

**Efficiency Maine Trust
Board Meeting Minutes
July 28, 2021**

BECAUSE OF LIMITATIONS ON TRAVEL AND GATHERINGS DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS, THIS MEETING WAS NOT CONDUCTED AT A PHYSICAL LOCATION AND DID NOT INVOLVE ANYONE MEETING IN PERSON. INSTEAD, THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED BY PHONE AND VIDEO CONFERENCING.

Trustees

- Jim Boyle, Secretary (via phone)
- Dan Burgess
- Kenneth Colburn
- Dan Drost (proxy for Dan Brennan)
- Heather Furth
- Mark Isaacson
- Suzanne MacDonald, Chair
- Joan Welsh, Vice Chair

Efficiency Maine Trust (EMT) Staff:

- Emily Cushman
- Peter Eglinton
- Monte Haynes
- Greg Leclair
- Laura Martel
- Kate Rankin
- Anne Stephenson
- Michael Stoddard
- Satchel Toole
- Lauren Trapani

Other Attendees:

- None

1. Welcome and Introductions

Ms. MacDonald called the meeting to order at 9:36 a.m.

2. Approve Agenda and Minutes

Ms. MacDonald requested an update on the Triennial Plan V process and timeline, to be inserted as agenda item 5(d).

ACTION: Upon a motion duly made (Mr. Isaacson) and seconded (Mr. Colburn), the Board voted unanimously to approve the revised agenda and the June 23, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes.

3. Public Comment on Agenda Items

None.

4. Executive Director's Report

Mr. Stoddard summarized the Executive Director's Report. Following are items highlighted during his presentation:

- The Legislature enacted LD 1733 - An Act To Provide Allocations for the Distribution of State Fiscal Recovery Funds, laying out a plan for the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding in Maine. This bill includes \$50 million for EMT to support residential weatherization and energy efficiency for municipalities, schools, and businesses. It also allocates \$8 million to the Department of Transportation to support electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure in coordination with EMT. Mr. Burgess noted that there is additional funding allocated to other areas (e.g., affordable housing) that may require EMT involvement. He also noted that the State is expecting additional funds to come from the federal level in the next few months. Mr. Colburn asked if EMT has sufficient staffing capacity to manage the funding influx. Mr. Stoddard said that EMT expects to see incremental increases in workload through its existing programs, and that it plans to meet that need through a combination of new staff hires and expanded use of subcontractors.
- EMT is continuing to see interest in online training sessions for the state's new building energy codes.
- Staff collaborated with the Office of the Public Advocate and the Non-Wires Alternatives Coordinator on the development of a final report and benefit-cost analysis for Section 31 (Brunswick/Topsham), where Central Maine Power has submitted a proposal for a transmission upgrade.
- The Commercial and Industrial (C&I) Prescriptive Program (CIP) has closed out the Small Municipality Retrofits Funding Opportunity Notice (FON) and continues to reach out to business sectors through these FONs.
- The Small Business Initiative continues to ramp up the heat pumps measure. This offering had a slow start in FY2021, impacted by the pandemic, which resulted in carryforward Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) funds. Mr. Stoddard observed that small businesses were particularly hard hit economic uncertainty surrounding the pandemic.
- The Home Energy Savings Program (HESP) continues to be busy with heat pump rebate support. Mr. Burgess and Ms. MacDonald highlighted experiences where contractors were scheduling well into the future. Mr. Eglinton noted that heat pump activity has doubled, and that EMT is seeing steady growth in the number of new heat pump installers signing on as Residential Registered Vendors.
- The Low-Income Initiatives (LII) will use the new, New England Clean Energy Connect (NECEC) settlement funds to target tankless coils in low-income homes, replacing them with heat pump water heaters.
- Mr. Isaacson noted that EMT will need to explore new and different tactics to successfully invest the new ARPA funds for weatherization. Mr. Stoddard reported that the Staff is actively working on this challenge, revisiting rebate levels, ramping up marketing, and talking to the contractor community. Mr. Eglinton noted that Staff is also exploring a variety of program design ideas to help ramp up workforce and weatherization services and to deliver quality weatherization upgrades to scale.

