

DRAFT VELCO Operating Committee MINUTES

DATE: October 15, 2020, 1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

LOCATION: Virtual Meeting (ZOOM)

PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

- **Burlington Electric Department (BED):** Munir Kasti
- **Green Mountain Power (GMP):** Mike Burke, Brian Otley
- **Stowe Electric Department (SED):** David Kresock
- **Vermont Electric Cooperative (VEC):** Kris Smith
- **Vermont Electric Power Company (VELCO):** Chris Root, Tina Stevens
- **Vermont Public Power Supply Authority (VPPSA):** Stephen Fitzhugh
- **Washington Electric Cooperative (WEC):** Bill Powell

OTHER PARTICIPANTS

Betsy Bloomer (VELCO), Jeff Disorda (VELCO), Mike Fiske (VELCO), Abe Fitch (VELCO), Dermot Hughes (VELCO), Kerrick Johnson (VELCO), Bill Jordan – partial (VT Department of Public Service), Shana Louiselle (VELCO), Shawn Magoon (GMP), Dan Nelson (VELCO), Jason Pew (VELCO), Dan Poulin (VELCO), Hantz Presume (VELCO), Mark Sciarrotta (VELCO), and Allen Stamp (AP Stamp, Inc.)

OPENING REMARKS

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

SAFETY TOPIC

Mr. Root discussed the fact that there has been the need for innovative ways to provide safety training under the current restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. VELCO has been able to provide virtual safety meetings along with some in-person socially distanced training, such as a pole-top rescue training provided just this morning.

Mr. Burke indicated GMP has been able to provide some in-person safety training by finding a large enough area to keep everyone socially distanced.

Mr. Smith reported that VEC has also been providing some in-person safety training while observing the requirement to be socially distanced.

CYBER UPDATE

Mr. Jordan reported he had observed the joint Vermont Electric Utilities cyber security exercise which was performed on September 1st and felt the exercise had gone well. Mr. Jordan indicated it is good that utilities participate and challenge themselves.

Mr. Jordan then provided an update on the cyber security protocols. There were two open items from the last meeting he had attended: the nondisclosure agreement (NDA) and the public records exemption for cyber related information. Mr. Jordan indicated Mr. Sciarrotta had sent a draft of the NDA to the department and the department then sent comments back. There is one remaining item pertaining to the City of Burlington.

Mr. Sciarrotta indicated one utility needs to provide their approval. The draft NDA will go on the

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Burlington City Council agenda for approval in November. Once this approval is received, Mr. Sciarrotta will recirculate a final draft of the NDA.

Mr. Jordan reported, with respect to the public records exemption, there is the need to work with the administration. He is hopeful it will receive some traction in the next legislative session.

Mr. Jordan will leave room for the date of the NDA and will add a placeholder for the public records exemption and will circulate the document.

DRAFT MINUTES APPROVAL

Mr. Root presented the meeting minutes from September 17, 2020 for approval.

Mr. Fitzhugh moved for approval.

Mr. Powell seconded.

Mr. Fitzhugh then asked a question pertaining to the minutes. Mr. Root addressed the question and offered a minor edit for clarification.

Mr. Root asked for objections, hearing none, the minutes were approved as amended.

GMP INCIDENT OVERVIEW

Mr. Magoon provided a brief update on a safety incident that occurred back in July and which is still under investigation.

EMERALD ASH BORER (EAB) UPDATE

Mr. Disorda provided an update from the EAB Subcommittee which had met that morning. They began the meeting with a discussion on how COVID-19 is affecting vegetation management. There are some challenges but everyone has been adjusting. Mr. Disorda then reported that the EAB had recently been found in West Rutland. The location in which it was found has an impact on 20 towns, the largest impact to date. One notable item, the EAB has likely been there for four to five years. Mr. Disorda reported that the best way to identify the EAB is with woodpecker damage.

Mr. Burke asked if the thought is that the EAB is now statewide. Mr. Disorda indicated this is likely the case but the state hasn't declared that to be the case as of yet. Mr. Root asked if, with this finding, the whole timetable has now moved up. Mr. Disorda indicated that may be the case.

Mr. Disorda reported that most of the utilities are building the ash removal into their routine maintenance programs. There have also been some small outreach programs established. There hasn't been much difficulty with concerns related to cutting this amount of trees as of yet. There have been some refusals but most landowners have been receptive.

Mr. Disorda reported they had been working with the State on safety training for removal of these trees. This work was put on hold due to COVID-19. They have now reached out to some training companies that have experience in this area, looking to develop an online training.

