

Power Generation Advisory Panel Meeting

January 11, 2021

Meeting Notes

Attendees

John Rhodes*

Corinne DiDomenico

Betta Broad

Bill Acker

Darren Suarez

Emilie Nelson

Laurie Wheelock

Lisa Dix

Kit Kennedy

Rory Christian

Shyam Mehta

Jim Shillitto

Cecilio Aponte III

Annel Hernandez

Jenn Schneider

John Reese

Not in Attendance

Stephan Roundtree

Recommendations Guidance & Development

- Utility group beginning, and we will engage with them. Their role is to add value to the recommendations. Could provide information and point out considerations.
- Laurie Wheelock: Agrees with all the suggestions mentioned above. At PULP, we encourage use of the hotline to DPS where the public can call and leave feedback. Can we set up something similar? (John Rhodes: We can look into that and plan.)
- Kit Kennedy: Agrees with the things mentioned above and likes Laurie's suggestion. Can there also be an evening public session so folks who can't join during the day can participate, and should we do it earlier rather than latter? And what if the recommendations can be applied in multiple types: mitigation, enabling, adaption/resilience? How do we handle that? (John Rhodes: We can put recommendations into multiple buckets, most likely.)
 - Bill Acker: Prefer earlier.
 - Emilie Nelson: Evening great idea, overall process sounds valuable, earlier feedback likely beneficial.
 - Laurie Wheelock: Also prefer earlier in the process (and having the opportunity for evening meetings so people can participate who may not be able to during the day)
 - Jenn Schneider: I agree that earlier would be helpful
 - John Reese: Earlier is probably more beneficial
 - Darren Suarez: The ideas for external engagement seem good. I like the idea for an evening event.
 - Cecilio Aponte: Earlier feedback is helpful, and while we may not have recommendations tied up yet, we should have something (prompts, questions) to respond to facilitate feedback
 - Kit Kennedy: I like Cecilio's idea about having prompts for feedback.
 - John Rhodes: Kit/Cecilio - shall we task staff with that task of developing prompts
 - Earlier in the process could allow us to keep in mind while drafting recommendations, but later could give people something to respond to.

- Betta Broad: We could ask subgroups to develop questions that they would like feedback on.
- John Rhodes: The evening suggestion is a good idea and the groups seems to prefer holding it earlier. The staff team will survey the group for availability.
- Lisa Dix: The number of meetings is a bit overwhelming, especially when we add cross-panel meetings. What is the process of fleshing out recommendations for the people who can't join all the meetings? What is the process/agendas/questions for the additional cross panel and public engagement meetings? What is the interim decision-making process so we can be aligned or agree on the presentation for the public engagement meeting? How are we do we evaluate specific data and criteria for the recommendation, such as cost?
 - Kit Kennedy: I have another process question, related to Lisa's questions which may be addressed later in this discussion: How should we address potential situations where consensus can't be reached on some recommendations or where there are competing or differing recommendations on particular topics?
 - John Rhodes: We can take this conversation offline and connect with Sarah and team about mechanics and gathering feedback. We can have consensus on recommendations, but we can also present a few alternatives if consensus can't be achieved, but consensus would be better. Sarah and staff team can work with on capturing minority positions. Regarding the question about specific data such as cost, staff team have good expertise on these data points and can help Panel members with this information. We may have to lean towards educated predictions instead of precise figures, as the future is uncertain.
 - Jenn Schneider: Yes, John I think that is a good idea, and I like Betta's thought on coming up with questions for public feedback.
- Darren Suarez: Would representatives of the Municipal Electric Utilities be included in the utility discussion?
 - John Rhodes: The organizations in Utility Group are mostly investor owned, but will also include 2 public utilities, NYPA and LIPA.

Discussion: Resource Mix Subgroup (Peakers and advanced fuels)

- Kit Kennedy: I think the bookends are not properly framed and there are some built in assumptions about reliability. Can we reframe them?
 - Lisa Dix: Thank you Kit I had a very similar comment. I also think these bookends need reframing.
 - Betta Broad: I also agree with the need to reframe bookends.
 - Catherine Morris: Yes, we can reframe them and there are assumptions in them. (fixed)
 - Kit Kennedy: These are just gut reactions to this right now and shouldn't be taken as "gospel".
- Emilie Nelson: We have to keep in mind how we can achieve reliability and meet the CLCPA goals.
- Kit Kennedy: I support the position on the left side because we can manage reliability and retire fossil fuel generation. This should be our North Star.
- Jenn Schneider: That is a good point Kit, I think we tend to forget how fast technology improves
- Rory Christian: I agree with the position on the left. In order to meet the CLCPA, we have to assume retirement of fossil resources. If we do need fossil resources, should not rely on NG or oil, and can look at alternatives, but we have to keep in mind the costs and combustion issues.
- Lisa Dix: CLCPA does not allow for building of new fossil fuels and essentially puts on a moratorium for new natural gas. It is perhaps a false assumption that these resources will be needed to meet reliability. There are many creative solutions to local reliability (demand response, storage, transmission, etc.). The law says no fossil by 2040. We need to say no new fossil fuels and to develop a phase out plan for current fossil fuels.

