

**Efficiency Maine Trust  
Board Meeting Minutes  
July 24, 2024**

*The July 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 Burgess
- Kenneth Colburn, Treasurer
- Heather Furth
- Mark Isaacson, Vice Chair
- Suzanne MacDonald
- Glenn Poole, Chair
- Chris Rauscher
- Joan Welsh, Secretary

**Efficiency Maine Trust (EMT) Staff**

- Ian Burnes
- Emily Cushman
- Hogan Dwyer
- Peter Eglinton
- Becca Ferguson
- Monte Haynes
- Greg Leclair
- Kate Rankin
- Lauren Scott
- Michael Stoddard

**Other Attendees:**

- Ross Anthony, Governor's Energy Office (GEO)
- Daniel Bisson, Tighe & Bond
- Richard Burbank, Evergreen Home Performance
- Josh Caldwell, Natural Resources Council of Maine
- Samantha Caputo, Opower Oracle
- Emma Cost, GEO
- Francis Eanes, Maine Labor Climate Council
- Ben Grant, Professional Logging Contractors of the Northeast
- David Littell, Bernstein Shur (Versant)
- Kirsten Millar, Virtual Peaker
- Brynne Robbins, Natural Resources Council of Maine
- James Robinson, Mainely Plumbing & Heating Inc.
- Drew Stevens,
- Luke Swain
- Kiki Tidwell, York Climate Action Committee
- Philip Zapfel
- Bill Bell, Maine Pellet Fuels Association

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Mr. Poole called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

**2. APPROVE Agenda and Minutes**

**ACTION:** Upon a motion duly made (Ms. Furth) and seconded (Ms. Welsh), the Board voted unanimously to approve the agenda and the June 26, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes.

### **3. Public Comment on Agenda Items**

- Mr. Bell thanked EMT for providing multiple opportunities to share comments during the Triennial Plan VI (TPVI) process. He also noted that Governor Mills recently announced a grant to the Maine Pellet Fuels Association for the marketing of pellet fuels.

### **4. Executive Director's Report**

Mr. Stoddard summarized the ED Report. Following are several items highlighted during his presentation:

- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced awardees for the competitive Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) program. A regional bid led by Connecticut, comprising five New England states and a facilitation role by the Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships (NEEP), was awarded \$450 million to accelerate electrification of heating systems. The portion of funds to be directed to Maine (more than \$40 million) will be administered by EMT. EMT is well positioned to receive additional funds through this grant for pilot programs and education/outreach. EMT was also involved in a second CPRG bid that would have funded an expansion of the electric vehicle (EV) program, but the bid was not successful.
- The second round of solicitations for school electrification retrofits, funded by the Maine Jobs and Recovery Plan (MJRP), is accepting applications through October 1, 2024.
- Staff has launched five new solicitations to distribute funds from Maine's Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) grant. Additionally, there is a large queue of previously awarded DC fast charging projects that are scheduled to come online over the next 12 months. Mr. Stoddard anticipates this rollout will help with EV adoption generally by diminishing concerns about range anxiety.
- EV Initiatives issued double the number of rebates for low- and moderate-income (LMI) consumers in FY2024 compared to FY2023.
- EMT called demand response events on July 9, 15, 16, and 17. EMT is still calculating the impact of its Demand Response Initiative during those events. Mr. Rauscher asked if EMT includes the marginal value of megawatts (MW) deferred in its cost-benefit analysis. Mr. Burnes confirmed that it does, but the most significant cost avoidance is marginal transmission and distribution costs. Mr. Rauscher asked if EMT includes the avoided cost of carbon in that calculation. Mr. Burnes responded that EMT does include it.

### **5. Planned Business**

#### **a) Monthly Financial Report**

Mr. Leclair noted that the revenue and expenditure numbers for the month of June have not yet been finalized. The Forward Capacity Market (FCM) revenues were about \$400,000 short of expectations. The remaining Electric Efficiency Procurement funds for FY2024 have been received. The remaining New England Clean Energy Connect (NECEC) funds owed for FY2024 should be arriving shortly.

#### **b) Memberships for FY2025 – Approve**

Mr. Eglinton provided an overview of the trade organization memberships that EMT intends to maintain for FY2025, as described in his July 24 memorandum. He noted that Staff may encounter other opportunities not listed in the memorandum, and highlighted the fact that

EMT is contemplating forming a membership organization with other green banks across the country to coordinate on Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund activities. Staff proposes to include approximately \$6,000 of unallocated authorization to allow EMT to participate in a limited number of such situations. Mr. Isaacson asked if there are additional organizations in Maine that EMT may want to join, especially those providing forums to interact with contractors. Mr. Stoddard responded that Staff will look into opportunities and come back to the Board with ideas.

**ACTION:** Upon a motion duly made (Ms. Welsh) and seconded (Mr. Isaacson), the Board voted unanimously to authorize the Executive Director to renew Efficiency Maine's group memberships in FY2025 in the amount of \$38,000 or less.

