



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Commission on Climate Change and Resiliency

QUARTERLY MEETING - MEETING MINUTES

September 9, 2022
3:00-4:00 pm

Recording:

<https://dcnet.webex.com/webappng/sites/dcnet/recording/e4ecc1fd11d6103b95eb00505681e860/playback>

MEETING ATTENDEES

Commission Members

Uwe Brandes

Jim Dougherty

Peggy Keller

Sandra Knight

Anthony Kane

Justin Lini

Chelsea Mervenne

Steve Moore

Jason Turner

Molly Rauch

Maureen Holman

Kate Zyla

Alan Etter

District of Columbia Staff

Sarah Edwards, Designated Staff Executive
to the Commission

Jenn Hatch, DOEE

Erin Garnaas-Holmes, DOEE

Guest Speakers

Sarah Kogel-Smucker, Office of People's
Counsel

Alex Fisher, DOEE, Energy Administration

MEETING MINUTES

- 1) **Call to Order** - Meeting called to order at 3:03 pm by Uwe Brandes.
- 2) **Announcement of a Quorum** – A quorum is present.
- 3) **Approval of Minutes** - A motion to approve the June 9, 2022 meeting minutes (Anthony, Chelsea) was passed unanimously.
- 4) **Chair's Welcoming Remarks** – Uwe Brandes welcomed commissioners, guests and members of the public to the meeting.

- a) Update on Commission Seats
 - i) Justin Lini was appointed by the Mayor to the Environmental Justice seat. Swearing-in was postponed, but will take place before next quarterly meeting
 - ii) Energy, and Insurance seats remain vacant, awaiting Council appointment

- b) Designated staff executive updates: Sarah Edwards (DOEE)
 - i) Position Letters Review
 - (1) Sent:
 - (a) DC Flood Task Force: Batch 1
 - (b) Construction Codes Coordinating Board
 - (c) Public Service Commission
 - (2) Upcoming:
 - (a) DC Flood Task Force: Batches 2 & 3
 - ii) Update on Commission's Report and Drafting Process - Commission is reviewing first draft, with targeted publication in October
 - iii) Preview of new DC-CCCR Website, launching later this month

5) Presentations

Sarah Kogel-Smucker, Office of People's Counsel (OPC)

- Office of People's Counsel role is to educate and advocate on behalf of utility consumers
 - Climate change mission: promotes climate solutions through legislative and legal advocacy, education and empowerment of consumers, and works to ensure the District meets its climate goals in a just, equitable, affordable, and resilient\
- District has a mix of retail choice and default standard offer service
- Pepco is distribution transmission utility - heavily regulated, but also monopoly of business
- Public Service Commission (PSC) action on microgrids began in 2020 with a request for information, many stakeholders in favor of "light touch" regulation
 - Light touch regulations would include consumer protections with a modified consumer bill of rights, but microgrids would not have as much regulatory burden as Pepco
- Proposed regulations - multiple consumer microgrids would be regulated as utility and be subject to microgrid tariffs
 - Potential to chill expansion of microgrids and deprives consumers of potential benefits
- Even if microgrids found a way to proceed with proposed regulations, the hurdles would raise costs significantly, which likely would be passed on to consumers
- Diversify funding sources for microgrids - federal and local and private investments
 - Should be wary of putting cost of climate goals in utility bills, which put burden disproportionate costs on low income consumers
- CREF is a parallel example of poor execution - consumers are not receiving promised benefits, which may discourage future participation. Instead, microgrid deployment must prioritize the experience and the benefits for consumers
- DOEE and OPC filed for reconsideration of PSC Order - waiting for answer

Alex Fisher, DOEE, Energy Administration

- Microgrids are crucial to climate, resilience, and grid modernization goals
 - Clean Energy DC and Sustainable DC call for neighborhood decarbonization strategies, largely reliant on microgrids
- PSC definition does not include “single controllable entity” as compared with US DOE’s definition
- Because microgrids are small defined geographic areas, they pull together demand, generation, and storage in real time
- DOEE has asked for enabling regulatory conditions, similar to a light touch approach
- Lack of regulations for multi customer microgrids creates uncertainty and no pathway for approval/installation
- Solar carve out of 10% by 2041 in the Renewable Portfolio Standard is not likely to be achieved without microgrid. Currently at 2-2.5% and already seeing difficulties in advancing.
- Lots of federal funding and tax credits in recent Congressional legislation, DC’s inability to approve and build microgrids will limit our access to the funding
- Consumers are losing benefit of using retail choice via microgrids to opt to cheaper and cleaner energy, in addition to the cost savings of solar generation within the microgrid
- Lack of microgrids hampers the effectiveness of battery storage, which is problematic as the District is on the cusp of deploying batteries to residents.
- Interconnection issues are also a concern, apart of regulations, high interconnection fees present another major barrier

Questions from Commission:

- Do the same barriers exist for district energy? Significant loss of opportunity to provide benefits by not installing campus + surrounding neighborhood microgrids
 - Answer (Alex): Most likely similar scenario to microgrids generally a lack of regulatory pathway for approval prohibits deployment
- DC obtained a BRIC grant from FEMA for a microgrid, but has not been able to move forward because of the lack of regulatory pathway. The project was intended to support multiple DC properties (hospital, 911 call center, shelter)
- Similarly, major private sector exploration efforts to proactively create microgrids. Have private sector stakeholders contributed thought leadership to the PSC process? And is there a broader planning need in coordination of economic development plans?
 - Little private sector engagement at PSC. One private developer commented on the rulemaking, noting the difficulty to advance microgrids with the proposed regulations
 - Integrated distribution resource planning - PSC should require utility to present probabilistic outcomes from DER integration, including microgrids and non-wire alternatives
 - DOEE has discussed collaboration with DMPED and OP to incorporate microgrids in plans/zoning. But currently unable to zone for a feature that does not have approval pathway

10) Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 4:02 PM.