



**Connecticut Equity and Environmental Justice Advisory Council
(CEEJAC)**

November 20, 2024, 3:00-4:00 PM

Energy & Technology Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

Disclaimer: Please note this is not a word for word translation

1. Jayson welcomed the council and PURA Chairman Marissa Gillett.
2. Chairman Gillett gave a presentation overview on what the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) is and what they do in the state of CT. Here are some highlights from the presentation:
 - Every state has a “PURA” entity. We’re different from state agencies or the state legislature.
 - PURA issues legally binding decisions on the utilities (eg. Eversource, United Illuminating, Yankee, Aquarion, etc). If you are served by an entity that is owned by a municipality, then we don’t regulate them.
 - What does PURA do?
 - Set distribution and delivery rates (eg. Poles and wires)
 - Supply rates are de-regulated; transmission rates are federally regulated
 - Focus has been on modernizing the grid
 - How does PURA do their work?
 - Through “dockets” which is like cases or proceedings
 - Docket is opened by party, Chairman, or legislature
 - Statutory Party includes Office of Consumer Protection, DEEP, Utility companies
 - Build the Record
 - Diverse viewpoints are important at this stage – can include asking questions, have formal hearings
 - Issue Straw Proposal or issue a Draft Decision
 - Staff create a proposal
 - Make Changes
 - Issue Final Decision
 - In 2023, majority of dockets focused on electric and telecom.
 - Equitable Modern Grid Framework – how the grid can be modernized
 - Low Income Discount Rate (launched in electric, expanded to gas and water) - address affordability burden. Nationwide goal of having folks spend no more than 6% of disposable household income on electric rates.
 - Annual review of dockets – once a year where public is able to comment on programs.
 - How to Engage with PURA:
 - Provide comment during a public hearing or in writing by email
 - Ex. Rate cases are done in person or virtually and it carries the same evidentiary weight as a written comment.

- PA 23-102 allows PURA to establish a process to compensate eligible stakeholder groups to participate in PURA proceedings.
 - Meant for EJ communities, hardship customers, small business customers, nonprofits.
 - Intends for stakeholder groups to enter on same level as utilities, such as hiring an attorney.
 - **Stakeholder Group Compensation Program:** [Stakeholder Group Compensation Program](#)
- Equity, Accessibility & Stakeholder Engagement Docket (EASE) – focused on procedural equity questions. Audience for PURA are judges, and PURA writes legal proceedings, but the intent is to not just take into account opinions but to understand the decisions and share with your community.
 - Scheduling Public Meetings in 2025
- Where to find PURA:
 - YouTube, Social Media - [Connecticut PURA - YouTube](#)
 - Recorded clips by staff – tutorials
 - Quarterly Newsletters, [Quarterly Newsletters](#)
 - Subscribe to the PURA Quarterly Newsletter directly by emailing pura.information@ct.gov with "Subscribe me to PURA Quarterly Newsletter" in the Subject line

Questions:

- How many dockets are currently for energy and electricity related?
 - Over 100 dockets, of that three-quarters are electricity related (sub-metered, rate setting, program design)
- Are there any major changes that specifically affect EJ communities?
 - Shared Clean Energy Program (SCEP) similar to Community Solar Projects, those projects are behind, so we are working on decisions that would help make that more likely for those projects to be constructed.
 - Assistance for Light and Medium Heavy Duty targets, and multi-unit dwellings. While we may be achieving the deployment targets, that doesn't translate to the programs being accessible to those communities.
 - Looking at a docket for electrifying school buses.
- Does PURA have enough resources to handle all this work? Is there a change that you would like to see?
 - Have a number of open positions at PURA. It is a challenge to recruit and retain staff in such a technical field. We are competing with utilities for the same workforce. Have a dedicated staff of 70 people.
- What is the current situation concerning the installation of monopoles in Bridgeport and Fairfield in historic districts? Is there any movement on "undergrounding" distribution wires?
 - Monopoles is under the Siting Council. PURA has a designee on the Siting Council, PURA voted against the monopoles. Undergrounding Distribution Wires is under PURA, in an active docket, collating strategies for long term undergrounding for grid

distribution. Customers pay the same for electricity regardless of your service (eg. Rural vs. Urban – all paying the same rate). There are different metrics for measuring reliability – utilities will put money to improve system-wide outage, but not the customer circuit issue (which is more focused on a neighborhood). Docket 28-09...

