

**Efficiency Maine Trust
Board Meeting Minutes
April 27, 2022**

The April 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
- Heather Furth
- Mark Isaacson
- Suzanne MacDonald, Chair
- Glenn Poole, Treasurer
- Christopher Rauscher
- Joan Welsh, Vice Chair

Efficiency Maine Trust (EMT) Staff:

- Ian Burnes
- Emily Cushman
- Bridget Gifford
- Monte Haynes
- Greg Leclair
- Laura Martel
- Lily McVetty
- Rick Meinking
- Sheldon Perkins
- Kate Rankin
- Jesse Remillard
- Molly Siegel
- Michael Stoddard
- Lauren Trapani
- Joanna Vollrath

Other Attendees:

- John Beekman
- Richard Burbank, Evergreen Home Performance
- Josh Caldwell
- Clifford Krolick
- Rebecca Schultz, Natural Resources Council of Maine
- Timothy Seymour
- Jack Shapiro, Natural Resources Council of Maine
- Larry Simpson, Enervee
- Melissa Winne, Governor's Energy Office (GEO)

1. Welcome and Introductions

Ms. MacDonald called the meeting to order at 9:31 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 March 23, 2022 Board Meeting Minutes.

3. Public Comment on Agenda Items

Mr. Krolick, a member of the Sierra Club, expressed his hope that EMT will use funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to hire a Senior Program Manager for Finance Initiatives and to advance EMT's Green Bank efforts. Mr. Stoddard noted EMT

has the position posted and is making progress with the hiring process.

4. **Executive Director's Report**

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

- EMT responded to several press inquiries about rising energy costs and mitigation opportunities.
- EMT participated in a handful of in-person events, including public meetings, trade conferences, home shows, and electric vehicle (EV) expos.
- The Call Center experienced another busy month with a high volume of inbound calls, up roughly 50% from a year ago.
- Triennial Plan V is pending before the Maine PUC and is the subject of settlement negotiations. EMT has circulated a stipulation for signatures. After providing an opportunity for parties to sign on, EMT will submit it to PUC for consideration. EMT Staff is hoping for a decision by late-May.
- Though the Commercial and Industrial (C&I) Program (CIP) experienced a significant slowdown earlier in the fiscal year, recent activity is picking up. The program appears likely to finish the year committing nearly all of the budget that was originally allocated to the program. However, due mostly to the slowdown caused by COVID over the past two years, the program will not significantly draw down the unspent carryforward from the prior year (FY2021) that was added to the FY2022 budget.
- The Small Business Initiative (SBI) offering for lighting is on a steady trajectory upwards, and heat pumps are holding steady. Ms. MacDonald inquired about potential correlations between lighting and heat pump adoption. Mr. Stoddard noted that EMT will give more thought on how to report any correlations. Mr. Burgess shared a quote from a national vendor who highlighted that Maine has the fastest growing heat pump market in the country at twice the rate of the national average.
- The Home Energy Savings Program (HESP) is seeing weatherization activity increase after a slowdown associated with COVID-19 variant surges in the fall and winter. Contractors are hiring to increase capacity. Despite the setback, weatherization activity will likely finish the year about 10% higher than FY2021. Heat pump activity is forecasted end up in the roughly same spot as FY2021.
- EV Initiatives continues to see supply chain disruptions and does not foresee this issue going away before FY2023. Manufacturers are bringing more EV models to the market, and it will be an exciting time once supply chain issues are resolved.
- After a series of requests for proposals (RFPs), EMT is now awarding contracts to its major program delivery teams for the Triennial Plan V period.
- Nat Haslett joined EMT as a Manager for Regulatory and Legislative Affairs. He will work with the Strategic Initiatives team to enhance EMT representation in PUC proceedings.
- Ms. MacDonald asked if GEO or EMT got responses from the public on their efforts to help consumers mitigate higher energy costs. Mr. Burgess pointed to the recent low-income credit on electricity bills, but noted that energy costs remain an ongoing challenge. Mr. Brennan shared that Maine State Housing Authority used supplemental Low Income Heating Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funds and collaborated with Central Maine Power (CMP) and Versant to put a \$90 credit on qualifying electric bills

for three months. He also pointed to improvements in the LIHEAP application process and noted that significant additional federal funds are anticipated for the program.

