

# Final VELCO Operating Committee MINUTES

**DATE:** April 15, 2021, 1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

**LOCATION:** Virtual Meeting (ZOOM)

## **PARTICIPATING MEMBERS**

- **Burlington Electric Department (BED):** James Gibbons, Munir Kasti
- **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, Tina Stevens
- **Vermont Public Power Supply Authority (VPPSA):** Stephen Fitzhugh
- **Washington Electric Cooperative (WEC):** Bill Powell

## **OTHER PARTICIPANTS**

Cyril Brunner (VEC), Brian Connaughton (VELCO), Tom Dunn (VELCO), Bill Jordan – partial (VT Department of Public Service), Ed McGann (VELCO), Dan Nelson (VELCO), Jason Pew (VELCO), Dan Poulin (VELCO), Hantz Pr sum  (VELCO), Mark Sciarrotta (VELCO), Doug Smith (GMP), Karin Stamy (VELCO)

## **OPENING REMARKS**

Mr. Root verified a quorum and called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

## **SAFETY TOPIC**

Mr. Root noted this month is distracted driving month. VELCO has been highlighting distracted driving awareness as a safety topic with employees.

Mr. Burke brought up the fact that the ticks are already active and springtime seems to be one of the worst times for tick activity.

## **CYBER UPDATE**

Mr. Jordan provided an update on the public records exemption for cyber related information. A provision was put into H.431 for this exemption. The bill was passed in the House and is now in the Senate. There were no questions during testimony and he expects the bill to go through this session.

Mr. Jordan next noted H.431 also includes a slight difference to the protocol for accident investigations pertaining to utility plants which involve VOSHA. The slight difference is that VOSHA will take the lead on the investigations and the Department will take a supporting role.

## **DRAFT MINUTES APPROVAL**

Mr. Root presented the meeting minutes from March 18, 2021 for approval noting a few minor changes related to Florence Substation SCAP Project section.

Mr. Fitzhugh moved for approval, Mr. Gibbons seconded, and the minutes were approved as amended.

## **FLORENCE FACILITY CLASSIFICATION**

In follow up to the previous Operating Committee meeting, Mr. Root presented a Florence

## **Final VELCO Operating Committee MINUTES**

Facility Classification diagram for member discussion. Mr. Root noted that it is VELCO's regular practice to bring these classifications to the Committee for discussion, however a vote is not required under the Vermont Transmission Administration Manual (VTAM) unless there is a dispute as to the cost allocation. Mr. Sciarrotta indicated that Ms. Stamy has been assigned the role of VTAM administrator and that VELCO expects to present VTAM revisions to the Committee this year sequenced over a few meetings. The revisions will memorialize VELCO's practice of bringing classification diagrams to the Committee for discussion. Mr. Poulin then provided a review of the Florence Facility Classification diagram which the Committee discussed.

### **TELECOM WORKING GROUP**

Mr. Nelson indicated the group is meeting next week. They are currently looking at administrative approach to fiber ownership and allocation. Routing reviews are under way. GMP has 140 miles of route approved. Working with WEC to finalize routing and allocation. Looking to schedule the routing with other utilities. VELCO has 20 miles of fiber on hand, 20 miles more to come next week, and more coming in May. There is the need for discussions on approach to interconnect with DER sites.

### **ISO BEHIND-THE-METER UPDATE**

Mr. Etori reviewed a presentation that had been presented at the Markets and Transmission Committees. The NE Transmission Owners proposal now focuses on the definition of Monthly RNL, adding additional specificity here rather than to the definition of RNL. Additionally, the "behind-the-meter" term has been eliminated from the definition of RNL. This will allow the RNL definition to better align with the FERC pro forma OATT language. The NE Transmission Owners proposal more closely aligns Monthly RNL with other load calculation and minimizes impact to existing and future resources.

Mr. Etori noted there was unanimous support of the proposal at the April 9<sup>th</sup> Participating Transmission Owners Administrative Committee (PTOAC). Upcoming is the vote at the Transmission Committee on April 27<sup>th</sup> and then a vote at the Markets Committee on May 11<sup>th</sup>.

