

**NORTH CAROLINA ENERGY POLICY COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
10:00 a.m., Wednesday, August 16, 2023  
Green Square Training Room  
217 West Jones Street Raleigh, NC 27603**

**Energy Policy Council Members Present**

Brian LiVecchi  
Chris Millis  
Gus Simmons  
John Hardin  
John White

Lt. Governor Mark Robinson  
Paul Worley  
Venu Ghanta  
Susan Munroe

**Energy Policy Council Members Not Present**

John Szoka  
Paolo Carollo

Scott Tew  
Sushma Masemore

**CALL TO ORDER**

Lt. Governor Mark Robinson called the Energy Policy Council (EPC) meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. on Wednesday, August 16, 2023. He opened the meeting and welcomed the members and participants. After new councilmen Mr. Chris Millis introduced himself, Lt. Governor Robinson asked for a motion to approve the EPC's May 17, 2023, meeting minutes. Mr. Paul Worley moved to approve the minutes, and Mr. Gus Simmons seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. Lt. Governor Robinson then stated that the presenters would begin their presentation concerning updates on numerous topics. Any questions the council has will be discussed after the speakers present their topics.

**Update on NC Carbon Plan: Venu Ghanta**

After introducing himself as a new councilman with the Energy Policy Council and his role with Duke Energy as the Vice President, NC Regulatory Affairs and Policy, Mr. Venu Ghanta began his presentation concerning the NC Carbon Plan. Mr. Ghanta first stated that a version of the Carbon Plan concerning South Carolina was recently filed and that the North Carolina Carbon Plan would be filed with NC Utilities Commission in the coming days. During his insight on the filing, he stated that there has been a drastic change as the landscape in the Carolinas is in the midst of transformation. For instance, Mr. Ghanta stated that there has been a tremendous growth in electricity demand due to economic development, residential demand, and an increase in electric transportation by residential and non-residential customers. With this increase in energy demand, there is an expectancy of an 8% increase in electric demand by 2030. He noted that the plan provides a balance about dispatchable on demand generation when you need it along with the growing number of complementary renewables that deliver fuel free energy. During the rest of his presentation, he discussed the broader trend in the industry away from coal, the need for additional pump storage hydro, and a few other key items. He spoke on the importance of communities and understanding the best way to support the communities through the deployment of natural gas and stakeholder engagement. It was noted that quite a few of the stakeholder feedback given was implemented into the NC Carbon Plan after having numerous meetings over

a four-month period concerning resource planning. Mr. Ghanta closed by speaking on advanced nuclear and Duke Energy's goal to ensure clean energy is provided.

From his discussion concerning licensing for existing units and the potential for expansion, Mr. Brian LiVecchi asked for clarification on expanding the capacity to which Mr. Ghanta stated that it is subsequent license renewals that assist with extending the life beyond the code along with the then possibility of power upgrades (which would need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis); then the next focus to consider would be the measurement uncertainty recapture. Mr. Simmons then asked Mr. Ghanta to provide the relative ratio of base load generation compared to dispatchable in which he stated that there is a ratio and at least a need of 15 thousand. He advised reviewing the plan as it contains an in-depth analysis of the matter at hand. With no further questions, Lt. Governor Robinson then asked for the next presenter to begin discussion on the NC NEVI/Clean Transportation Plan.

### **Update on NC NEVI/Clean Transportation Plan: Heather Hildebrandt & Paula Hemmer**

Ms. Heather Hildebrandt began her discussion by first refreshing the council and public on the Executive Orders (primarily EO 246), and a brief overview of the Clean Transportation Plan including its focus and key goals. With the help of stakeholder engagement, Ms. Hildebrandt mentioned that the plan is a guide to provide strategies on how to achieve an equitable clean transportation system along with the four focus areas that will assist in reaching that goal (Governance, Infrastructure, Funding/Finance, and Communication/Engagement). While discussing the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Program (NEVI), Ms. Hildebrandt explained the split of (1) \$5 Billion that is given as a direct allocation to states; (2) CFI grants (Competitive) of \$2.5 Billion. Some of the requirements consists of but are not limited to: Charging must be Level 3 (DCFC), Must be located no more than 1 mile from AFC, 20% non-Federal match, and must support (4)x150kW minimum per station. After explaining the phases and goals, Ms. Hildebrandt provided an update on the deployment process in which they are in the Procurement stage and ranking for phase 1 (Design build requires legislative change to implement on private property and need to determine clusters/bundling). In closing, she spoke on recent announcements on chargers relating to Tesla opening its North American Charging Standard (NACS) connector for use by other automakers and the plan by seven major automakers, to build 30,000 DCFC ports by 2030.

