, this would be beyond threshold. Undergrounding in the same corridor could be an option.

### **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

Mr. Johnson provided information regarding the following:

- State legislature has to pass four bills tonight to keep government running
- Additional agenda items were tabled for another date

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### **COVID-19 UPDATE**

Mr. Root discussed the VELCO plan to accommodate the pandemic: Two people teams working together at most, staggered access to pinnacle, Operators are working from two locations (MCC/BCC) and more plans are being developed.

Mr. Burke discussed the GMP plan: Similar to VELCO with the exception of Essential Services such as new fiber connectivity which is continuing, if service upgrades are being performed those projects are being tabled. Field crews not assigned to essential service work are remaining at home until needed. Planned for April 1 but assessing daily. Keeping employees safe is the main goal. They have reduced the day shift to 2 people at each location and wiping down each desk before and after use. Storm contingency plans are set up in each location while maintaining 10' between people. All of the outage management systems are remote capable, and have 4 back-up controllers for the Control Rooms.

Mr. Burke recently had a North Atlantic Mutual Assistance Group (NAMAG) call where they discussed pandemic plans that are in place for contract crews. Border closing has been discussed and mutual aid from Canadian crews is likely still available.

Mr. Rossi discussed the VEC plan: The Control Center has three immediate step-in operators available with another four that can step-in with some additional steps required. The Control Center has been locked down previously (Operators only) and they are making plans to shelter in place; having available several cases of MREs, showers and cots. VEC's internal Incident Command Structure is in Orange mode, a step-up from baseline with established officers and chiefs, most working from home with some still making the transition.

Mr. Rossi further reported that field crews are on-call and remaining at home. Cleaning protocols are in place that include wiping vehicles down when picking them up or leaving them in the warehouse. The only potential for close contact remains in the field as travel is being done in separate vehicles.

Mr. Powell discussed the WEC plan: They are splitting two person crews into separate vehicles and have locked down WEC buildings. Remote access is limited which requires people to remain at work with several precautions in place.

Mr. Kresock discussed the SVE plan: They have locked buildings down to public as of last week. Those that can work from home are doing so, and one week at a time rotation for those who cannot. The line-crew are on-call and being segregated working from home.

Canned and dry goods have been acquired and available in the shop. IT support is working to get additional remote abilities available. Additionally noted, SVE has purchased additional FirstNet phones for use if needed.

Mr. Myotte discussed the MWL plan: He cannot speak to the other VPPSA members. MWL has covered all services with redundant crews. Stress levels are high and keeping people calm is a focused effort.

Mr. Gibbons discussed the BED plan: McNeil is pushing a scheduled outage to the fall, and the GT is in mid-outage and the onsite back-up turbine is in place. They have suspended orders to disconnect service to past-due customers and are expecting bottom line revenue loss due to

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loss of load. BED shares VELCO communication infrastructure for VPN and no issues have arisen. Additionally, the conference lines have worked as well. Ms. Stebbins-Wheelock reported that the shared internet with VELCO has worked well thus far, however, to support the amount of employees working from home, they have acquired a second connection with Burlington Telecom.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **Open discussion**

- Mr. Nelson discussed the radio system which had no known issues currently
- Mr. Burke, NAMAG call yesterday mentioned they were doing critical load conductor sweeps (trees and other hazard searches) and GMP is doing the same. Essentially, this means that lines to hospitals and other identified critical loads are being patrolled to identify potential hazards now before they become emergencies.

#### **Next meeting**

**Date:** April 16, 2020, 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**Location:** Green Mountain Power Montpelier, VT

#### **Possible topics for discussion**

- None discussed

### **MOTION TO ADJOURN**

Mr. Johnson moved to adjourn, Mr. Dunn seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 11:59 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Pew  
VELCO OC Secretary