

Regular Meeting, Electric Vehicle Charging Stations Infrastructure Commission – MINUTES

August 28, 2020

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the General Court is conducting legislative activities remotely. Senator Watters opened the meeting by reading the Right to Know notice for this remote meeting as specified by Emergency Executive Order 12.

Following an overview of the meeting platform and how it functions Senator Watters called the meeting to order at 11:23 a.m..

Commission members present: Senator Watters; Rep. George Sykes; Richard Bailey (DOS); Gary Lemay (Drive Electric NH); Rebecca Ohler (NHDES); Carleton Simpson (Unitil); Dan Bennett (NHADA); Matthew Mailloux (OSI); Kevin Miller (ChargePoint); Kevin Boughan (Eversource); Peter King (BIA); Dave Rodrigue (DOT)

Members absent: Rep. Steven Smith

Public present: Brianna Brand, Melissa Elander & Kelly Buchanan (Clean Energy NH); Liz Nixon (PUC); Donna Gamache (Eversource); Jessica Wilcox (NHDES/GSCCC); Timothy White (NHDES); Annie Gilleo (Greenlots); Bruce Clendenning (The Nature Conservancy); Brian Buckley (PUC); Carol Miller (BEA); Meg King (NHDES – technical support); Pete O’Conner (PIA); James Penfold (EV LaunchPad); Alyssa Moodie (NHDES); Kurt Demmer(PUC); Jon Shaer (NECSEMA)

Approval of July Minutes

Kevin Miller moved to approve and Carleton Simpson seconded. Gary LeMay requested that the July minutes reflect the request he made during the July 24 meeting for detailed information on where the VW money was being spent. Amendment accepted by Kevin Miller and Carleton Simpson seconded the amendment. The amended minutes were approved unanimously.

Presentation by CENH – Brianna Brand & Melissa Elander

Expanding EV Charging in the North Country: Insights from North of the Notch – reference PowerPoint Presentation

Brianna Brand opened the presentation and provided general background about Clean Energy New Hampshire (CENH) which included helping to found the Drive Electric New Hampshire (DENH) Coalition to accelerate the adoption of electric vehicles (EV) and increase awareness through education and outreach, which has a seat on SB517 Commission.

The North Country population has decreased by 4.5 percent in the last 10 years. The average income of NC residents is just 61% of the statewide average. This region is actively promoting recreation tourism and is working to revitalize town centers in order to attract visitors. Through the North Country

Initiative, Melissa Elander, the North Country Energy Circuit Rider employed by CENH, helps school districts and municipalities in Coos County to complete energy efficiency (EE) and renewable energy (RE) projects. She provided an overview of her work in the North Country: promoting funding, grant writing, assist in developing and issuing RFPs, providing technical assistance (energy concierge for municipalities), and connecting municipalities to incentives and contractors. Expanding availability of EV charging in this region would complement the work the municipalities are already doing. A copy of the presentation is available at <https://www.des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/air/tsb/tps/msp/sb517.htm>.

In Coos County \$239 million was spent on travel in 2017, and \$15 million in state taxes were generated from travel spending. There is no access to universal DC fast charging in the North Country and limited public level 2 charging. To date the state Requests for Proposals (RFP) have not addressed the need. The northernmost Tesla only supercharger is in Lincoln.

Distance between Gorham and Colebrook is 56 miles, but if Coos county had a EV charging network they may be able to attract more Canadian visitors, which is very close. The northern region of VT has 79 public access Level 2 stations, compared with 3 in northern NH. Ideally there would be EVSE all along route 3 & 2 to create a network. Towns in northern Grafton county are doing a good job of attracting young people. There's an opportunity for this to spread to Coos through EV charging.

Representative Sykes was identified as official Chair since Senator Watters had a spotty internet connection. The floor was opened to questions from the commission members regarding the presentation.

Senator Watters – given inability for commission and state to get funding out, there may be funding in the FAST Act for charging and the “Moving Forward Act” certainly has funding for charging. Are there any other alternatives?

Melissa responded that there is a USDA Rural Development program that is used to stimulate rural businesses and they did express interest at one point in accepting applications for EVSE if a strong connection can be made that this will support local businesses.

Gary Lemay shared that LaPerle's IGA is interested in installing DCFC if they can get support and also noted that NHEC can provide \$2500 for Level 2 chargers.