Mr. Disorda indicated the EAB is coming to VT faster than previously thought. VELCO's EAB response plan:

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- Incorporate work into established cycles
- Seek to remove trees before infestation occurs
- Currently halfway through the response plan.

Mr. Disorda reported the next steps are:

- VT Utility working group may be needed to:
 - Coordinate resources
 - Lessons learned
 - Share info
 - Align published outreach materials to stakeholders
- Adjust plan as needed
 - Stakeholder outreach
 - Review and confirmation of easement rights
 - Monitor for new infestations

TELECOM WORKING GROUP

Mr. Stamp reported the Telecom Subcommittee is focused on reliability work. The group last met the first week of October. They have completed the assessment of routing taking it to 150 kW data points. They met with Stowe this week, are scheduled to meet with BED next week, and will be scheduling some things with Dan O'Hara for next week. The other big item is the validation of the cutoff point for data gathering. They are currently evaluating 150 kW, 250 kW, 0.5 MW, and 1 MW cutoff points. The overall schedule: development phase wrapping up end of October and will convey recommendation; engineering is the next phase planned for November 2020 to July 2021, with construction expected for Q1 & Q2 of next year. Mr. Stamp indicated construction will start with VELCO centric fiber work, broader work for fiber reliability project will follow. Mr. Stamps expects this to be a 3-year project, but it is dependent on the data point.

Mr. Smith asked if the review of the cutoff point is new. He had thought they had settled on a 150 kW data point. Mr. Stamp indicated the review is new and is a result of questions asking whether the data point could be validated.

IRASBURG PROJECT OVERVIEW

Mr. Hughes provided an overview of the Irasburg Substation Condition Assessment project. The project objective is to mitigate asset condition concerns. This work will address the 115 kV circuit switcher not meeting short circuit duty, along with regular scheduled maintenance and condition based replacements. The cost estimate for this work is \$4.6 million with 15% contingency.

Mr. Hughes provided a review of a facility classification diagram indicating this substation includes pool transmission facility (PTF), common (non-PTF), shared, and exclusive assets. GMP, VEC, WEC, Town of Barton, and Village of Orleans all own exclusive assets at this substation.

The project scope includes the following:

- Replace transformer high-side circuit switcher with circuit breaker
- Replace certain protection relays, meters and controls
- Replace (3) 46 kV oil circuit breakers with vacuum breakers

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- Replace 46 kV disconnects
- Retire 115 kV and 46 kV disconnects no longer utilized
- Replace lightning arresters
- Bring transformer oil containment up to current standards
- Replace stand-by power generator
- Repairs to existing control building

The outages required to perform this work will include a 115 kV bus outage, an H39 transformer outage, and a 46 kV bus outage.

The milestone schedule is as follows:

- Scope and estimate complete
- NTA screening complete
- Cost estimates have been presented to all Distribution Utilities with exclusive assets at Irasburg
- 45 day notice letter issued
- Expect to file for CPG in November 2020
- CPG expected in May 2021
- Construction to start in May 2021
- Project completion in October/November 2021

Mr. Hughes indicated the cost estimates presented to the Distribution Utilities did not include the cost of filing the CPG.

Mr. Burke asked if the outage of the 46 kV bus will affect generation. Mr. Hughes indicated outages are tentatively scheduled for late summer/early fall to minimize impact on generation in the area.

UPDATE ON PROGRESS OF RNL AND BTM GENERATION DISCUSSION

Mr. Root presented slides provided by Mr. Etori providing an update on transmission cost allocation issues for behind the meter generation. The status update included the following:

- Several New England Transmission Owners (NETO) and Regional Utility Group (RUG) meetings have occurred
- Nothing definite at this time
- Looking at defining a BTM generator
- BTM requiring reconstitution as follows:
 - Effective on a future TBD date. (Not effecting current resources)
 - A stand-alone generator greater than 1 MW.
 - A generator, behind a load meter, at least 1 MW greater than the demand.

Mr. Root indicated VELCO will continue to provide periodic updates on this matter.

OTHER BUSINESS

Open discussion

- None

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Next meeting

Date: November 19, 2020, 1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Location: Virtual Meeting (ZOOM)

Possible topics for discussion

- Telecom Working Group – standing agenda item
- Update on progress of RNL and Behind-the-meter generation discussion
- October 5% voltage reduction test results
- 3340 Line Tree Contact NPCC/NERC Potential Violation update

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Mr. Fitzhugh moved to adjourn, Mr. Burke seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 2:43 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tina Stevens
VELCO OC Secretary