

Monthly Meeting - 5-17-2018

STATE OF NEW YORK
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

MEETING OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Thursday, May 17, 2018
10:28 a.m.
Three Empire State Plaza
Agency Building 3, 19th Floor
Albany, New York

COMMISSIONERS:

JOHN B. RHODES, Chair
GREGG C. SAYRE
DIANE X. BURMAN
JAMES S. ALESI

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2 CHAIRMAN RHODES: Good morning.

3 All right. It's time. So, let's get
4 started.

5 I'd like to call this session of the
6 Public Service Commission to order.

7 Secretary Burgess, are there any
8 changes to the final agenda?

9 MS. BURGESS: Good morning, Chair and
10 Commissioners.

11 There are no changes to this morning's
12 agenda.

13 CHAIRMAN RHODES: Okay. Then I will
14 proceed to the items. We have one item, on the
15 regular agenda and it is an informational, no-vote-
16 taken item. Item 301, case 18-E-0254, which is the
17 matter of the 2018 summer electric-system
18 preparations, presented by Vijay Puran, Utilities
19 Supervisor of Bulk Electric Systems and Paul
20 Darmetko, Utility Engineering Specialist. Mike
21 Worden, Director of Office Electric, Gas, and Water,
22 will provide a brief introduction.

23 Mike, please begin.

24 MR. WORDEN: Good morning, Chair
25 Rhodes and commissioners.

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2 Item 301, is largely focused on power-
3 supply issues and pricing that goes along with that.
4 And the item which is going to be presented by Vijay
5 and Paul, is really good news item for this summer.
6 We have a very good outlook going on and I won't take
7 away from their thunder and go into that.

8 But I think we'd be remiss without
9 talking about some of the current events that are
10 going on. I want to give you a short update on the
11 current storm-recovery effort and then just talk
12 about some of the things we're doing in response to
13 that.

14 Currently, there are about 92 thousand
15 customers without power in New York State. It's
16 mostly in the lower Hudson Valley and as I'm sure you
17 were all keenly aware of, that's the area that was
18 affected by the Riley and Quinn Storms, back in early
19 March. The affected counties in particular, are
20 Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Sullivan and Westchester
21 and these are served by NYSEG, Central Hudson and
22 Orange and Rockland.

23 So, we have about 55 hundred -- 5550
24 F.T.E.'s off line, tree and service crews that are
25 providing support to the area. That includes, on the

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2 order of 1250 out of state, out of region crews --
3 out of New York State crews. And it also includes a
4 large contingent of New York crews that have been
5 redeployed from, for example, western New York, down
6 into the lower Hudson Valley area. So, there's a
7 significant recovery effort going on.

8 We have had and we do have a heavy
9 focus on these kinds of restorations. There have
10 been quite a number of these storms, since we were
11 first hit by Riley and Quinn. I think this is the
12 fourth or fifth one that has caused significant power
13 outages and it seems to be coming, as Governor Cuomo
14 has noted, a -- a regular event. So, we are working
15 on making improvements, to the response process.

16 As you know, we initiated an
17 investigation to the outages associated with Riley
18 and Quinn. That's on -- ongoing, so I can't really
19 get into any of the details of that.

20 What I will tell you, that we're
21 trying to incorporate lessons learned, as we go
22 along, that we see things that should be improved on
23 a current-events-type basis. An example of that, is
24 we've been working with our partners, at State OEM,
25 to improve the process for getting crews across the

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2 border from Canada. In this event, just like in the
3 March event, the -- that's been a -- a -- an area of
4 significant response.

5 There are also -- both NYPA and
6 National Grid have been providing transmission crews
7 to help with this event, more so than they have in
8 the past. And so, that's been another area where
9 we've made some substantial improvements.

10 Hurricane season starts June 1st. So,
11 as you know, the last session -- again going
12 backwards, you approved the utility plans that were
13 in place for this summer, but we don't plan on
14 standing pat with those plans. We plan on making
15 improvements to the plans as we go along through the
16 summer, with the goal of having some significant
17 improvements in place, prior to the latter part of
18 the summer and the fall period, when the most
19 significant risk of a hurricane is -- is before us.

20 So, with that, I'm going to turn it
21 over to Vijay to give an update on the -- on the
22 summer preparedness on the bulk system.

