Full Commission Meeting
September 30, 2014
Townshend Town Hall

Commissioners Present: Jodi French (Chair), Maggie Bartenhagen, Nicholas Bartenhagen, Sam Battaglino, Heath Boyer, Jenepher Burnell, Jack Cunningham, Charlie Goodwin, Emily Kunreuther, Alan LaCombe, Alice Maes, Ray Mara, Priscilla Margola, Georgianne Mora, Jane Morano-Purdy, Carolyn Partridge, Denis Pinkernell, Edgar Rice, Steve Skibniowsky, Lew Sorenson, Eric Stevens, Guy Tanza, Roger Turner, Piet van Loon, John Whitman
Commissioners via Telephone: Tom Consolino, Craig Hunt, Edith Mas, Elizabeth McLoughlin, Bill Murray, James Olivier
Citizen Interest Commissioners Present: Greg Brown, David Deen
Citizen Interest Commissioners via Telephone: Lynn Barrett, Lynette Hamilton
Staff Present: Chris Campany, Kim Smith, Ashley Collins

Introductions: There was a quorum of 21 towns represented; with 15 present and 6 towns via telephone.

Convened: 7:00PM

Administrative Items & Reports:
Secretary’s Report: On a motion by C. Partridge, seconded by J. Cunningham the minutes from the August meeting were approved, with one revision.
Financial Report: On a motion by C. Goodwin, seconded by C. Partridge the Finance Report was approved with one abstention.

Regional Plan Update: C. Partridge made a motion to approve the Regional Plan Update, seconded by P. van Loon; there was a unanimous vote by Commissioners who were present, and unanimous vote through roll call by the Commissioners participating by phone, in full support of the Regional Plan’s approval.

VELCO: Frank Ettori with VELCO was present to discuss the grid stability of electric transmission systems in Vermont. VELCO was formed in 1956 to share access to clean hydro power and maintain the transmission grid. They currently own and operate Vermont’s high
voltage transmission grid, and have 738 miles of transmission lines that run through the state. They are the backbone for the majority of high speed internet providers, and fiber optic communications in VT. Mr. Ettori explained that VELCO has a Vermont System Planning Committee (VSPC), which outlines the long range plan, and ensures transmission planning. He explained the variety of goals, threats and responses that VELCO is faced with. The main goal is consistent with the Comprehensive Energy Plan to have 90% renewable energy use by 2050.

Changing Resource Mix (CRM), extreme physical security events, protection system mis-operations, cold weather preparedness, right of way clearances and 345 Kv Breaker failures are just some of the threats that VELCO needs to plan for. In addition to cost increases, physical and cyber security, human performance and aging infrastructure, CRM is not only a threat but also a top risk for VELCO. When asked about the risks posed by electromagnetic pulses, he acknowledged there really was no way to prepare for them.

**ISO New England:** Eric Wilkinson of ISO New England works with the external affairs office, and covers policy in Vermont. ISO refers to independent system operator. Mr. Wilkinson explained that there are 3 core responsibilities at ISO: maintaining grid reliability so power remains on, day to day operations in the entire power system, and regional planning in New England for the Power System. ISO New England balances supply and demand everyday with power grids, and they coordinate transactions for power. He explained the regional issues, and noted that their planning efforts are for the entire New England region and they review a ten year plan, annually. Mr. Wilkinson displayed various graphs showing the changes in resources, changes in energy mixes and noted that oil and coal are almost never used. The changes in energy mix could result in some system instability as some fuels, especially natural gas, can be scarce in New England during periods of high demand. He also presented statistics on fuel mix in Vermont versus in New England as a whole. Mr. Wilkinson explained the strategic planning initiative, detailing the state requirements and how they drive the proposals for renewable energy. He also noted that the transmission systems run under federal regulations.

**Executive Director's Report:**
- Executive Director Chris Campany summarized an annual year-end report and the bi-monthly staff activity report.
- Chris explained that the first meeting was held of the VT Citizens Nuclear Decommissioning Advisory Panel.
- Twenty-Seven applications were submitted for Windham County's Economic Development program. Three of the proposals were seeking loans versus grant funds.
- The Clean Energy Development Fund (CEDF) sent out a request for information related to their plan to fund modern wood heating systems.
Chris also mentioned that he, WRC Planner Kim Smith and WRC Energy Committee chair Heath Boyer met with counterparts from the Bennington County RPC to discuss a collaboration on regional energy planning.

P. van Loon moved adjournment.

Meeting adjourned at 8:57PM

Respectfully submitted,

Ashley Collins