Mr. Brian LiVecchi asked for clarity on the map discussed by Ms. Hildebrandt as it concerns Tesla not being part of the existing NEVI compliant chargers, which was answered with they are not. The ones listed were funded through Electrify America, which was the DC fast. Lt. Governor Robinson asked how many vehicles could be charged to the Existing NEVI compliant DCFC charger markings on the map illustration from the presentation, which Ms. Hildebrandt stated was up to four, but it ultimately depends on the location. Mr. Simmons asked if NCDOT is applying for the competitive money and then sub granting it out. Ms. Hildebrandt answered stating that while NCDOT could apply, they didn't because they didn't identify it as a true need based on the current project analysis. Mr. Simmons followed-up asking how additional EV's in use help position us for additional funding to which she responded stating that the more vehicles in an area to use the infrastructure the more quickly the return on investment for the infrastructure occurs.

Mr. LiVecchi asked about solutions for if an electric vehicle is stuck in traffic and clarification on legislative change as it concerns the deployment process. While not a major issue at the moment, Ms. Hildebrandt assured the council that planning for the issue is being studied. For instance,

studies at NC State are being conducted to stage charging, along with further studies on how further support can be provided for those vehicles/individuals who solely have electric vehicles. Although Ms. Hildebrandt recommends referring to a lawyer to discuss the legislative change in the deployment process, she understands that NCDOT have mechanisms do to design build and that the process is improving from going through to make changes for NCDOT to be able to contract with the particular entities. With no further questions from the council, Lt. Governor Robinson stated that he has serious concerns about the topic at hand such as how agenda driven it is and the direction it's going. He additionally states that he believes NCDOT should be spending their time more wisely trying to provide highway systems to people out on the coast who need it and trying to figure out plans to get high speed internet for those in the West. Upon concluding the presentation and open discussion, Mr. LiVecchi stated that they would have a brief intermission before proceeding with the final two presentations.

### **Update on VW Settlement Projects and Funding Opportunities: Brian Phillips**

Mr. Brian Phillips, an employee with the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) provided the council and public with a presentation concerning the NC Volkswagen Settlements. He started by providing a brief background summary on the topic concerning Volkswagen being found guilty of installing defeat devices on their two- and three-liter diesel vehicles from which the state received approximately \$92 Million for mitigation. Mr. Phillips discussed the two phases that consisted of award programs for school buses, transit buses, on-road, DC Fast ZEV Infrastructure, and Level 2 ZEV Infrastructure (some of the vehicles were but not limited to; propane, electric, and diesel). Within the phases, he discussed the program stats by the program constructed and the Diesel Emission Reduction Act (DERA), which was funded by EPA and approved by Congress.

In closing his presentation, Mr. Simmons asked if there were any applications received for CNG filling stations to which Mr. Phillips stated that it was not allowed for infrastructure and only for electric vehicle replacements. Mr. Simmons then asked a follow-up about the chicken and egg analogy concerning CNG vehicles versus the availability of fueling stations. Mr. Phillips answered that it hasn't been a question within their meetings concerning the topic. Mr. LiVecchi asked if any other dimension reductions were measured other than nitrous oxide in which Mr. Phillips added that there were more and that he could provide more information to the council. After concluding open discussion with the council concerning the VW Settlement, Mr. LiVecchi then asked for Ms. Julie Woosley to provide her updates on funding opportunities.