23 MR. PURAN: Thank you, Mike.

24 Good morning, Chair Rhodes and
25 Commissioners.

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2 Today, I'll brief on the state's
3 transmission and distribution-system preparedness.
4 If you could, turn to the next slide, which will be
5 slide three of this presentation, please.

6 Okay. Based upon staff's review and
7 the assessment of utility data, meeting with the
8 individual utilities and the New York ISO, staff
9 finds that the state's electric system. both the
10 transmission and distribution systems are prepared to
11 reliably meet New York consumers' expected summer-
12 electric demands. Our review found that the
13 utilities will complete all major plant
14 reinforcements, inspections and repairs, prior to the
15 start of the summer season and they have adequate
16 spare equipment on hand to meet unforeseen
17 circumstances.

18 Next slide, please.

19 This chart shows the historical
20 actuals and forecast statewide peak demands, as
21 projected by the New York ISO What's interesting to
22 note, is how the forecast peak demands have changed
23 over time.

24 As you can see, the current forecast,
25 or the black line, is significantly lower, than the

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2 2015 forecast or the green line. And also, below the
3 previous two-years' forecast shown in purple and
4 blue. The New York ISO attributes the reduced peak
5 demands primarily to the positive effects of the
6 state's energy programs and to underlying forecasts
7 econ-metric growth rates.

8 If we compare the forecasts made in
9 2015, again, the green line, for 2025, with the
10 current forecast, which is the black, for the same
11 year, the current forecast is about three thousand
12 megawatts less. That's a rather significant drop, or
13 the equivalent of several large power plants.

14 To give a feel for what that means, in
15 terms of residential customers served, the energy
16 associated with three thousand megawatts is enough to
17 supply approximately 2.5 million, average-size
18 residential homes.

19 Next slide, please.

20 This chart shows the forecast impacts
21 of the contribution of energy efficiency and
22 distributed generation, towards reducing peak
23 demands. The blue bar -- bars, represent the
24 forecast energy-efficiency impacts and the red bars
25 represent the impacts of distributed generation.

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2 By year 2028, the combined effects of
3 energy efficiency and distributed generation, is
4 expected to quadruple to over 3,500 megawatts, from
5 the current forecast for 2018, of about eight hundred
6 megawatts.

7 Next slide, please.

8 This table shows the available
9 installed capacity for 2018. The installed capacity
10 comprises in-state generation capacity, special-case
11 resources and net imports from neighboring ISOs. In
12 total, the New York ISO expects to have about 42,169
13 megawatts available, to serve the load in 2018. Next
14 slide, please.

15 This table shows a forecast state-wide
16 peak demand, of 32,904 megawatts, for the summer of
17 2018, which is slightly down from last year's
18 forecast, of about three - 33,100 megawatts. To
19 reliably read this peak demand for 2018, the New York
20 State Reliability Council, has determined that a
21 minimum installed reserve requirement of capacity of
22 18.2 percent, over the forecast peak demand, is
23 required.

24 This 18.2 percent installed reserve
25 requirement, results in a 5,989 megawatts minimum

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2 requirement, above the forecast peak demand, for a
3 total installed capacity requirement of 38,893
4 megawatts.

5 As mentioned previously, the total
6 available capacity for 2018, is 42,169 megawatts, or
7 3,276 megawatts, above the minimum required. So,
8 this means that the actual installed reserves, are
9 about 28 percent above forecast peak, providing for
10 the cushion, to serve peak load, beyond the 18.2
11 percent required by the New York State Reliability
12 Council.

13 Next slide, please.

14 As you are aware, ConEdison has quite
15 a complicated distribution system, comprising many
16 individual networks, that from time to time can
17 experience various issues that require local solution
18 to provide load relief, or demand reductions. To
19 provide that, ConEdison has several demand-response
20 program -- programs that is a -- has paid customer to
21 provide -- provide load reduction, if needed.

22 These programs are the Distribution
23 Load Relief Program also known as the DLRP, the
24 Commercial System Relief Program, known as a CSRP and
25 the Direct Load Control Program, known as the DLC.

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2 The table indicates that there are several hundred
3 megawatts of capability, available to ConEdison. The
4 other utilities also have load-relief measures they
5 can turn to, should they be needed.