5. **Planned Business**

a) **UPDATE on Monthly Financial Reports**

Mr. LeClair reported EMT needs to right-size its ARPA budgets, and will likely propose the associated budget amendments at the next Board Meeting. Mr. Stoddard explained that when the Board first approved the allocation of ARPA funds, the Maine Jobs and Recovery Plan (MJRP) spread these funds over two fiscal years. There have been numerous approval steps in the intervening period, including drafting of initiative proposals (“business cases”), and signing memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with the Department of Administrative and Financial Services (DAFS). At this point in the fiscal year, EMT has not yet expended ARPA funds (relying on other revenue sources to launch some of the initiatives that will eventually use ARPA funds) and is now forecasting that it will not use as much of the ARPA funds in FY2022 as originally assumed.

b) **APPROVE Amendment to Loan Write-off Policy**

Mr. Haynes proposed amending section 4.c. of EMT’s Loan Accounting Policy to extend the collection timeframe from 90 days to 120 days. Mr. Colburn suggested providing redlined versions of the policy.

ACTION: Upon a motion duly made (Mr. Colburn) and seconded (Mr. Isaacson) the Board voted unanimously to authorize the Controller to amend section 4.c. of the Loan Accounting Policy to extend the collection timeframe from 90 days to 120 days.

c) **UPDATE on Legislative Activity**

Ms. Winne, Mr. Burgess, and Mr. Stoddard provided an update on a handful of bills from the 2nd session of the 130th Maine State Legislature.

An issue that arose during legislative debates on LD 1350 – *An Act To Expand Maine’s Clean Energy Economy* – was whether to expand EMT’s role to allow for ownership of generation assets and financing through revenue bonds. Mr. Isaacson observed that lower costs of debt that public agencies can provide could be instrumental in developing the infrastructure that will be needed to achieve State’s beneficial electrification goals. Mr. Stoddard stressed that EMT consistently refrained from taking a policy position on this issue at the Legislature, commenting instead on the organization’s capacity to execute the tasks if they were assigned. Ms. MacDonald suggested that the Board continue the conversation on this issue and other forward-thinking ideas that might involve an expansion of EMT’s mission. Mr. Colburn agreed, pointing to the need for additional brainstorming on the future of distributed energy resources (DERs). Mr. Stoddard suggested that the Staff and the Board decide on the scope of the conversation, and then plan for the discussion format. Ms. MacDonald inquired about an appropriate timeline; Mr. Stoddard noted that it would be prudent to address these topics before the start of the next legislative session in January 2023.

d) UPDATE and DISCUSSION on Plans for Use of Federal Funds

Ms. Cushman provided an overview of the history and legislative context for the ARPA funds described the approval process for EMT’s specific ARPA-funded initiatives. The MJRP and the associated bill (LD 1733, *An Act To Provide Allocations for the Distribution of State Fiscal Recovery Funds*) allocated \$50 million in ARPA funds to EMT: \$25 million for low-income weatherization, \$15 million for energy efficiency projects among municipal, country, school, and community organizations, and \$10 million for energy efficiency projects in the C&I sector. All funds must be committed by December 31, 2024 and expended by December 31, 2026. EMT crafted a series of project descriptions (“Business Cases”) for review by DAFS to ensure compliance with the ARPA legislation and associated rules for implementation. As the Business Cases are approved, EMT works with DAFS to develop memoranda of understanding (MOUs) for each initiative.

Next, EMT Staff (Program Managers Gifford, Meinking, Remillard, and Seigel) each described their ARPA-funded initiatives in more detail and provided an overview of current plans. Mr. Stoddard encouraged Board members to provide feedback, and requested their assistance in publicizing these opportunities. Mr. Colburn suggested that EMT rely on trusted local organizations and voices, such as Down East Energy Partners. Ms. MacDonald recommended that EMT share information with the Maine Climate Council working groups when they resume discussions this spring.

6. New Business

None.

7. Next Meeting Agenda and Scheduling

The next Board meeting will be in May, but the Board discussed alternatives to the traditional 4th Wednesday of the month due to a scheduling conflict that multiple Trustees reported. It was agreed that the precise date would be determined through subsequent discussions.

8. Adjourn

ACTION: Upon a motion duly made (Mr. Poole) and seconded (Mr. Isaacson), the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the Board Meeting at 12:09 a.m.