5. Planned Business

a) UPDATE on Monthly Financial Reports

Mr. LeClair reported that revenues are on track.

b) APPROVE Membership for Association of Energy Services Professionals (AESP)

Mr. Eglinton explained that the Staff proposes that the EMT become a “group member” of the AESP for FY2022. The annual dues for government entities with more than 20 employees is \$5,000. This membership gives the Staff access to regional and national resources in the energy sector, including professional development opportunities and recruiting materials. Ms. MacDonald asked if every membership opportunity needed to be brought to the Board individually, or if Staff might present all of them at once. Mr. Stoddard agreed that this would be more efficient, and suggested the Board add the Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnership (NEEP) membership approval to the motion.

ACTION: Upon a motion duly made (Mr. Colburn) and seconded (Ms. Furth) the Board voted unanimously to authorize the Executive Director to obtain a group membership for EMT in the AESP for FY2022 in the amount of \$5,000 and to renew membership as a NEEP “ally” in the amount of \$2,500.

c) APPROVE: Authorization to Accept American Recovery Plan (ARP) Funds

Mr. Stoddard explained that the statute allows for EMT to receive funds from any entity provided that receipt of those funds is consistent with the purposes of EMT Act (35-A MRS §10103(4)) and the Board approves. LD 1733 reflects the State’s plan for the allocation of the ARP funds, and includes \$50 million for EMT. Staff is requesting Board authorization to accept these funds.

ACTION: Upon a motion duly made (Ms. Welsh) and seconded (Mr. Burgess) the Board voted unanimously to find that the receipt of the fund is consistent with the purposes of the EMT Act and to authorize the Executive Director to accept \$50 million in ARPA funds to administer the programs envisioned in LD 1733.

d) DISCUSSION: Triennial Plan V Process and Timeline Update

Ms. MacDonald asked how Staff prefers that the Board suggest changes to the Triennial Plan, and how Trustees might receive feedback on questions. Mr. Stoddard explained that the Board is the final arbiter of the plan. The Board is not an advisory board, but a decisionmaking board. As such, an individual Trustee’s role is different than that of the stakeholders. He suggested that Board members are welcome to commit their thoughts to writing and share it with each other and the Staff, and encouraged Trustees to share as much of their views as they feel comfortable through discussion at Workshops or Board Meetings. Ms. Welch asked about the process for reviewing and incorporating input from the stakeholders. Mr. Stoddard said staff would synthesize public comments in a memo to the Board, explaining the Staff’s responses for the Board to consider.

e) PRESENTATION: on Triennial Plan V Topic: Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) Funding Priorities

Mr. Eglinton explained that a significant portion of NECEC and ARPA funds are earmarked

for uses that have historically leveraged RGGI funds (most notably, low-income weatherization and C&I unregulated fuels measures). When EMT receives NECEC settlement and ARPA funds, the Staff will therefore be able to reallocate RGGI funds for other uses. He presented the proposed allocation of these funds by program and described initiatives that could be further funded by RGGI funds. Mr. Burgess asked if RGGI funds could be used for EV Initiatives. Mr. Stoddard explained that EMT's reading of the statute in its current form is that EMT cannot use RGGI funds for rebates for EVs. The statute states that the funds must be used to "lower energy costs at [C&I] facilities" and "lower residential heating energy demand." Ms. Macdonald noted the gradual ramp up in the low-income weatherization budget and asked how Staff might respond to those who suggest that EMT should prioritize upfront investment for this disadvantaged community to support enhanced equity. Mr. Stoddard stated that this plan represents a realistic ramp rate; to increase activity three-fold will require significant expansion of workforce capacity, which will take time.

f) DISCUSS: Priorities and Plans for EV Initiatives

Ms. Siegel and Mr. Stoddard presented the plans and strategies for EV Initiatives in the TPV period. They explained the past and current priorities for the EV charging network, including Level 3 fast chargers and Level 2 chargers, and what areas are going to be targeted over the three years of the new triennial plan. The presentation also focused on how to overcome the charging and EV purchasing barriers. Ms. Welsh asked if there is a useful life for EV chargers. Mr. Stoddard explained that while EMT does not consider a specific lifespan, the hosts of each charger have signed a contract with EMT for period of time and can operate the chargers independently after the contract expires. Mr. Boyle suggested Staff also consider the debate around the gas tax exemption for EVs.

6. New Business

None.

7. Next Meeting Agenda and Scheduling

The next Board meeting will be in September. The precise date will be determined via email.

8. Adjourn

ACTION: Upon a motion duly made (Mr. Isaacson) and seconded (Mr. Colburn), the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the Board Meeting at 12:30 p.m.