- Betta Broad: The need for overbuilding renewables is a particular strategy that we haven't discussed so far. Are there experts we can tap to help us with this conversation about 100% clean and reliable electricity (ex. Richard Perez, SUNY Albany). Also, we need to look at costs, especially in the last 10%. What is it going to cost to get to 100% clean? We need to be more specific about solutions and strategies.
- Shyam Mehta: I agree with the bookend on the right side, but there are problems with the framing and both bookends need to be reframed. We can't sacrifice reliability. We haven't had a chance yet, but we need to discuss more DGs/DERs, especially solar and storage, in replacing peakers and providing reliability solutions. Could we use price signals and smart grid technology to reduce peak demand? We also need an analysis of all the peakers in the state right now, how dirty are they, and how much would it cost/reliability needs for replacement?
- Jenn Schneider: Agree Shyam
- John Reese: I agree with Shyam and we need to be at the right side. The studies that have been done recognize 10-15 GW will still be needed. Yes, it takes new clean energy, but it also takes huge technology improvements at a huge cost. Nowhere in the CLCPA does it say that there can't be new gas hookups. We can't rule out fuels today because we don't have those answers, and we can't rule out combustion. There may be a lack of solutions available to come up with those answers right now. What technologies are going to be commercially available and economically feasible? We don't know yet. "Smart planning can solve this" is not realistic. We can't say that we can just plan our way out of this. There are massive infrastructure challenges because it takes 10-15 years for these projects to come online. We have to do the best we can and accelerate technology development and deployment, and remove barriers to siting and implementation. We need to keep the lights on at all times. The bookend on the right is preparing for 2040, and we need to position to keep the lights on if we don't succeed.
- Annel Hernandez: We need to keep in mind of working towards the 2030 goal vs. the 2040 goal. For the 2030 goal, there are things that can be done and peakers that can be shutdown. The DEC NOx regulations has had many plants considering repowering and will get this done. We need to consider the 2030 goal and the current regulations that open up new opportunities within the sector. CLCPA says no new fossil plants. Also, as we think about the phase out plan, we need to think about EJ communities.
 - Lisa Dix: Agreed with Annel. The NOx Reg can begin and should be used as interim milestone to begin phase out and replacement w/renewables (large scale and DG, storage).
 - Emilie Nelson: If there is time, I would like to offer a suggestion on a potential approach for a recommendation.
- Kit Kennedy: There is as much reason to be optimistic, and not so pessimistic, about meeting our 2040 goals with smart planning and solving the reliability problem, especially when looking at the progress of the state and the country, as well as the new federal administration. We have a lot of good technology now that just needs policies to help them scale. There is no reason to be pessimistic and we have a history to make us optimistic. This has to be our North Star goal, we just need to identify barriers and solutions.
- Emilie Nelson: Appreciate comments on reliability, there is no tolerance for interruptions on the grid. There is a current process underway that might give clarity. The 2019 DEC Peaker Regs and the NYISO Reliability study is an iterative process that needs to continue to occur with increasingly strict regulations. We should prioritize the regulation of peakers, but also prioritize solutions to come on the market. The priority comes down to the investment, the Panel could recommend prioritized investment surrounding the peakers.
- Bill Acker: I agree with Kit. We can and should reach our 2040 goals, but the points people are bringing up mean that the solutions are less clear. I am just concerned about the visibility on how we are meeting our goals. NYS is leading, but we shouldn't be passive about our solutions either. We can be confident and proactive and invest in how we will get there. We need aggressive development of technologies. We don't know the optimal resource mix in 2040, but can be proactive in our planning, investment, and deployment.

The recommendation should focus on how we are going to get there, not that we are going to get there. The analysis needed cannot be done right now. The recommendation should be on advancing, maturing, and deploying technologies, as well as smart load planning etc.

- Catherine Morris: How did everyone feel about the new interactive tool?
 - Betta Broad: Thanks Catherine, I thought this was helpful and interesting to see where people stand
 - Cecilio Aponte: Thanks Catherine, I think its helpful to put a qualitative view to some of these conflicts. I think thinking through the recommendations/facts we need to see to change positions is a helpful exercise.
 - Jenn Schneider: I think this was a helpful way to see where everyone is at. I think that both bookends are assumptions and I agree with John that the right side would be worst case scenario, if for some reason technology does not get us to where we need to be.
 - Kit Kennedy: Catherine, I think this was somewhat helpful in providing a visual depiction, but I also thought it posed barriers to constructive discussion by requiring people to make spot judgments which may tend to lock in positions rather than lead to consensus.
 - Lisa Dix: I appreciate the thought that went into facilitating the "bookends" conversations as I do think we surfaced the next step issues that need to get addressed and more digging in subgroups to get draft recommendations started.

Discussion: Barriers Subgroup (Storage)

- Bill Acker: This is a topic discussed in the Resource Mix Subgroup and Future Solutions Subgroup
 - Deployment of existing energy storage technology:
 - Siting and Permitting – especially the conversation about spacing and density of these assets
 - BSM and new resources in markets
 - Consider new target in Clean Energy Standard and continuation/expansion of programs
 - Development and deployment of new technology:
 - Need for continued innovation and technology development for long duration storage
 - Challenge of scaling up technology, particularly large-scale demonstration projects to validate technology at scale and use cases

Next Steps

- John Rhodes:
 - Proceed on recommendations drafting, cross-panel discussion, and external engagement as discussed today – I feel this is a good approach and Lisa brought up some good points about decision making and alignment.
- Power Generation Advisory Panel meeting on February 12th, 1:00 pm EST
 - Topics for discussion? – And do we Address easy or hard recommendations first?
- Climate Action Council meeting on January 19th, 3pm EST (<https://climate.ny.gov/>)