

# Final VELCO Operating Committee MINUTES

**DATE:** March 18, 2021, 1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

**LOCATION:** Virtual Meeting (ZOOM)

## **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, Kris Smith
- **Vermont Electric Power Company (VELCO):** Chris Root, Frank Etori, Tina Stevens
- **Vermont Public Power Supply Authority (VPPSA):** Stephen Fitzhugh
- **Washington Electric Cooperative (WEC):** Bill Powell

## **OTHER PARTICIPANTS**

Jay Bellows (Northern Reliability), Brian Connaughton (VELCO), Jeff Disorda (VELCO), Tom Dunn (VELCO), Abe Fitch (VELCO), Kerrick Johnson (VELCO), Shana Louiselle (VELCO), Ed McGann (VELCO), Kim Moulton (VELCO), Jason Pew (VELCO), Dan Poulin (VELCO), Hantz Pr sum  (VELCO), Mark Sciarrotta (VELCO), Allen Stamp (AP Stamp, Inc.), Karin Stamy (VELCO)

## **OPENING REMARKS**

Mr. Root verified a quorum and called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

Mr. Root indicated he received a letter from GMP requesting Josh Castonguay replace Brian Otley as an Alternate on the Operating Committee. Mr. Root asked if there were any objections to the change. No objections were noted.

## **SAFETY TOPIC**

Mr. Fitch spoke to being aware of changing conditions this time of year. The weather can bring snow or sunny, warm days. As the weather warms, there will be more pedestrians, bicyclists, walkers, and motorcycles out on the roads. We need to have extra awareness. Additionally, while the days may be sunny and warm, the nights often drop below freezing creating the potential for black ice. In addition to weather changes and awareness of those on the roads, the road shoulders this time of year often consist of soft soil conditions.

Mr. Root then shared concerns with vehicles getting stuck with soft road conditions and the hazards of using chains to remove stuck vehicles. He also brought up the fact that with the start of sugaring season, many of these workers will empty sap buckets and tanks at night so be aware of these trucks and workers.

## **DRAFT MINUTES APPROVAL**

Mr. Root presented the meeting minutes from February 18, 2021 for approval.

Mr. Rossi moved for approval, Mr. Fitzhugh seconded, and the minutes were approved as presented without objection.

## **EMERALD ASH BORER UPDATE**

Mr. Disorda indicated the group had met just this morning. The VT Agency of Transportation (AOT) was on the call and noted they were getting ready with their response plans, which are

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only in draft form. AOT is behind the utilities in terms of response plans and the committee offered up suggestions and ideas. Mr. Disorda noted the utilities are in a good place compared to other affected entities in the state. The second half of meeting was spent on a round table of topics such as expanding the subcommittee, lessons learned from the 3340 line tree contact, the bucket truck rollover event at VEC, and proposed changes by the VT Pesticide Council.

Mr. Dunn asked how wide spread EAB is at this point, and whether or not we could assume it was state-wide. Mr. Disorda indicated the utilities are looking at it with that lens, but the State hasn't made that determination yet.

### **VELCO 2021 KPIS**

Mr. Fitch provided an overview of VELCO's KPIs including the measure definition, the final 2020 report value, and definition updates targeted for 2021. See presentation for details.

### **TELECOM WORKING GROUP**

Mr. Stamp noted the group typically meets every two weeks, but had to cancel the last meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for next Wednesday. The group has started working on the transport network. Some challenges the group face are determining what the end approach looks like and answering questions related to determining how to attach to the DER sites and the kinds of equipment to put there. Additionally, the group is focusing attention on materials management, such as determining the laydown area. Mr. Johnson asked what the new fiber mileage is expected to be. Mr. Stamp indicated the new fiber mileage is approximately 800 miles, and this includes going to approximately 60 to 70 substations.

### **SANDBAR PST FAILURE**

Mr. Root presented some slides on the Sandbar PST failure which occurred back on February 22, 2021. There are four PSTs in Vermont: 1 at Sandbar, 1 at Blissville, and 2 at Granite. These PSTs are rated for 350 MVA, weigh approximately 225 tons without oil in them, and are expensive to purchase.

