



SPENCER J. COX
Governor

DEIDRE M. HENDERSON
Lieutenant Governor

State of Utah

Department of Commerce Division of Public Utilities

MARGARET W. BUSSE
Executive Director

CHRIS PARKER
Director, Division of Public Utilities

Status Report — GRID Modernization Collaborative Workgroup

To: Public Service Commission of Utah

From: Utah Division of Public Utilities

Chris Parker, Director

Artie Powell, Manager

Doug Wheelwright, Utility Technical Consultant Supervisor

Bob Davis, Utility Technical Consultant

Date: January 20, 2022

Re: **Docket No. 21-035-16**, Collaborative Stakeholder Process for Rocky Mountain Power's Grid Modernization and Rate Design.

The Division of Public Utilities (Division) hereby submits its collaborative process six-month status report (Report) to the Public Service Commission of Utah (Commission).¹

Issue

On June 14, 2021, the Commission issued its Second Scheduling Order in Docket No. 21-035-16, Collaborative Stakeholder Process. In its Order, the Commission directed the Division to file a preliminary report to include the anticipated topics of the informal workgroup discussions by July 30, 2021. The Commission directed the Division to file its first status report by January 31, 2022 and succeeding status reports every six-months thereafter.

¹ See Public Service Commission of Utah, Second Scheduling Order, Docket No. 21-035-16, June 14, 2021, <https://pscdocs.utah.gov/electric/21docs/2103516/3190922103516sso6-14-2021.pdf>.

Background

The Commission initiated this docket on March 17, 2021, for the purpose of establishing a collaborative stakeholder process related to grid modernization and rate design, issuing a Scheduling Order and Notices of Technical Conference, Comment Period, and Scheduling Conference.²

The Commission's Initial Notice asked Rocky Mountain Power (RMP) to submit an informational filing to initiate the collaborative stakeholder process and present its filing and answer stakeholder questions during a technical conference on May 10, 2021. After receiving additional comments from stakeholders during the technical conference, the Commission held a second scheduling conference on June 2, 2021.³

The Commission conducted the second Scheduling Conference with representatives from RMP, the Division, the Office of Consumer Services (OCS), Utah Clean Energy (UCE), Utah Association of Energy Users (UAE), Western Resource Advocates (WRA), Kroger, Walmart, and Nucor (collectively, Stakeholders).⁴

RMP agreed to ensure that all intervenors in this docket would be provided with appropriate notice and instructions for participation in the informal workgroup discussions. The Division agreed to file a preliminary report, including the anticipated topics to be discussed during the workgroup discussions. The Division agreed to file a status report every six-months to advise the Commission on the status of their efforts and a final report at the end of the Stakeholders' collaboration.⁵

Discussion

The Stakeholders began their collaborative workgroup discussions on July 13, 2021 with a presentation from RMP on the fundamentals of rate unbundling. The Stakeholders determined

² *Id.*, at page 1.

³ *Id.*

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *Id.*, page 2.

that discussing specific topics and sub-topics in-turn would develop a foundation to help the collaborative workgroup progress forward.

The Stakeholders agreed to several general topics of discussion with sub-topics for further discussion during its initial scoping meeting held on July 13, 2021.⁶ Those discussions and presenters are as follows.

August 31, 2021

Cost of Service Overview

Presenters:

Rocky Mountain Power

Utah Association of Energy Users (UAE)

October 7, 2021

Generation and Transmission Allocation/Classification

Customer Features⁷

Third Party Access⁸

Green Button⁹

Home Area Network¹⁰

Schedule Future Discussions

Presenters:

Rocky Mountain Power

November 18, 2021

AMI/Grid Modernization

Smart Inverter

Agenda for Future Discussions

Presenters:

Ric O'Connell — GridLab

⁶ See Division Preliminary Report, Docket No. 21-035-16, July 29, 2021, page 3, <https://pscdocs.utah.gov/electric/21docs/2103516/319750DPUPrlmnrRprt7-29-2021.pdf>.

⁷ **Customer Features** encompasses many aspects of user interfaces that help customers understand their energy consumption through use of smart meters, program applications, and live apps that monitor energy usage. https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2016/12/f34/AMI%20Summary%20Report_09-26-16.pdf.

⁸ **Third Party Access** is comprised of companies that are not associated with the customer's utility but uses the data collected through the customer features upon consent of the customer to aid in energy usage efficiency in a secure manner. <https://emp.lbl.gov/publications/regulators-privacy-guide-third-party>.

⁹ **Green Button** initiative is an industry-led effort that responds to a White House call-to-action to provide utility customers with easy and secure access to their **energy** usage information in a consumer-friendly and computer-friendly format. <https://www.energy.gov>.

¹⁰ The **Home Area Network** or **HAN** is a **network** contained within a customer's **home** or business that connects a customer's qualified energy monitoring device to a smart meter. This connection allows the customer to observe his or her real-time energy usage through the energy monitoring device. <https://www.firstenergycorp.com>.

Brian Lydic — IREC

December 9, 2021

Regulatory Assistance Program (RAP)

Presenters:

Dr. Carl Linvill — Implications of a Modernizing Grid on Electric Cost Allocation

John Shenot — Evaluating Potential Grid Modernization Investments

Elaine Prause — Grid Modernization Investments: Evaluation and Cost Recovery

January 10, 2022

Cost of Service Distribution

Presenters:

Rocky Mountain Power

Ron Nelson — Strategen

The stakeholders agreed to conduct additional workgroup discussions and scheduled dates and times through July of 2022. The group compiled a list of topics it plans to discuss over the next several months as well as a deeper-dive into some of the topics discussed during the first six months. The topics and timing for future discussions will be determined during its February meeting.

The group applied to the Department of Energy Technical Assistance (TA) program for assistance and was accepted. The group expects to start scoping topics with the TA program leaders in February and schedule a presentation sometime during 2022.

Conclusion

The Stakeholders' ongoing collaborative workgroup discussions have been productive, informative, and an effective use of time thus far. The stakeholders agree that it is beneficial to proceed with future discussions that support the intent of the collaborative workgroup and work towards resolutions for the main concerns outlined in RMP's most recent general rate case. The Division plans to file its next six-month status update by Mid-August of 2022.

cc: Service List