### **STORAGE UPDATE**

Mr. Connaughton provided an update on the subcommittee. They had their first meeting last week and quickly began discussions around what the extra value is from mobility. The group is trying to get a better understanding of cost and reviewing docking station options. The next meeting is scheduled for early May. The group will review the VELCO business case and begin to answer questions related to cost and added value. There should be another update at the next OC meeting in May.

### **LONG RANGE PLAN**

Mr. Presume provided a presentation on the draft Long Range Plan which had been shared previously noting some additional slides on storage have been added to the presentation. See presentation for details.

Currently in the outreach stage. Have meetings scheduled with the public. Expect to publish the plan by July 1, 2021.

## **Final** VELCO Operating Committee MINUTES

### **TEXAS BLACKOUTS – IMPLICATIONS FOR NEW ENGLAND**

In 2011, there was a Southwest cold weather event. Issues were identified as a result of this event, including lack of weatherization. The outcome was NERC developed and released *Reliability Guideline: Generating Unit Winter Weather Readiness* in December 2012. In 2018, there was a similar cold weather event in South Central United States. During the 2018 event, over 46000 MW of natural gas generation was lost. The outcome was the identification of the needs to develop cold weather NERC Standards. The 2021 event was again a cold weather event in which ERCOT had to shed load and implement feeder rotations to preserve the frequency within the region. FERC and NERC are in the process of investigating the 2021 event.

The New England region has been identified by NERC as an energy/fuel risk area that could result in emergency actions similar to the latest ERCOT event. New England's reliance on natural gas, the limited number of pipelines supplying this to the region, and the lack of firm contracts for generation supply all contribute to the identified risk. New England's Cold Weather Preparedness includes the following: ISO-NE actively monitors natural gas supplies, encourages dual fuel generation, and developed the Pay for Performance and Inventoried Energy Programs.

See presentation for further details.

### **LOAD SHED PLAN DISCUSSION**

VELCO is required to be able to shed 50% of its area load within 10 minutes. This is accomplished through Operating Instructions to each 24/7 Control Center per ISO-NE and VELCO Operating Procedure Number 7. VELCO will be reaching out to each of the control centers and VT Distribution Utilities to understand the load shed plans in place. Questions to consider:

- What are the loads identified for shedding?
- What are considered priority loads for each area?
- What are the considerations for renewables and/or time of day?
- What are the plans for extended load shed event?

### **RETURN TO OFFICE DISCUSSION**

Mr. Rossi indicated VEC has updated some of their internal guidelines based on recent updates to the State's guidance. Additionally, they are currently working on their remote working policy which will provide guidelines for supervisors and managers. Overall he does not expect to see a huge influx of employees coming in since they have been managing quite well during the pandemic. Mr. Rossi noted that the July 4<sup>th</sup> to Labor Day time period will be a transition time to more normal work.

Mr. Burke noted GMP is doing similar things to VEC. GMP just put out notice yesterday to employees that, if vaccinated, they can be in a work vehicle without masks if both are vaccinated. Their plan is to have everyone come back soon, even office staff, based on universal guidance. GMP is following the State's guidelines.

Mr. Dunn noted VELCO will be working through a transitional period during the summer. VELCO expects to make the transition slowly in order to address employee concerns.

## **Final** VELCO Operating Committee MINUTES

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATE**

Mr. Dunn noted the annual meeting was held recently. No additional updates were provided due to lack of time.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **Open discussion**

- None

#### **Next meeting**

**Date:** May 20, 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
- Storage Update – quarterly agenda item
- Discussion on FERC Order 222
- Return to Office discussion
- Updates on Texas Event – outcomes
- Sandbar PST update

### **MOTION TO ADJOURN**

Mr. Gibbons moved to adjourn, Mr. Rossi seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 3:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tina Stevens  
VELCO OC Secretary