The fault in the Sandbar PST impacted area voltages for 3.5 cycles and resulted in dropping some VEC load out of the South Hero substation due to line work being performed on the New York side of the PV20.

Next steps include:

- Sandbar PST to be taken apart and moved off the foundation
- Granite PST Unit
  - Remove the oil and inspect the unit
  - If the unit passes inspection, the unit will be relocated to Sandbar
- Develop a repair scope for the Sandbar Unit
  - Unit is to be shipped back to the Netherlands
  - Discussions on who pays and how much

### **STORAGE UPDATE – MOBILE BATTERY USE CASE EVALUATION**

Mr. Johnson provided an introduction to Mr. Bellows of Northern Reliability. Mr. Bellows then presented slides noting the evaluation of an opportunity as part of VELCO's Value Delivery Team

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work. The opportunity includes building a system that can be moved in and out on a lease basis. There are three different sizes available: 2 MWh, 1 MWh, and 600 KWh. The benefit of VELCO serving as the service provider is that the money stays in Vermont.

Mr. Burke asked if these would be available for large commercial customers. Mr. Bellows indicated this is a possibility but it would be through the utility. Need an integrated approach to deployment in order for it to be sustainable.

Mr. Connaughton indicated conversations are occurring at VELCO about possible use cases, cost of the unit itself, cost of moving it around, etc. The thought is that the OC is the right group to have these conversations and it may be time to form a sub-committee to perform use case review.

Mr. Root asked for a motion to create a subcommittee, with Mr. Connaughton as the chair. Mr. Rossi made a motion, and Mr. Fitzhugh seconded. No objections were noted. OC members should submit names to Mr. Connaughton to join the subcommittee. Mr. Gibbons asked if the subcommittee member had to be an OC member. Mr. Root indicated it does not have to be an OC member.

### **LONG RANGE PLAN**

Mr. Presume provided a brief update on the Long Range Plan. They have submitted the second draft of the plan to the Vermont System Planning Committee. The second draft included the addition of more information based on comments received such as expanding the discussion of storage, retiring peaking generation, incorporating BED's net zero energy goal, and including a graph showing Vermont importing 100% of time. An area of note is the forecast for loads to grow with the expectation to exceed the all-time peak fairly soon based on electrification of EV. The last two plans had seen no load growth during the first ten years of the forecast. The overall recommendation is to coordinate our plan in Vermont. Without this coordination, it will not be possible to meet the State's energy goals.

The public version of the plan will be finalized the end of March.

### **OVERVIEW OF SHARED, COMMON, AND EXCLUSIVE ASSET CLASSIFICATION**

Mr. Etori presented a slide on Facility Classification Legend. VELCO attempts to be consistent from one substation to the next. The VTAM manual was created years ago by the OC and is in need of updates. The facility classification group will be reviewing this document and will bring it back to the OC with necessary updates.

### **FLORENCE SUBSTATION SCAP PROJECT**

Mr. Poulin provided an overview of SCAP, noting that one of the main goals of the program is to provide a comprehensive analysis of the substation with a specific set of criteria. Mr. Poulin next provided a review of the Florence substation assessment, along with an alternative to the radial configuration and a slide on Facilities Classification. See presentation for details.

Mr. Poulin noted the project would be commissioned in December 2022.

Mr. Root indicated a vote on the classifications may be necessary. There was a discussion of the requirement outlined in the VTAM. A vote is necessary if there is a disagreement or if the affected

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utilities do not have an agreement on the classifications. The group requested Mr. Root send an email to them on how the classifications would be broken down. VELCO agreed to research whether a vote is needed. This project only affects GMP and there is an agreement for them to pay for the specific portion of the project. At the April meeting, there will be a further discussion on the topic.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **Open discussion**

- None

#### **Next meeting**

**Date:** April 15, 2020, 1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

**Location:** Virtual Meeting (ZOOM)

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

- Telecom Working Group – standing agenda item
- ISO behind-the-meter update
- Storage Update – quarterly agenda item
- Long Range Plan – Hantz Presume
- Texas Blackouts – Implications for New England – Jason Pew

### **MOTION TO ADJOURN**

Mr. Gibbons moved to adjourn, Mr. Burke seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 3:23 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tina Stevens  
VELCO OC Secretary