

# FINAL VELCO Operating Committee MINUTES

**Date:** June 20, 2019, 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**Location:** Green Mountain Power Montpelier, VT

**Call-in:** 1-866-720-4556, Code: 6027065

## **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
- **Vermont Electric Power Company (VELCO):** Chris Root, Frank Etori, Jason Pew
- **Vermont Public Power Supply Authority (VPPSA):** Craig Myotte (by phone)
- **Washington Electric Cooperative (WEC):** Bill Powell

## **OTHER PARTICIPANTS**

Brian Connaughton (VELCO), Jeff Disorda (VELCO), Tom Dunn (VELCO), Abe Fitch (VELCO), Bill Jordan partial through Cyber Security discussion (VT Department of Public Service), Brian Otley (GMP), Colin Owyang (VELCO), and Hantz Presume (VELCO)

## **OPENING REMARKS**

Mr. Root called the meeting to order at 11:03 a.m. and reviewed the agenda.

## **SAFETY TOPIC**

Mr. Fitch provided an overview of a line contact that had occurred recently in an adjacent Transmission Operator area. A structure was removed and the line was allowed to sag in proximity to the ground. Grounds were installed on all phases; however, induced current from a still in-service adjacent line had caused a potential voltage on the out of service line. Since the line was sagged within 5' of the ground, a line worker walking by had brushed the line and incurred a shock. Responders on site used an AED to revive the worker on the scene.

Multiple takeaways from the event were discussed that included grounding techniques and zones of protection, construction practices that allowed the line to be sagged extremely low, and most notable was the use of the onsite AED.

As a follow-up from the event, VELCO has added the verification and location of worksite AEDs to the VELCO tailboard. Mr. Fitch also discussed the importance of maintaining AEDs in working order and having a regular inspection of them.

## **CYBER SECURITY DISCUSSION**

Mr. Jordan provided a review of the current activity in the cyber field within VT. He reported that the formation of a VT cyber group, similar to the Joint Utilities Emergency Preparations group, is ongoing. Some utilities have provided contacts for group participation; a comprehensive list has yet to be created.

Mr. Root discussed that China is working on a project to separate communication infrastructure from external connectivity.

Mr. Jordan asked about how the VT Distribution Utilities (VDU) are identifying the use of potential components that pose a cyber-risk. Mr. Connaughton provided a brief overview of the NERC CIP-013 Standard, the industry response including resources publically available through the NATF. This information was subsequently provided via email to the OC members.

## MINUTES APPROVAL

Mr. Etori presented the meeting minutes from May 16, 2019 for approval.

Mr. Powell moved for approval, Mr. Gibbons seconded, and the minutes were approved without objection.

## GLYPHOSATE (ROUNDUP) USE

Mr. Disorda provided an overview the herbicide that included a history of its use beginning in 1974 that has evolved to today's uses in vegetation management in agriculture and ROW.

VELCO uses the herbicide as approved by the state and in accordance with issued permits and product labeling.

Recent lawsuits against Monsanto, the producer of the herbicide, claiming it is a carcinogen was discussed. The most notable being a lawsuit in California that where a plaintiff was awarded \$289M; thousands more similar lawsuits are pending.

## VELCO 2020/2021 BUDGET

Mr. Etori provided a reminder for the VDUs to let us know what projects we should plan on for the upcoming 2-year budget cycle. Items such as Planning, protection & control, and services that could be provided.

## NORTHVIEW STATUS UPDATE

Mr. Owyang discussed the Northview Weather proposals for outage prediction and the two cost allocation options that have been proposed: System Line Miles or System Area Coverage.

A discussion on the potential risk exposure led to the fact that the best representation of risk is by using a line mile allocation. The group agreed to this approach with the stipulation that VEC would not incur increased costs over their current contract.

Mr. Owyang agreed to present the latest proposal, as agreed upon, back to Northview and report back to the OC.

## VERMONT ENERGY DASHBOARD

Mr. Owyang discussed the [www.vtenergydashboard.org](http://www.vtenergydashboard.org) current and potential future (dashboard 2.0) project. The data being used currently comes from the state database that contains projects that have been approved but might not have been installed; leading to errors in the data. Energy Action Network (EAN) has been running the dashboard successfully.

A discussion of who might host the dashboard in the future included several options

including VELCO, EAN, VEIC, and cloud services. One concern that the group agreed upon was that of data security and privacy and scope of the project.

Mr. Otley proposed that an appropriate amount of time be allocated to developing the scope of the project before any decisions on the direction are finalized. Mr. Owyang agreed to communicate back to the Dashboard 2.0 project group to develop a path forward with DU involvement.