**c) Legislative Update**

Mr. Stoddard provided an overview of the Second Session of the 131<sup>st</sup> State Legislature. Key bills highlighted in his presentation included:

- LD 122 increases the maximum retail price threshold for rebate eligibility of light-duty EVs from \$50,000 to \$55,000, and requires that EMT establish a pilot program to provide incentives for businesses to purchase/lease medium- and heavy-duty EVs. Mr. Stoddard noted that this is likely to add more models and trim levels to the list of rebatable EVs, thereby driving an increase in program activity that more closely matches peer-state programs. Ms. MacDonald wondered if percentage of household median income might be a better threshold. Mr. Stoddard noted that there are many EVs now available at prices that typical Mainers pay for their internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles.
- LD 1606 directs the Green Schools Program within the Maine Department of Education to conduct a study and develop guidance in coordination with several state agencies to assist public schools in achieving energy efficiency and maximizing the use of clean energy.
- LD 2067 extends the Arrearage Management Program (AMP) operated by the utilities through 2027. EMT will continue to support AMP by providing participants with reports on their electricity usage and information on energy saving measures and incentives.
- LD 2053 exempts buildings used to cultivate crops (except those used to cultivate cannabis) from the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code. This impacts how EMT measures the baseline for these buildings.
- LD 589 amends the Beneficial Electrification Act to add a definition of “beneficial load” and calls on EMT to consider incentivizing appropriate placement beneficial load (i.e., in areas where there is excess grid capacity.) Mr. Isaacson suggested that EMT should focus on addressing this through the C&I Custom Program where projects can be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, expressing concern that doing it at a smaller, more residential scale might open EMT up to criticism of fairness.

**d) Triennial Plan VI (TPVI)**

**i. Staff Memorandum Summarizing Stakeholder Comments and Staff Responses – Review and Discuss**

Mr. Stoddard provided an overview of Staff's memo summarizing the TPVI public stakeholder process, comments received, and Staff responses. EMT sought stakeholder input

through four channels: (a) a Request for Information (“RFI”), (b) public Board meetings and topic-specific workshops, (c) public hearings in-person and online, and (d) an opportunity for written comments on the draft Plan. Over 390 organizations and individuals participated in these various stakeholder engagement opportunities.

Mr. Stoddard highlighted that a considerable portion of stakeholder feedback reflected opposition to the Staff’s original proposal to eliminate residential biomass incentives. He reiterated that this proposal was based on the fact that this offering has low program activity, generates limited cost savings, has a complex impact on carbon emission goals, uses limited Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative funds, and faces challenges serving low-income households. He noted that Staff’s view has changed somewhat with these discussions; Staff acknowledges that there can be some carbon savings when pellets are made from fuel that would have otherwise gone into the waste stream. Mr. Stoddard asked the Board for guidance on whether to maintain the Staff’s recommendation in the final draft of the Plan. Mr. Poole, Mr. Isaacson, Mr. Colburn, and Ms. Welsh voiced support for maintaining residential biomass incentives for TPVI.

Mr. Colburn noted that comments he made regarding load flexibility for TPV still apply to TPVI. He urged EMT to advocate for load sensing data from the utilities, following the model of a similar effort in California. Mr. Isaacson seconded Mr. Colburn’s suggestion.

Mr. Stoddard noted that Staff plans to submit the written TPVI draft to the Board mid-August so that Trustees have several weeks to review it in advance of a vote. Staff is aiming to file it with the Public Utilities Commission before Thanksgiving.

**6. New Business**

None.

**7. Next Meeting Agenda and Scheduling**

Mr. Stoddard noted that there will be no August Board meeting. The September Board meeting will need to be rescheduled due to a Maine Climate Council conflict. Staff will follow up via email.

**8. Adjourn**

**ACTION:** Without objection, the board adjourned the Board Meeting at 12:05 p.m.

**Efficiency Maine Board of Trustees – Roll Call Sheet****Board Meeting Date: 7/24/2024**

Trustee	<b>Vote 1</b>	<b>Vote 2</b>	<b>Vote 7</b>
<i>Agenda Item</i>	2. Approve Agenda and Minutes	5.b. Approve Memberships for FY2025	8. Adjourn
<i>Motion, Second</i>	Ms. Furth, Ms. Welsh	Ms. Welsh, Mr. Isaacson	No Objections
Brennan, Daniel	A	A	
Burgess, Dan	Y	Y	
Colburn, Kenneth	Y	Y	
Furth, Heather	Y	Y	
Isaacson, Mark	Y	Y	
MacDonald, Suzanne	Y	Y	
Poole, Glenn	Y	Y	
Rauscher, Christopher	Y	Y	
Welsh, Joan	Y	Y	

Y= Yes, N = No, A = Absent, R = Recused