

Final VELCO Operating Committee MINUTES

DATE: October 21, 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):** Brent Lilley
- **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

Morgan Casella (Dynamic Organics), Brian Connaughton (VELCO), Tom Dunn (VELCO), Abe Fitch (VELCO), Kerrick Johnson (VELCO), Sarah Juzek (SED), Shana Louiselle (VELCO), Jason Pew (VELCO), Hantz Pr sum  (VELCO), Mark Sciarrotta (VELCO), Doug Smith (GMP), Allen Stamp (AP Stamp, Inc.), Trish Waugh (SED), John Woodward (Dynamic Organics)

OPENING REMARKS

Mr. Root verified a quorum and called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

SAFETY TOPIC

Mr. Fitch shared that hunting season is upon us and stressed the importance of hunter safety. A recent event involving duck hunters unaware they were shooting over a substation highlighted the need for situational awareness when hunting.

DRAFT MINUTES APPROVAL

Mr. Root presented the meeting minutes from September 16, 2021 for approval.

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

TELECOM WORKING GROUP

Mr. Stamp provided an update which included: approximately half the miles of the project have been reviewed with the Distribution Utilities; currently out at WEC from a construction standpoint and have made it three quarters of the way through the segment; will be adding another crew shortly; currently have roughly 180 miles of fiber in inventory; looking at ordering for next year's plan; procurement this fall to bring on more contractors.

Mr. Stamp also provided an outlook for 2022 noting they will be ramping up the miles, which will be a challenge. The 2022 work plan includes approximately 275 miles, of which the VELCO Driven Scope is 142 miles and Substation and DER Connections is 133 miles. Included in the 133 miles of Substation and DER Connections is 46 miles of VEC substation focus, 77 GMP miles, and 10 miles noted as Other.

PACIFIC NORTHWEST NATIONAL LABS / DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY GRANT

Mr. Casella and Mr. Woodward provided a presentation outlining a Distributed Energy Resource

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Data Integration Project underway with VELCO. This project includes the feasibility analysis of building and maintaining an interface for use by Distribution Utilities, along with DER owners and aggregators, that enables the exchange of standardized messages about DER. Some benefits of an interface include greater visibility of DER, along with tools for coordinating across transmission and distribution boundary.

The project is currently in an internal discovery and fact-finding stage with the expectation of engaging the Distribution Utilities soon. There will be two concepts for the Distribution Utilities to consider: DER Registry and DER Telemetry Access. Findings will be consolidated into a report outlining options for a software build project.

Finally, it was noted that VELCO is currently collaborating with Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) to provide a successful demonstration of network model exchange across the Transmission and Distribution interface. The first use case will be underfrequency load shedding decision support. This collaboration will leverage/supplement ongoing work related to designing CIM based data collection system, integrating T&D network models, standardizing representations of DER, and specifying telecommunications requirements. The benefit, VELCO is able to get this project off the ground with federal money.

Mr. Dunn asked about the load shedding application. How would this application work and how is it different from what is currently done? Mr. Woodward indicated knowing the location of DER on a circuit would cause different operational decisions when it comes to load shedding. Mr. Pew noted this knowledge of DER locations, along with the location of critical circuits, would lead to smarter decisions.

Mr. Connaughton indicated this will be a 3-year project. The schedule is still in development but the broad overview: year 1 is scoping and data collection, year 2 is PNNL work, and year 3 is validation and testing.

ISO UPDATE

Mr. Etori provided the following updates:

- The ISO budget was recently approved with absolutely no pushback on the 6% increase. The likely reason for the lack of pushback is the fact that ISO is being asked to do a lot with respect to studies.
- ISO provided a winter system outlook and indicated they are worried about this winter's fuel deliveries, along with the impact on the ability to serve load. Prices for energy this winter are expected to be much higher.
- With respect to Behind the Meter: the Transmission Owners previously filed a motion with FERC, FERC responded with questions, and the TOs provided responses to these questions. Additionally, a complaint was filed by NEPCA which the Transmission Owners are in the process of responding to.
- RENEW Northeast has a proposal in front of the Transmission Committee to change the way O & M costs are paid for by generator interconnections. Mr. Etori noted the plan is to vote in opposition to this proposal.

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OSHA VOSHA MANDATES FOR UTILITIES

Mr. Fitch provided some slides presenting an overview of the Biden Administration COVID-19 Vaccine Mandates and the Biden Administration COVID-19 Action Plan. Mr. Fitch noted that Vermont is a state plan state and VOSHA could adopt or expand on the OSHA mandates. See presentation for details.

Mr. Pew indicated it was noted during the MLCC Heads call earlier today that ISO is mandating vaccines for all employees by end of year or individuals will be asked to leave. ISO will be requiring proof of vaccine. NGRID is asking all employees to supply vaccine cards so they can gauge where the company is with respect to vaccinations. NGRID is leaning towards requiring vaccinations, but has not made that mandate as of yet. Eversource is requiring 100% vaccination by December 8th.

LOAD SHEDDING PLAN

Mr. Pew noted there is focus from ISO and the state regulatory authorities on the need for load shed rotation plans. VELCO has been working on gathering up the plans in order to ensure we have them and can act upon them if the need arises. Peter Brandien with ISO has organized a group consisting of LCC Operations and Communications individuals to ensure there is a working plan that can be implemented and concise messaging to go along with it. The group will be organizing a tabletop exercise, which will likely consist of State Regulators, LCCs, ISO, and possibly Distribution Utilities. The tabletop exercise is expected to be an educational exercise. The group has only had one meeting, but is expected to meet again early next month.

Mr. Pew next noted that one of the actions of OP4, Action 9, is to request voluntary load curtailment by large industrial and commercial customers. During today's MLCC Heads meeting, ISO asked the LCCs to assist them in calculating how much could likely be curtailed if Action 9 was declared. LCCs are expected to reach out to participants in order to help with this determination.

K42 PROJECT UPDATE

Mr. Presume provided an update on the K42 Transmission Line Replacement project noting that the proposal had been presented to the Planning Advisory Committee. The update included a review of identified K42 deficiencies, the proposed solution with options, and the implementation schedule. See presentation for details.

OTHER BUSINESS

Open discussion

- None

Next meeting

Date: November 18, 2021, 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
- FERC 2222 Order – update in the Fall
- James Gibbons presentation to Board

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- NOPR update
- GridEx report out
- Vaccine mandate

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Mr. Gibbons moved to adjourn, Mr. Powell seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 3:16 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tina Stevens
VELCO OC Secretary