## **VELCO JUNE BOARD OF DIRECTORS (BOD) UPDATE**

Mr. Dunn discussed the last BOD meeting. Highlights included the approval of the VELCO Strategic Plan; VELCO is in a good fiscal position, broadband work to support underserved areas, regional NE topics, and status on the PV20 project.

## **SHEFFIELD HIGHGATE EXPORT INTERFACE UPDATE**

Mr. Root provided a brief overview of the K42 line (Highgate to Georgia) originally built in 1958. About sixty-eight percent of the structures on the line are in need of replacement within 8 years. The K42 line is integral to the transmission system as it exports power from the northern VT system and therefore taking the line out of service to replace the structures is not desired.

A potential synergy exists between the replacement of the structures and a complete rebuild of the line. If the cost of structure replacement was used toward the construction of a parallel line, the Vermont cost for a SHEI solution would be significantly reduced and additional capacity would yield a longer-term solution to the current export issues from northern VT (SHEI). Once the new line was built, the current line would be removed.

This proposed solution has yet to seek approval, as the costs estimates are in development, alternatives must be considered and a funding mechanism determined. One potential solution discussed was an added connection fee for any new projects within the currently constrained area that would have not otherwise been allowed. Mr. Root proposed that VELCO determine the long-term upgrades that would provide benefits beyond the short-term upgrades being pursued. The planning analysis would be coordinated with DU planners and would build upon the EIG study performed in 2018. That approach was agreed upon by the group; participants from each of the respective planning departments will be provided.

## **GENERATION DATA SHARING**

Mr. Presume discussed a need to capture Distributed Generation (DG) data in a repeatable accurate process. Although Solar PV has the greatest impact in terms of low midday net loads, other types of DG also contribute to reducing midday loads. VELCO requested that telemetered SCADA data be sent to VELCO through ICCP, and that installed nameplate data be provided on a regular basis. Further, VELCO recommended that a working group be formed to collaborate on a DG data sharing process.

Mr. Burke reported that he would investigate getting VELCO added to an already existing process that updates various stakeholders on similar GMP data.

Mr. Rossi reported that he would discuss internally and will set up a meeting to discuss further.

## CURRENT TOPICS IN VT LEGISLATURE

Mr. Sciarrotta provided an end of session Legislative wrap up. The session was notable for the majority priorities that did not pass that included paid family leave and minimum wage.

- The State's budget includes money for EV charging deployment and news reports indicate that the goal is to have a fast charger installed within 30 miles of every Vermonter within three years.
- The legislature passed an energy bill that made minor procedural adjustments to the PUC process and which require batteries larger than 500kW to obtain a CPG.
- A broadband bill, which was signed into law today, provides grant and loan money for broadband expansion following the submission of a 'feasibility' study by the DPS; expected to explore whether electric utility infrastructure can be leveraged to expand broadband. The bill also raised the USF fee and created/funded a position at the DPS focused on broadband.
- The PUC will also be looking at pole attachment issues.
- Outside of the legislature, the PUC has commenced an interconnection rulemaking, which might be a good topic for a future OC meeting.

## OTHER BUSINESS

### Open discussion

- Joint OC/CFO meeting moved to September and will be held in Montpelier
- The August OC meeting was discussed a potential cancellation or reschedule
- Mr. Rossi discussed a potential new fire code, revised NFPA Standard 855, which may require fire detection, maintenance, and suppression systems for battery storage devices. Currently the revision is specific to li-ion batteries but could expand in the future.
- Mr. Rossi discussed AT&T First Net telecommunications network, a nationwide emergency telecommunications network for first responders and other priority customers such as the electric utilities. VEC plans on participating and registering two of their leadership's wireless phones for that will be active on the network full time if necessary. Other company phones will be registered and can be activated upon an emergency.

**Next meeting**

**Date:** July 18, 2019, 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**Location:** Green Mountain Power Montpelier, VT

**Action Items**

- July Meeting potentially held at Norwich to coordinate with Mr. Jordan's ongoing cyber group report-out; need to discuss more with Mr. Stephen Fitzhugh on status of Norwich hosting the July OC.

**Possible topics for discussion**

- Mr. Sciarrotta to discuss PUC's interconnection rulemaking
- Mr. Jordan's next visit, potentially in August, could include a CIP-013 supply chain and the associated EEI and NATF whitepaper discussion

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

Mr. Rossi moved to adjourn, Mr. Root seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 02:34pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Pew  
VELCO OC Secretary