

**SB191 State Energy Advisory Council (SEAC) Meeting
DRAFT Meeting Notes**

Location: LOB 304

Date: April 11, 2014

Time: 1:30 to 3:30 pm

Council Members in Attendance:

- Meredith Hatfield, Director of the Office of Energy and Planning, SEAC Chair
- Representative Beatrice Pastor
- Representative Charles Townsend
- Representative Herbert Vadney
- Mike Fitzgerald for Commissioner Tom Burack, DES
- David Shulock for Commissioner Amy Ignatius, PUC

Other agency staff in attendance:

- Rebecca Ohler, DES
- Brandy Chambers, OEP
- Karen Cramton, OEP
- Les Stachow, PUC

1:36 Introductions & Approval of Notes from last meeting

1:40 Navigant Presentation

This afternoon is a replication of the discussion we had at the last meeting where we discussed policies and initiatives related to energy efficiency. Today we'll be discussing transportation options and fuel choice.

Fuel use reduction

- Rep. Townsend: Idling policies may also be relevant to diesel train engines, etc.
- Becky: Procurement standards on the state side are made difficult by lack of availability of high-efficiency vehicles in the light truck category
- Scott Albert: Is there information on current electric vehicle charging stations in the state? Would be good to have a baseline.
 - Available data indicates somewhere between 22 and 28
- Laura Richardson: Other fuel-reduction policies include roundabouts (replacing stop signs or lights, keeps traffic flowing), open road tolling, right turn on red, etc.
- Rep. Pastor: Do you have examples of states doing registration fees based on fuel efficiency?
 - No one currently doing, but under consideration. NH could be the first to adopt it, and be a leader.
- Meredith: Does CAL-LEV adoption require legislation?
 - Becky: Yes, tried in 2003-2004, did not pass.
- Rep. Townsend: Do we have vehicles sold here that don't meet the standard?
 - Becky: Probably, not all of the manufacturers make a 50- state car, they meet federal standards but not CAL-LEV. Another big difference is consumer warranty—consumers in NH don't get the benefit of a longer warranty because we aren't part of CAL-LEV.

- Becky: California also has a zero-emissions vehicle (ZEV) standard, and all the other New England states (plus 9 other states) have also adopted that. Without that standard here, dealers have a much reduced incentive to try to sell electric vehicles (EVs).

Electric Vehicle Adoption

- NU representative: As was just noted, the ZEV structure is an important incentive for automakers. On the dealer side, closing the sale on an EV can take longer, and they have to be certified and trained. So automakers are going to target areas where they can get ZEV credits, it's not worth the investment to be in states like NH that aren't ZEV states.
 - Another policy tool in California is the allowance of EVs in HOV lane. Was noted that that is not relevant in NH, which currently doesn't have HOV lanes.
- Becky: DES participates in the Transportation Climate Initiative, a collaboration of the 11 mid-Atlantic and Northeast state transportation, environmental and energy agencies working to reduce GHG emissions from the transportation sector. TCI has developed a technical guidance document for communities on siting charging stations and permitting in homes.

Natural gas vehicle adoption

- Becky: Infrastructure builders say that they need a base fleet of 25 heavy-duty trucks in order to make it worth it to build a station.
- Hatfield: We recently heard that NH is getting two, one in Pembroke and in Concord. Is there sufficient demand in both places?
 - Becky: That remains to be seen. Both of those stations will be used primarily to put natural gas on trucks and deliver it to customers who are far away from pipeline infrastructure. Vehicle fueling is an off-shoot of both projects, and at the Concord location the station will not be accessible to other vehicles. There is also a state-owned vehicle filling station in Concord, which we are hoping to make public access soon.
- Becky: Another thing we've been talking to towns about is considering requiring their contract fleets (e.g. street sweeping, trash collection) to be NG
- It was noted that there is a station in Nashua that is a public-private partnership; Nashua had hoped to transition their trash trucks and public works vehicles to NG, and they approached state about ARRA funding to purchase trucks. They were granted the funding, which covered a large portion of the fleet so the city was able to invest in the filling station, and they allow private fleets to use it as well.
- Lori Lerner: Do we know where other states in NE are on this effort?
 - Becky: Even with the significant investments happening in other states, it's not enough to have a robust infrastructure, there are pockets of availability, but it's not cross-state.