### **Funding Opportunity Updates (IIJA & IRA): Julie Woosley**

State Energy Office (SEO) Director, Ms. Julie Woosley, provided the council and the public with additional updates since the last meeting concerning the numerous funding opportunities that SEO is currently working on. Ms. Woosley firstly reminded the council and public of the differences between the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) in which, BIL provides grants/research and development programs through various DOE offices and IRA builds on existing tax code to provide investment tax credits and production tax credits through the Department of Treasury. She additionally discussed some of the federal funding opportunities that currently exist in SEO (EPA CPRG, 40101(d), 40103(b), SEP funding, Weatherization BIL, 40502 State EE Revolving Loan Fund, etc.). Ms. Woosley then provided a representation of the SEO's current funding separated out by FY 23 & FY24 Revenues as of July 2023. Following the end of the presentation and with no questions, the EPC moved to their sub-committee reports.

## **Sub-Committee Reports**

### **Energy Assurance Committee**

Sub-Committee Chair, Mr. Paul Worley, mentioned the joint meeting that took place with the Energy Infrastructure Committee alongside sub-committee Chair, Mr. Gus Simmons, where there was a presentation on Natural Gas Capacity. Mr. Worley additionally mentioned that with the Biennial Report coming up, potential topics and recommendations were discussed. Future presentation topics were also discussed by the committee.

### **Energy Infrastructure Committee**

In agreement with Mr. Worley, Sub-Committee Chair, Mr. Gus Simmons, gave an update concerning the presentation on natural gas infrastructure, gas in the state and its growth, and expectations for continued growth in demand. One particular topic the EI committee plans to consider when drafting recommendations for the Biennial Report consist of demand exceeding the availability of infrastructure.

### **Energy Efficiency Committee**

Sub-Committee Chair, Mr. Scott Tew, was not present, so Ms. Julie Woosley provided an update concerning the presentation provided by the Department of Insurance about energy/building codes along with updates concerning building code changes. She additionally mentioned the presentation from Mr. Matthew Davis on State Energy Use and the Weatherization Assistance Program. Ms. Woosley added that the recommendation from the energy savings presentation consisted of having managers in the top five largest state agencies, expanding the use of data automation software to better track energy usage/manage it, and requesting building energy audits for the highest energy use building to focus on those resources.

### **Energy Innovation Committee**

Sub-Committee Chair, Mr. John Hardin, provided updates on EI's mission statement that was drafted as this is a new committee and to ensure no overlap in the duties of the other committees was prevalent. After meeting a few times and gathering insight in the last EPC meeting, the following Mission Statement was proposed below:

*The Energy Innovation Committee (EIn) focuses on: early-stage and innovative energy solutions for the transition to a sustainable clean energy economy, including but not limited to evaluation of novel energy-generating technologies, energy-saving technologies, energy-transfer processes, and end-user energy delivery systems.*

Mr. Millis asked if the mention of sustainable clean energy is a limitation for a focus topic of the committee as it pertains to stand clean energy versus the overall aspects of what lead to innovation, all things energy. Mr. Hardin answered that it is not the intent to limit it to sustain clean energy; however, it is a priority of the committee. Mr. LiVecchi added that it wouldn't rule out other ideas such as fossil fuels. With no further comments concerning the proposed mission statement, the motion to approve the EIN mission statement was made by Mr. Worley and seconded by Mr. Simmons. The motion was unanimously approved. Mr. Hardin then provided updates concerning the presentations presented during the committee meeting (EV Demand, Nuclear Energy, and Small Modular Reactors/Natrium Advanced Nuclear Reactors) and discussed the committee's plans to discover several technologies that are most critical and innovative.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Upon opening the floor for public comment, no comments were made.

## **CLOSING COMMENTS**

With no further comments, Mr. LiVecchi said that the next meeting would be held on November 15, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. in the Archdale Ground Floor Hearing Room. He thanked the presenters and council for their discussion today and asked if anyone had any additional comments from the committee. With no other comments, a motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Worley and seconded by Mr. Simmons. The meeting was adjourned at 11:58 a.m.

Meeting Minutes Approved on: **August 16, 2023.**