

**Efficiency Maine Trust
Board Meeting Minutes
November 16, 2022**

The November meeting of the Board was conducted in person at the Trust's office at 168 Capitol Street in Augusta, Maine. The option to participate by phone and online video conferencing was also available.

Trustees:

- Dan Brennan
- Dan Burgess
- Kenneth Colburn, Secretary
- Heather Furth
- Mark Isaacson
- Suzanne MacDonald, Chair
- Glenn Poole, Treasurer
- Joan Welsh, Vice Chair

Efficiency Maine Trust (EMT) Staff:

- Ian Burnes
- Emily Cushman
- Peter Eglinton
- Hope Kohtala
- Greg Leclair
- Laura Martel
- Lily McVetty
- James Neal
- Sheldon Perkins
- Michael Stoddard
- Joanna Vollrath

Other Attendees:

- David Batchelder
- Phillip Borges, Emerson Swan
- Steve Bright
- Richard Burbank, Evergreen Home Performance
- Joel Farley
- Sydney Roberts Rockefeller
- Xavier Walter, Maine Building Performance Association
- Selectman from Houlton (name not provided)

1. Welcome and Introductions

Ms. MacDonald called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m.

2. APPROVE Agenda and Minutes

ACTION: Upon a motion duly made (Mr. Colburn) and seconded (Mr. Poole), the Board voted unanimously to approve the agenda and the October 26, 2022, Board Meeting Minutes.

3. Public Comment on Agenda Items

Mr. Burbank thanked EMT for its review of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) last month and encouraged EMT to engage with contractors in its rollout.

4. Executive Director's Report

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

- EMT saw a significant increase in website traffic with nearly 60,000 unique visitors.
- Staff exhibited at the Maine Health Care Association Conference & Expo and the Maine School Management Association Fall Conference.
- Staff participated in the electric utilities' ongoing rate cases at the Public Utilities Commission. Staff focused on identifying potential areas of overlap between activities that the utilities are proposing and EMT's ongoing work, and ensuring that parties are coordinating appropriately.
- The Commercial and Industrial (C&I) Prescriptive Initiatives (CIPI) completed 171 virtual customer consultations – a service that is proving to be a positive “gateway” tool for program participation. Unlike previous years, the CIPI team forecasts that it will fully invest its natural gas budget by March. The pipelines for the program's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)-funded Funding Opportunity Notices (FONs) have increased significantly since mid-October as potential participants become more familiar with the offerings.
- The Home Energy Savings Program's (HESP) weatherization rebate volumes for October were 121% higher than last October (563 vs. 255 rebates). The new DIY weatherization rebate is proving popular. Staff suspects it is also driving increased website activity, and encouraging homeowners to do larger jobs. Mr. Stoddard thanked Mr. Burgess for the idea.
- Retail Initiatives had a breakthrough when Lowe's agreed to lower its heat pump water heater price in Maine from \$749 to \$549 after EMT's \$850 instant discount. Two weeks later, Home Depot lowered its price in Maine from \$849 to \$549 after EMT's \$850 instant discount, matching Lowe's price. Mr. Eglinton noted that Maine now has the lowest heat pump water heater prices in the country.
- EMT created a new eligibility verification process for the “moderate” income bracket – a sector of Maine's households that faces greater barriers to participate in EMT programs than higher income households. EMT is using Internal Revenue Service (IRS) tax transcripts (free online with proper identification) to validate incomes that are up to 120% of area median income (AMI), matching the IRA's definition of moderate income. EMT introduced this new offer in its electric vehicle (EV) rebate program.
- EV Initiatives launched a new request for proposals (RFP) for high-speed chargers in Aroostook and Washington counties. These projects will leverage a combination of New England Clean Energy Connect (NECEC) and ARPA funds. Mr. Isaacson noted that it would make good sense to pair these projects with batteries to balance the grid. Mr. Stoddard confirmed that the RFP's scoring rubric rewards projects that plan to offset demand charges, which may be accomplished with battery storage.
- Mr. Stoddard reminded the Board about plans to establish an Innovation Advisory Group a few months ago. He requested that any Board members who are interested in participating email him directly. Mr. Colburn and Ms. MacDonald asked about participation from outside entities. Mr. Stoddard said EMT would entertain suggestions. He noted his desire to avoid detracting from the group's function of tracking progress on pilot projects and offering guidance on the design of future projects.
- The Whole Home Heat Pump Solutions Pilot continued its work on “Phase 2” of the pilot, expanding outreach to add more manufactured homes. EMT is interested in gathering a full heating season's worth of data with this larger sample size, working towards finding something scalable.

