

STATE OF VERMONT
PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

Case No. 19-2956-INV

Investigation pursuant to Act 62 into the creation of an all-fuels energy efficiency program, expansion of energy efficiency utility programs and services, and funding options for those programs	
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Order entered: 10/04/2019

ORDER RE SECOND ROUND COMMENTS AND NOTICE OF WORKSHOP

Introduction

On July 11, 2019, the Vermont Public Utility Commission (“Commission”) opened this investigation in response to Section 2 of Act 62 (H.63) of the 2019-2020 Vermont legislative session. Act 62 requires the Commission to report to the Legislature on the Commission’s consideration of the creation of an all-fuels energy efficiency program, expansion of energy efficiency utility programs and services, and funding options for those programs.

On September 24, 2019, I convened the first workshop with a focus on reviewing the current statutory policies and goals that guide Vermont’s energy programs, Vermont’s current portfolio of energy programs and services, and the current sources of funding for those programs and services. The workshop was preceded by written stakeholder comments on these topics.

In today’s Order I establish deadlines for further comments on the topics discussed at the first workshop and I define the scope and schedule for the second set of comments and workshop.

Discussion

Further Comments on First-Round Topics

As discussed at the first workshop, participants and Commission staff seek more detailed explanation of Efficiency Vermont’s first-round written comments related to the EEC/TEPF split for new construction projects. Efficiency Vermont is requested to file this more detailed explanation by October 11, 2019. Any responses, and any updates to the Department of Public Service’s Attachment A (describing funding sources), should be filed by October 18, 2019.

In addition, any further comments on the first-round filings or stemming from the first workshop, including any amended or new terms that would benefit from a common definition, should be filed by October 18, 2019.

Scope and Schedule of Second-Round Topics

As indicated in the August 9 order, the second round of comments and the second workshop will address the following topics:

1. The strengths and weaknesses, or advantages and disadvantages, of current energy program delivery mechanisms and funding sources;
2. Gaps in current programs, services, and funding; and
3. Preliminary recommendations for the Commission to consider as part of its report.

In addition to commenting on these broad topics, we invite participants to comment on the following questions:

1. Are there states or jurisdictions that have energy efficiency programs for unregulated fuels? If so, how are those programs funded and regulated, if at all?
2. For states or jurisdictions that have recently “modernized” their efficiency programs, policies, or regulations, such as those discussed at the first workshop, how are efficiency programs funded? How would these programs scale to Vermont considering differences in population size and density, available funding, climate, and demographics?
3. Are there specific legislative or regulatory barriers in Vermont to implementing the program options utilized in other states for efficiency program modernization?
4. Are there lessons from the California’s PUC decision to change fuel substitution regulations that could influence policy or regulatory changes in Vermont?¹
5. Commission staff is aware that several northeastern states and other states across the country have established green banks to leverage public-private capital for efficiency, weatherization, clean energy, green infrastructure, and electric transportation initiatives. Staff seeks input on the potential for the formation of a new public-private capital

¹ CPUC, Decision 19-08-009, Order dated Aug. 1, 2019, available at <http://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Published/G000/M310/K159/310159146.PDF>

investment partnership program (a.k.a. green bank) in Vermont as a funding mechanism for efficiency, conservation, and related programs and services pursuant to Act 62 Section 2(a)(3).

Any written comments on these second-round topics should be filed by October 18, 2019. In addition, participants who wish to make a presentation on any of these topics at the workshop must submit their request to the Commission no later than close of business on October 18, 2019. Each request must identify the topic of the proposed presentation and the amount of time being requested for the presentation, keeping in mind that there will likely be questions from others in attendance, including the Commission. Participants are encouraged to coordinate their presentations to avoid unnecessary repetition.

Following the workshop, I will establish a deadline for further comments on the topics discussed, and on topics for the final round of comments and workshop before the Commission prepares its preliminary report. This final round of comments should focus on recommendations for the Commission to consider for its preliminary report, and the factual and policy reasons that support those recommendations.

Notice of Workshop

The second workshop will be held on October 25, 2019, from 9:30 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. at the Susan M. Hudson Hearing Room on the third floor of the People's United Bank Building at 112 State Street in Montpelier, Vermont. The workshop will be recorded by a court reporter.

SO ORDERED.

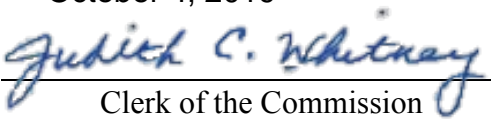
Dated at Montpelier, Vermont, this 4th day of October, 2019.



Thomas Knauer
Hearing Officer

OFFICE OF THE CLERK

Filed: October 4, 2019

Attest: 
Clerk of the Commission

Notice to Readers: This decision is subject to revision of technical errors. Readers are requested to notify the Clerk of the Commission (by e-mail, telephone, or in writing) of any apparent errors, in order that any necessary corrections may be made. (E-mail address: puc.clerk@vermont.gov)

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