- FYI, here's a link to the Connecticut Siting Council (not PURA) docket associated with the Fairfield to Bridgeport transmission line project just mentioned by the Commissioner Gillett: [Docket No 516](#)
- Operation Fuel is planning to participate in the stakeholder engagement docket and are glad to be a resource sharing our experience with anyone who wants to know more. We have also successfully applied for stakeholder compensation funding and would love to support more groups through that process if you're interested. Please reach out to us if you'd like to connect! You can email me at Gannon@operationfuel.org.
- Performance Based Regulation – how we regulate utilities. Utilities are compensated by cost-of-service compensation. PBR – is based on outcomes and their ability to achieve those outcomes. Looks at performance incentives, and ability to achieve metrics, like affordability. If you're interested in the patterns of disconnections, we're trying to make this accessible to the public.
 - An op-ed on PBR: <https://ctmirror.org/2024/02/09/ct-pura-utility-regulation/>
 - Acadia Center is a resource on this topic.
- What kind of programs are from PURA, DEEP, vs. Legislature?
 - PURA has to have statutory authorization for what we do. Solar programs (eg. [Residential Renewable Energy Solutions: RRES](#)) have statutory authorization that is prescriptive. PURA can also stand-up programs that are culminations of authority or direction. Benefit of being under DEEP, tells us to look at DEEP's policy documents to guide our decision-making (eg. EV Roadmap, GC3 documents). PURA then takes these into account in our decision-making. The programs that we stand up are directed by DEEP or Legislature. Non-wire solutions docket looks to interject competition to distribution (eg. Instead of replacing a pole and wire, can you defer that pole and wire with something more cost effective).
- Case Management Database is difficult to navigate. YouTube channel there is a 3-minute video to walk you through setting up an account, common terminology.
 - How to Navigate PURA's Online Docket System [How to Navigate PURA's Online Docket System](#)
- How are you going to diversify your engagement?
 - EASE docket is the next planned public meetings. First public meeting is scheduled for March 2025 – want to build awareness of the docket and do initial outreach. PURA is only allowed to talk about open dockets in public forums (“ex parte”). Have not evoked ex parte in the EASE docket, so can talk about any matter in that docket with anyone. In March, planning to go into communities about how PURA can be more accessible?
- Can you give more examples of how groups could use the funds from the Stakeholder Group Compensation Program?
 - Reasonable costs for participation (eg. Attorney fees)

- Intentionally vague because there aren't a lot of predecessors. Really meant to help entities develop evidence to present evidence to help us achieve an outcome.
- Stakeholder Compensation Program Frequently Asked Questions [stakeholder-group-compensation-faqs.pdf](#)
- How long does it take PURA to respond to an application for stakeholder funds?
 - Will respond if application is complete or not and about 30 days to respond. Only allowed 3 entities for each proceeding.
- What is the difference between a docket and proceeding?
 - No difference. Case is also interchangeable with docket and proceeding. Docket numbers: first numbers are the year, middle is the month, final is the sequential order numbers.
- How can a docket be opened?
 - PURA has a board and we all have equal votes on a matter; majority carries. Chairman can direct the opening of a docket to investigate a matter. Legislature can ask PURA to open a docket. An applicant will petition us to open a docket. Office of Consumer Protection can also ask us to open a docket.
- Could PURA and Siting Council consider holding a joint public information meeting on under grounding? It might help to do this long before a docket is created.
 - Continued conversation on undergrounding and wires.

List of Registrants

Doris Johnson	alicine francois	Betsy Gara
Sarah Huang	Scarlett Lara-Alcantara	Rehnuma Maisha
Jen McCaffery	Kathy Czepiel	Jennifer Wang
Ismail Abukar Osman	Eric Hammerling	Jean de Smet
doris johnson	Kristie Beahm	Jameson Davis
Lisette Andino	Mary Buchanan	Mike Turaj
Michael Icart	Anstress Farwell	Arqum Gul
Yousheng Mao	Jelani Fletcher	Ian McDonald
Leslie Downey	kim masson	Sarah Schechter
Mary Hogue	Jhoni Ada	Stephanie Camp
Kay Lehoux	Doug Brugge	Justine Phillips-Gallucci
Kay Lehoux	Heather Kohlmar	Gannon Long
Joanna Sebik	Hannah Beath	Greg Ohadoma
Allison Pilcher	Seth Cochran	Margaret Kane
Scott Redfern	Jon Schaefer	Perkin Simpson
Emily Deans	Andrew May	Luke Daniel
Alissa Bullard Bumstead	Maddy Harrison	Adrienne Houel
Kendall Keelen	Hedley Freake	lynne bonnett
Paul Aresta	Marc Gonzalez	Michele Melley
Adrian Huq	Annie Decker	Brittany Antuna
Dana Mowry	Fred Behringer	Halle Lisette Pierce
Peggy Diaz	Jennifer Arienti	Theresa Govert

Keila Silva
Eliza Heins
Cynthia Jennings
Marissa Gillett
Lindsay Suhr

Ryan Boggio
Jayson Velazquez
Omar Green
Rahiem Eleazer
Joseph DeNicola

Mark Mitchell MD
Kayla D.
Tenaya Taylor
Theresa Hopkins-Staten
Taren O'Connor