

The Watertown Environment and Energy Efficiency Committee working group BERDO met remotely via Zoom at 7:00 PM on Thursday, July 18th, 2024.

The following members and staff were present: Brian Hebeisen (chair), Silas Fyler (Energy Manager), Pat Rathbone, Jocelyn Tager, Ernesta Krackiewicz

Others present:

The meeting started with a quorum at 7:00 with Brian Hebeisen presiding.

1) Announcements

2) Review of the BERDO Draft Regulations working with version 1.4 7/4/24 version

Next Steps

1. Brian to reword paragraph in Section 9.1.2 regarding building type changes and reverification requirements.
2. Silas to review and potentially revise Section 10.3.1 regarding Texas/Oklahoma wind RECs and emissions factors.
3. Silas to clean up and potentially remove redundant language in Section 10.3.2 regarding RECs for PPAs.
4. Silas to review and clarify Section 10.4.1 regarding electricity generation credits and REC retirement requirements.
5. Pat to rewrite Section 10.4.1 for clarity once Silas determines the intended meaning.
6. Silas to remove the gray box at the beginning of Section 12.
7. Silas to ensure consistency between the BERDO and regulations regarding timeframes for hardship compliance plans.
8. Jocelyn to review Section 12.2.2.E regarding MassSave delays and potentially propose changes at the next meeting.
9. Silas to schedule and post the next meeting for Thursday, May 25th at 5:00 PM.

Joe Biden's Decision and BERDO Project Update

Pat informed Silas about Joe Biden's decision not to run for a second term, which sparked a discussion about potential candidates and the upcoming open convention. The group also discussed the upcoming deadline for responding to the Secretary of Eea on the deir, with uncertainty about whether the working group could make an official statement without the full body of WE3C's approval. Lastly, the progress of the BERDO project was reviewed, with outstanding changes related to Section 12 needing to be addressed offline.

Revising Section 10 Building Types Discussion

The team discussed changes to Section 10 of a document, specifically focusing on the most recent version sent out by Silas on July 4th. There was a consensus that the current building types needed to be reverified, particularly in cases of renovations or changes in use. However, the team decided to postpone this issue, with Brian proposing to add language to the department's review process allowing for discretion in determining when a new baseline or verification was necessary. Silas and Jocelyn agreed with this idea but expressed concern about changing baselines in buildings. They decided to collaborate on rewording the relevant paragraph to address this issue, with Brian committing to writing up this new language for discussion in the next meeting.

Energy Purchase Confusion and Potential Loopholes

Brian and Silas discussed the confusion surrounding the energy purchase from the Watertown municipal aggregation program and its relation to the 100% RPS Class One RECs. They explored potential loopholes in their business model, such as the use of non-class one RECs by smaller businesses to circumvent buying class one RECs. Silas suggested that the utility mandated amount of other classes, apart from class one, might be an exception. The team agreed to further consider this complex issue, including the potential adoption of an emissions factor for fuels not referenced in the regulations and the possibility of discussing add-ons from the default version of the Watertown aggregation in future discussions.

Regulations Delay and Document Handling

The team discussed the delay caused by the Massachusetts work on regulations before the 'BERDO' reaches the city council. Silas mentioned the requirement to evaluate three buildings for city council, but had only found one so far. Jocelyn suggested taking the issue to the city council to discuss the delay and the requirement for three buildings. The team debated whether the city council needed sample buildings evaluated before the regulations were implemented, with Pat and Jocelyn questioning the necessity of this step. The issue remained unresolved by the end of the meeting. Silas proposed the idea of having sample buildings for the team to review, which was agreed to be a good suggestion. Brian reminded the team about the new information regarding the State and the fact that it would loosen their timeframe for getting their regulation through. Pat, however, expressed her concerns about the team dealing with the issue of writing regulations, suggesting that the task should be assigned to the city council. The team agreed to continue working on the regulations, but also to find a way to lodge a small protest and explain the potential consequences of their careful construction of the regulations. Jocelyn believed that the regulations would be accepted with minor tweaks. The team discussed the ongoing work on a document, with Brian suggesting that if team members felt strongly about certain issues, they could lodge complaints with the city manager. Pat and Brian agreed to continue working on the document, with Brian proposing a new approach to handle issues not yet decided upon by the city council. Silas suggested tracking these issues in the meeting minutes and changing the document between versions. Brian clarified that Silas was the owner of the document and responsible for tracking issues.

Project Discussion and PPA Improvements

The team discussed various aspects of their project, including amending criteria for the 10.3 point, specifying the location of power purchase agreements (PPAs) in Massachusetts, and addressing the restrictiveness of policies requiring new projects for PPAs. They also deliberated on streamlining language related to RECs for PPAs and resolving confusion regarding a specific paragraph related to electricity and associated generation credits. The team agreed to review these issues further in future meetings.

Document Changes and Emission Standards

The team discussed changes to a document, specifically sections 11 and 12, agreeing to remove section 11 and clarify the content of section 12. There was a detailed discussion about the differences between deferral and hardship plans in the context of compliance with emission standards, with some confusion remaining. The team decided to revisit the distinction between the two plans and the language used in the BERDO and the regulations. Concern about the delay in implementing mass save was raised by Jocelyn, and it was decided to revisit this issue in the next meeting scheduled for Thursday at 5 o'clock.

3) Decided next meeting will be 5:00pm on 7/25/24

4) Move to adjourn at 8:35 pm

All approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Silas Fyler