- The Efficiency Maine Green Bank’s (EMGB’s) home energy loan activity continues to exceed historical patterns and deplete the pool of available capital in EMT’s residential revolving loan fund (RLF). Staff is closely monitoring activity and developing plans to address high demand for loans as well as to pursue third-party capital to maintain – and expand – loan offerings. EMGB is also exploring opportunities to broker third-party leases for municipalities and schools, and working to complete a rulemaking for the new Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) Program by January.

5. **Planned Business**

a) **UPDATE on Monthly Financial Reports**

Mr. Leclair reported that electric procurement revenues are now at 49% of what was budgeted for the full year (vs. 41% last month) after EMT received some trailing payments. EMT has received \$2.7 million in ARPA revenues from the State of Maine thus far, and is in the process of requesting additional funding this week. ISO New England revenues are slightly behind forecast (31% year-to-date vs. 33% of the year gone by).

b) **APPROVE Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2022**

Mr. Eglinton provided a summary of EMT’s FY2022 Annual Report, highlighting past year’s activities and results, including the lifetime energy cost savings, program investments, and notable accomplishments. He presented Staff’s two proposed legislative recommendations relating to 1) the Energy Efficiency and Renewables Resource Fund and 2) the loophole that effectively exempts standalone substation projects from the non-wires alternatives process.

ACTION: Upon a motion duly made (Mr. Colburn) and seconded (Mr. Poole) the Board voted unanimously to approve the FY2022 Annual Report, with any changes discussed and adopted at the November 16, 2022, Board meeting, as well as any non-substantive typographical edits or computational corrections as may be required prior to submission to the Public Utilities Commission and Legislature.

c) **DISCUSS language for Bylaws regarding remote participation in Board meetings**

Mr. Stoddard asked Board Members to read the draft amendments to the existing Bylaws and come prepared to discuss and vote on them at the December Board Meeting.

d) **APPROVE E2Tech membership renewal**

The Board decided to table this agenda item until next the Board meeting.

e) **Efficiency Maine Green Bank**

i. **APPROVE sole source contract with NEIF for lease agreement**

Mr. Eglinton requested approval to use a sole source procurement for lease servicing to be provided by the National Energy Improvement Fund (NEIF) in

an amount not to exceed \$38,000. These services would assist EMT in implementing a key component of “Phase 2” of the Whole-Home Heat Pump Solutions Pilot.

ACTION: Upon a motion duly made (Mr. Isaacson) and seconded (Ms. Furth) the Board voted unanimously to authorize the Executive Director to enter a sole source contract with NEIF in an amount not to exceed \$38,000, through FY2027.

ii. APPROVE Staff discretion in determining which loan products to fund with existing capital

Mr. Eglinton reminded the Board that in 2021 the Board had approved setting aside two separate allocations of \$2 million each from Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) funds to use as loan capital. One half of the loan capital was set aside for residential loans and the other half for commercial loans. Mr. Eglinton explained that, to better respond to fluctuating market demand, Staff proposes to merge the two allocations into a single resource available to support loans that are experiencing elevated demand or showing strong potential from the Efficiency Maine Green Bank’s. Mr. Colburn said he would like Staff to keep the Board informed when any discretion is exercised, and to report on the share allocated to the residential vs commercial sectors.

ACTION: Upon a motion duly made (Mr. Poole) and seconded (Mr. Colburn) the Board voted unanimously to authorize the discretion of Staff to determine which loan products to fund with existing RGGI capital reserved for use in the Trust’s financing initiatives.

f) UPDATE on confidentiality of heat pump models for Innovation Program

Mr. Burnes shared that EMT is working to acquire European hydronic heat pump models (not currently available in the U.S.) for some Innovation Program pilots. He reported that Staff was considering how to address the vendors’ desire to have confidential or “masking” treatment of certain details of the project.

6. New Business

None

7. Next Meeting Agenda and Scheduling

The next Board Meeting is scheduled for December 21 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

8. Adjourn

ACTION: Upon a motion duly made (Mr. Burgess) and seconded (Mr. Poole), the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the Board Meeting at 12:02 p.m.