

Regular Meeting, Electric Vehicle Charging Stations Infrastructure Commission

May 24, 2019

Meeting presentations and minutes are available at
<https://www.des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/air/tsb/tps/msp/sb517.htm>

Senator Watters opened the meeting at 11:05 a.m.

Introductions

Commission members present: Senator David Watters; Representative George Sykes; Rebecca Ohler (NHDES); Peter King (BIA), Richard Bailey, Jr. (NHDOS); Carleton Simpson (Unitil); Gary LeMay (Drive Electric NH); David Rodrigue (NH DOT); Kevin Miller (ChargePoint); Kevin Arritt (for Charlotte Ancel, Eversource); and Dan Bennett (NHADA).

Guests: Carol Miller, (New Hampshire Bureau of Economic Affairs) and Peter O'Connor (Plug-in America)

Public present: Liz Nixon (PUC); Tim White (NHDES); Jessica Wilcox (NHDES); Elizabeth Strachan (NHDES); Simon Thompson (Sheehan Phinney Capitol Group); Drew Drummond (Greenlots); Marc Brown (Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers); Brad Pernaw (Common Man); John Kondos (Monadnock Sustainability Site Network); Renay Allen (Exeter Energy Committee); Madeline Mineau (Clean Energy New Hampshire); Brianna Brand (Clean Energy New Hampshire and Drive Electric NH); Carol Doering (Lee Energy Committee); and Lou Grondin (Lee Energy Committee).

Approval of March and April Minutes

David Rodrigue moved to approve the meeting minutes and Kevin Miller Seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved.

BEA and Economic Development, EV Charging Infrastructure Commission

Presentation by Carol Miller from New Hampshire Department of Business and Economic Affairs

Carol Miller gave a presentation on the role of New Hampshire Department of Business and Economic Affairs (BEA). She outlined the key growth sectors in New Hampshire, including healthcare, advanced manufacturing, technology, hospitality, and construction. She highlighted that New Hampshire ranks fairly high among all states for the percentage of workforce employed in technology and indicated that technology jobs continue to grow in New Hampshire. Carol indicated that BEA continues to recruit businesses, workforce/talent, travel industry, and students into New Hampshire. The talent recruitment targets millennials and commuters from age 28-32 years old. Carol suggested that this group are also likely to drive electric vehicles.

Carol said that BEA put out a request for proposal (RFP) to complete a statewide charging infrastructure plan for New Hampshire. A total of eight companies responded to the RFP and BEA chose to move forward with Plug-in America.

Statewide Strategic Plan to Improve EV Infrastructure
Presentation by Peter O'Connor from Plug-in America

Peter O'Connor gave a presentation on the statewide strategic plan to improve EV Infrastructure. Plug-in America is working with CALSTART (to address heavy duty fleet needs) and S Curve Strategies (for communications and outreach) on the plan. Peter started his presentation by stating that there is a DC Fast Charger at the Whole Foods Market in Bedford, New Hampshire and one at Roger's Campground in Lancaster, NH. The distance between the two fast chargers is 124 miles and could be a challenge even for a vehicle with a 200-mile range making it pretty clear that additional infrastructure is needed in the state. Peter then outlined the various tasks they would complete to come up with the strategic plan.

Task 1: Facilitate visioning, goal setting, and development of detailed strategies in NH that included stakeholder outreach via surveys to utilities, charging network operators, installers, site hosts, drivers, state and local officials, and fleet operators (including transit and commercial).

Task 2: Research adoption rate trends and forecasts including national trends and the trends that most effectively spur EV adoption.

Task 3: Research driver charging needs through driver surveys

Task 4: Identify charging and anticipate needs in order to address how the state can do more to maximize the availability of privately-funded charging; address charging issues; and leverage the great work already being done by the state.

Task 5: Develop an EV Statewide Strategic Plan

During back and forth discussion the following points were made:

- The driver surveys are not necessarily drivers from New Hampshire. They kept the survey to drivers in the New England area and can narrow it down to just NH drivers but the pool of surveys would be much smaller. Although there are about 3,000 plug-in cars registered in NH it is difficult to reach out to all of them and have them respond to the survey. Peter indicated that they would be happy to send the survey to any driver email lists that were available. It was suggested that Granite State Clean Cities could possibly provide lists for survey distribution.
- The deadline for the plan is June 30th
- Concerns were brought up over coordination between the different efforts in the arena of EV charging throughout the state. Peter indicated that he was hoping this would be an added tool for the discussion among the commission and that he would continue to seek input from the commission.