Mass Transit

- Limited infrastructure currently, and little to no coordination between entities
- Becky: The state has required that any of the busses that receive funding from the state be on Google maps, but this area is a really challenging one for us.
 - NH's one position in DOT that was responsible for coordinating ride-share was cut during the last budgeting process. A group called Commute Green NH is trying to take that over, but again, no funding

- NU: For transit systems, there are some federal opportunities for switching to electric buses/alternative energy
 - Becky: The problem we're having with the federal funding is that there's always a match requirement, and we just don't have it. The pots we have are so restrictive in terms of what they can be used for, none of them allow us to put a match toward public transit efforts.
- Richard Swett: There's been a lot of talk about rail for the better part of 3 decades, but I've come to the conclusion that it's a dead dog. So are you looking seriously at bussing, and dedicated lanes?
 - Ben: I can't speak to the availability of funds in NH, but these types of inputs are exactly what we hope to discuss with the council.
 - Rep. Vadney: I agree on this issue as far as trains go, they're impractical at this point.

Smart planning/Reducing VMT

- Becky: One effort is Granite State Futures, which the regional planning commissions are undertaking to talk about livability standards and tying all of these issues together.
- Some communities are working on efforts to encourage compact development around town centers that are easier to serve with transit options.

Pricing programs

- Current insurance pricing structures are not transparent; we do pay more to drive more.
- Becky: There are some small, non-cost policies that the state can implement to have an impact. One relates to parking spaces at schools. Today every high school kid drives instead of taking the bus or carpooling.
- Rep. Vadney: I agree with the issue of parking, a lot of studies have indicated that they best way to control traffic is to limit parking. However, the school buses are another problem; I watch them run 50-60 passenger buses to pick up 4 or 5 kids, because their parents are driving them all in their own cars but the school district must provide a seat for every kid.
- David: A problem with dis-incentivizing driving in NH is that there are no other options, there's no public transportation, you really do have to drive to most places.

Fuel Choice

Nat gas availability

- Rep. Pastor: In the case of these 'virtual pipelines,' are the emissions benefits from natural gas offset by the trucking, and the leakage from the piping systems?
 - Meredith: Some of the trucking companies are also using natural gas fleets. The state could prioritize converting everyone who is already on a pipeline.
- Ellen Hawes: I just want to echo those points, I think it makes sense to look at conversion on or near mains, but we are concerned with the idea of spending a lot of money expanding infrastructure, which we'd be paying back for years. What if prices suddenly changed in the near term? We'd be stuck still paying for that infrastructure build-out
- Rep. Vadney: The even bigger issue with natural gas is that no one really knows what the long-term production of these gas fields is, what if we spend all of this money on infrastructure and they dry up in 30 years?

Geothermal

- Lori Lerner: Do we have any programs to speak to the users of geothermal to find out what they're getting? I have a system and would love to share knowledge, experiences, data, to find out whether it is a good solution.
 - General agreement that while such a program would be valuable, would who collect the data? Perhaps a website or blog could be set up to allow people to connect to each other.
- Audience member noted that it is important to make it easy for these system to participate in the RPS.

Air Source Heat Pumps

- Efficiency Maine's website is set up so that that in 2 clicks, you can find a list of installers, while NH website is hard to navigate for these systems.
- Carol Woods: There is a challenge on contractor education & awareness.

Biomass

- Wood pellet shortage this winter.
 - Charlie Niebling: the market will respond with more supply. People stocked up less after several mild winters.
- Rep. Vadney to Charlie Niebling: What percentage of pellets are produced here?
 - Charlie: About 50%; the rest are imported from other states in the region

Solar Thermal

- Les Stachow: IKEA now carrying whole-package in the UK; this kind of customer convenience is a key to adoption

District Heating

- Les Stachow: only relevant in densely populated areas

- Lori Lerner: I think across the board, it would be helpful to give consumers more information about others' experiences with various technologies
- Discussion about comprehensive information collection & evaluation
- The Green Home Tourist on the NH Sustainable Energy Association is working on getting this data together—see <http://gboh.nhsea.org/> .

Rep. Vadney: I think one factor that is missing is convenience—people won't do it if it's not convenient. Also redundancy.

Fitzgerald: The financing aspect is really important, we need to keep it in all these discussions. Also home valuation—have to make sure that consumers get their investments back at sale.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 Next meeting is April 21st at 1:30pm.