North Country (NC) municipalities are aware of potential VW funds and want to move forward, but don't want to put in EVSE if a rebate/grant program opens up and they lose out on access to that. Most communities would be looking at level 2 if they don't have funding assistance

Kevin Miller – is the intended use case to attract people to “stay and play” for an hour or 2? If so, this is best suited for L2, not DCFC.

Matthew Mailloux – as the State looks forward towards a L2 statewide program whether it be grants or rebates or a combination, the challenge is that there are certain areas of the state that would have more utilization and can make a better use case. Should there be a separate North Country program?

Melissa – don't see a reason for the NC to be its own program but L2 chargers are most appropriate type for the area and she thinks it's worth looking at multiple routes in the NC. It could be included in statewide initiative, but asked that they take a comprehensive look at more routes in the NC.

Kevin Miller – the unmet and unseen demand that was just described is really helpful as OSI considers what would be an appropriate mechanism – for example a rebate structure allows ability to be responsive to demand – an L2 charger is an amenity provided to EV drivers – although usage is important, it's not the only important point to installing EVSE (such as economic benefit).

Pete O'Conner – EVSE increases adoption because it allows EV drivers to know that they can drive anywhere – lynchpin stations have a value that is not reflected in utilization

Matt Mailloux – should the state focus on low usage sites that the “free market” won't build, or look at sites that can achieve profitability via high utilization? We are trying to decipher what the states roll should be in accomplishing both sides of the charging network.

Rep Sykes – concerned when we talk about profitability of EVSE. This is infrastructure and we don't expect, for example, bridges to make money.

Kevin Miller - Look at full value proposition. It is very difficult to analyze each site as you can't really evaluate the monetary benefit to the region of the dollars spent while at local businesses while the car owner is charging. A grocery store's return on investment is providing EVSE amenity to attract a visitor who might be offered a decreased charging rate to spend money in their store.

Melissa (CENH) – NC communities are not looking at EVSE as a source of profit, but entirely to bring folks into town, to park and stay for a few hours.

Gary Lemay – NHEC has experience in helping members install EVSE as an amenity and not as profit maker. The chargers are metered and usage determined on an annual basis.

Pete King – brings perspective of an EV driver. He has no problem driving east/west in NH, but hasn't ventured farther north than Plymouth because he is afraid of being stranded. He would like to see more EVSE north of the Notch. He has been approached many times by Canadian drivers who want to chat about EVs. If there was a convenient spot with EV chargers it would spur tourism (post-COVID). This would be a great use of funds, to diversify where the chargers are located.

Senate Bill 575 (2018) – Results of PUC Docket IR 20-004 – [Order No. 26,394](#)

Brian Buckley, Elizabeth Nixon and Kurt Demmer, NH Public Utilities Commission, discussed the results of PUC docket IR 20-004, which was opened in response to Senate Bill 575 (2018) that directed the PUC to look at Rate Design standards relative to EV charging, including cost of service, prohibition of declining block rates, time of day rates, seasonal rates, interruptible rates, load management techniques, and demand charges. The PUC opened docket [IR 20-004](#) in January of this year. [Order 26,394](#) was released on August 18, 2020. Brian Buckley, Liz Nixon and Kurt Demmer from PUC provided an overview of Staff recommendations under this docket and the final Order from the Commission. A copy of the presentation is available [here](#).

SB575 (2018) directed the PUC to look at Rate Design standards including cost of service, prohibition of declining block rates, time of day rates, seasonal rates, interruptible rates, load management techniques, and demand charges.

Rate Design Goals – goal is to capture latent ratepayer value. Looking at a picture of ISO New England load – peak load only occurs for a very few hours during the summer – other hours reflect very little utilization rate of the grid – If we can fill in the white underutilized area, it can create a downward pressure on rates by spreading kW demand over more kW hours.

Certain areas of the grid have more headroom for new load than others. If siting an EVSE in a place that doesn't have the headroom and you're not sending the right price signals to the driver to charge at certain times, then costs of that charging session can become very expensive. This can be avoided by sending the right price signals to EV drivers and that can be done through rate design.

Summary of Order No. 26,394 which was issued about a week and a half ago – looks at rate design standards:

- Cost of service – appropriate for EVSE
- Prohibition of declining block rates, etc.) – Block rates viewed as inappropriate because they shift costs on others and run counter to conservation, but block rates are not outright prohibited. They are not appropriate for separately metered EV charging, but may be appropriate for facilities that already operate under declining block rates.
- Seasonal Rates – appropriate for EVSE
- Interruptible Rates – inappropriate
- Demand Charges – may be appropriate for EVSE, but not an absolute necessity – referenced example from Maine
- Time of Day (use) Rates (TOU) – appropriate for EVSE – focused on separately metered TOU. Many EVSE have an imbedded meter in them and PUC wants to look into use of these meters as an alternative to separate metering

Next steps for this Docket – PUC will open a new docket to specifically consider EVSE TOU proposals and are currently working with interveners to develop a timeline for proposals in 2 parts: 1) residential – L2 2) High demand draw – DCFC. There is not a defined timeline for this new docket.