- The plan would not only focus on the immediate need for DC fast corridor charging, but that it would also look beyond that to the needs for destination charging, Level 2 charging, and charging along smaller routes.
- The idea of network versus non-networked stations was brought up and Peter indicated that although some stations (like DC Fast chargers) should be networked so that drivers can know if they are in working order, it is sometimes a financial disadvantage to require smaller Level 2 stations to be networked.
- Peter was asked how the plan could assist the commission and he thought that the information they are collecting for the plan could assist in developing requests for proposals for site hosts when the time came for that.
- Peter indicated that low utilization is not always considered a failure. People often use EVs for their daily commute but are hesitant to purchase them for the few longer trips they take each year. The presence of DC Fast chargers allows the driver to feel comfortable buying an EV and assist in the overall adoption of the vehicles even if their usage is low.
- It was asked if the network allows not only for the drivers to know if the charger is working, but does it provide info back to the network concerning usage and electricity use? It was stated that this data would be available to the site host, but it is the prerogative of the site host whether they want to share the data.

**Drive Change. Drive Electric. Launches Destination Electric Program
Presentation by Jessica Wilcox from NHDES and Granite State Clean Cities Coalition**

(this item was not on the agenda)

Jessica Wilcox from NHDES and the Granite State Clean Cities Coordinator discussed the Drive Change. Drive Electric. *Destination Electric*¹ EV awareness campaign that was recently launched by the participating Northeast states². Drive Change. Drive Electric. launched three years ago and is a collaboration of the Northeast states and the auto makers. This year the group launched *Destination Electric*. In this program each state identified a small number of cities that have EV charging available within walking distance of small, unique businesses. In New Hampshire the cities are Dover, Portsmouth and Nashua. The participating businesses³ agree to place a *Destination Electric* decal in a prominent location (similar to a Zagat rating decal). The goal is to raise consumer awareness of electric cars and the availability of EV charging in that community. The program launched with over 100 participating businesses, 41 of which are located in New Hampshire! This is not another charging map program, but rather a way to raise awareness of EV charging and a way to bring EV owners together in local settings.

There was interest in working within the communities to highlight the program and it was also noted that NH should design an EV sticker that EV owners could put on their cars.

¹ <https://driveelectricus.com/destination-electric/>

² VT, NH, ME, MA, RI, CT, NY

³ The campaign is focused on small, unique businesses rather than larger chain stores

Policy Language

(this item was not on the agenda)

Senator Watters presented the following policy statement developed by the electric utilities that the commission might consider endorsing in advance of any DC Fast Charging Corridor Proposal:

“The Commission endorses utility electric vehicle charging station and supply equipment ‘make-ready’ programs that provide streamlined interconnection and behind the meter investment. Such investments are viewed as prudently incurred and just and reasonable capital expenditures by the utility.”

For background Carleton Simpson from Unitil stated that there wasn’t regulatory certainty as to whether utilities would receive Public Utility Commission (PUC) approval for their make-ready proposal and that the three regulated utilities thought it would be helpful for the commission to endorse the program to help them move forward for when they go to the PUC for approval of dockets. The utilities will spend money on “make-ready” projects and will need to recover costs in the future.

Liz Nixon with the PUC was in attendance at the meeting and asked to comment. She stated that the Commission has concerns about cyber security regarding EV charging stations, but that she could not comment on how the PUC commissioners might view the utility proposals for make-ready programs or any statement from the EV Commission.

It was noted that such a program could cause rate payers to pay for something a minority would be using. However, another viewpoint was that other state PUCs have approved such programs having found them to be, in the long term, a benefit to ratepayers. There was concern that the statement was too open-ended in that “make-ready” at one location may be prudent, but may not be at another.

Senator Watters said that he would like to share the language with the Office of Strategic Initiatives, and also asked Carleton to reach out to the Consumer Advocate to get his input. He suggested that the June meeting take up this issue again, with the goal of having a recommendation from the Commission at that time.

A commission member brought up the slowness of the process and that they wanted to see at least a small percent of the Volkswagen funds for EVSE be released sooner rather than later. Another commission member agreed with this. It was brought up that there are entities waiting to put in chargers because they want to see if funds will be available to assist in the installation.

There was a short discussion of what real authority the commission has over how or when the Volkswagen funds are spent and it was concluded that the commission has the authority to make recommendations

Legislative Update

Senator Watters provided the following:

- SB 275, requiring state vehicles to be zero emission by 2039, is moving forward. Sen. Watters had a discussion with Governor’s Office staff and he is hopeful the Governor will sign it.
- Other bills regarding the Renewable Portfolio Standard and RGGI are still in the works.

- NH may see an off-shore wind project soon that could provide energy for 300,000 homes.
- Off shore wind bill indicating that we may see a major off shore wind project sooner than we think.
- Energy storage is an essential component of EVs– National Grid has big plans.
- Looking forward, the Ten Year Plan (highway plan) process is next year and he would like to see EVs embedded in it with funding.

Public Comments

John Kondos from Monadnock Sustainability Sites Network stated that he is aware of projects that are taking the approach where if a new parking lot is going in they are installing the conduit, but not installing the chargers as they are waiting for funding. It is his understanding that the Volkswagen funds will unleash many projects that are in waiting.

Brad Pernaw from the Common Man stated that he would be happy to talk to anyone about siting a universal charging station at the Hooksett rest areas.

The June Meeting will be the last meeting until September.

The Meeting was adjourned at 12:30