Pete King – You mentioned that Eversource has a TOU pricing – they have a variable peak pricing but it’s not appropriate to EV drivers.

Brian Buckley – yes, they have a TOU for residential and commercial customers, but the period is 12 hours on peak and 12 hours off peak and the rate differential is very small. Only about 40 of their 5000 residential customers participate. He agreed that it’s not ideal for an EV customer.

Gary LeMay – NHEC offers an off peak rate for EVSE for residential – e.g., 8 cents for off peak hours – totally price driven signal – if they charge during the day they pay the higher price – there are starting to be high voltage EVSE with battery storage built in that will help mitigate demand and peak time issues – so industry is changing

Commission discussion – avenues for continuation of our work.

Commission members agreed that the work of the Commission is important, that information that has been presented is useful, and that the necessary work is not yet completed. Some examples of need for continued work included the need to provide further input on the use of the VW funds and the need to better understand EV adoption rates in New Hampshire.

The DMV has vehicle data by town. NHDES has worked with the data for several years to determine number and general location of EVs and annual growth rates (no personally identifying information is shared by DMV). It is difficult data to work with because there is a lot of it, it requires some level of decoding of the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN), and not all of the data is accurate. Given current staffing shortages NHDES is not able to do this work currently. There was substantial discussion about the type of data available and what would be useful for both electric utility planning as well as policy.

Carleton Simpson noted that Bloomberg has done some analysis, but there’s not a lot of data for NH in terms of where the vehicles are located or where they travel, but it does indicate that NH is outpacing EV adoption relative to the rest of the EV market, but it would be great to test that hypothesis.

Rep Sykes discussed the [NEW HAMPSHIRE TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL](#), which does not expire. Its purview includes studying methods of implementing new transportation technologies throughout NH and they are tasked with making recommendations to the appropriate state agency or committee of the general court. They have also been talking about whether there is more legislative work that needs to be done. Is this an area that we want to continue to talk about?

There was general agreement that we should explore how this Council could help continue the work of the EV Commission. Rep Sykes will contact Chair of that committee and see how this committee can provide information/education to them.

November report – call for volunteers to help draft

Becky Ohler, EV Commission clerk, requested help from 1 or 2 members from the commission in drafting the final report of the Commission. Gary LeMay, Pete King and Carleton Simpson all volunteered

VW Funding Update

Matt Mailloux with OSI was unable to attend so Becky Ohler provided an update. Five proposals were received for Level 2 charging at the downtown Concord Green Street parking lot and OSI, DES and DAS (which owns the lot) are in the process of evaluating proposals and requesting additional information.

Relative to reissuing a DCFC solicitation it was asked if the state should wait to learn if federal tax credits will be available or extended. There seemed to be agreement that the state should move forward.

There have been on-going expenditures of VW funds for vehicle replacement projects, primarily state vehicles at this point, with most of the funding for the state vehicle replacement under contract. There have also been a number of municipal vehicle replacements, some in conjunction with EPA's Diesel Emission Reduction Act program (DERA), which is implemented by NHDES. One of the provisions of DERA is that if a state matches their base award, they get a 50% bonus. Both last year and this year we have used VW funds to match our federal DERA allocation. These funds cannot be used for EVSE and have primarily been for vehicle replacement, including a school bus project in Manchester where older diesel buses were replaced with new propane buses. OSI is in the process of putting together a sheet that identifies all of the projects funded and that should be up on the OSI website soon.

Legislative Update

Rep Sykes – no Legislative update – it's been a challenging process introducing legislation and getting votes. It's not clear where we're going moving forward. The next meeting will be a veto override session in Durham with Covid restrictions in place. There is no clear sense of when gov't will open up to in person public meetings and the legislature is trying to expand virtual meetings.

Public Comment

Rep Sykes opened up the floor to public comment – none

Next meeting for September 25th – note time change at 12 instead of 11

Rep Sykes asked for a motion to adjourn. Rebecca Ohler moved, Dave Rodrigue seconded and the motion approved. The meeting was adjourned at 1:12 PM.