6 That completes my presentation. I'll
7 turn it over to Paul for the remainder -- remainder
8 of the presentation.

9 Thank you.

10 MR. DARMETKO: Thank you, Vijay.

11 Good morning, Chairman Rhodes. Good
12 morning, Commissioners.

13 In this portion of the presentation,
14 I'll be providing you with a summary of how the
15 utilities have performed at reducing the electric-
16 supply price volatility for their full-service
17 residential customers. I'll provide you with an
18 overview of the utilities residential-electric supply
19 portfolio composition for this summer, compare this
20 summer's forecasted electric-market prices to last
21 summer's forecasts and actual prices. And finally,
22 I'll provide you with a summary of the state's
23 historic electric-supply costs, from 2006 through
24 last year.

25 This graph show the results of the

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utility's electric-supply price-volatility mitigation efforts, since December of 2008. It compares the average New York ISO market-price volatility, the red line, with the utility's residential electrical-supply portfolios, the blue line. Or more simply stated, the lines show what the volatility of the utility's portfolios would have been, had they only purchased from the market, versus what it actually is because they engage in hedges. Each point on the line represents the volatility, over a twelve-month period, as measured by the coefficient variation.

As you can see from the chart, the utilities have continued to do a good job, at reducing the portfolio-price volatility, compared to market. The highest point on the chart represents the volatility that was experienced, as a result of the polar vortex, in the winter of 2014. The following run up and then subsequent drop, is the result of a combination in electric -- of electric-market prices steadily falling and a price spike, that occurred in February of 2015. This price spike was nowhere near the size of the prior winter, but it did cause the volatility to rise.

This past winter, New York State

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2 experienced high electric-market prices, again,
3 driven by colder than normal weather, which shows up
4 at the end of the graph. But as you can see, the
5 statewide portfolio continues to per -- perform very
6 well.

7 This chart shows the elements of the
8 composite residential-supply portfolio for this
9 summer. As shown, about 66 percent of the portfolio
10 consists of fixed-price contracts. Of those fixed-
11 price contracts, the majority of them are financial
12 in nature.

13 The fixed portion of the portfolio
14 also includes newer physical contracts, older legacy
15 contracts and a small amount of the utility's own
16 generation, with -- for which they have fixed fuel
17 costs, as well as NYPA contracts. The balance of the
18 portfolio is predominately made up of market
19 purchases, followed by relatively small amounts of
20 utility's own generation, with variable fuel costs
21 and index contracts, that are primarily indexed to
22 natural gas.

23 This chart shows this summer's
24 expected-average energy-market prices based on
25 NYMEX's futures and how they compared to the -- and

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how they compare to last summer's futures and actuals, for New York City, Hudson Valley and western New York, or New York ISO jump zones, J, G and A, respectively. Last summer's expected energy-market prices that we reported to you last May, are in green. Last summer's actual market prices are in blue and this summer's expected market prices are in red. Last summer, energy prices across the state ended up being much lower than what was expected going in to the summer, mainly driven by a very mild summer, compared to the normal, as well as low gas prices. This summer's energy prices are expected to be higher than last year's actuals, but between 9- and twelve-percent lower than the five-year average, depending on the zone.

This slide shows last summer's New York ISO strip-auction capacity prices and what this summer's strip-auction capacity prices are. As you can see, the strip-auction capacity prices are down from last summer across the state, due to a variety of factors, including lower-load forecasts, New York City locational-capacity requirement. This year is also lower, which also contributes to its price decline. This last slide really just provides a bit

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2 of context and some history on supply costs in New
3 York State. The energy-ancillary service and
4 capacity cost information that's contained in this
5 chart, was computed by staff and shows what the
6 state-wide supply costs would have been, had all
7 energy-ancillary service and capacity costs, priced
8 at market.

9 We've also had a gas-price information
10 from the Energy Information Administration, to show
11 the relationship between electric-energy costs and
12 natural-gas prices. As you can see, there's a pretty
13 high correlation between natural-gas prices and
14 energy costs and that's because in most hours
15 throughout the year, gas plants are setting the price
16 of energy.

17 The jump in energy and ancillary
18 service costs, from 2013 to 2014, is mainly due to
19 the polar vortex and very high gas prices during that
20 winter. In 2015, '16 and '17, the energy and
21 ancillary-service cost dropped, due to mainly lower
22 gas prices and overall, more mild weather.

23 The biggest takeaway, I think though,
24 from the slide is that electric supply costs are at
25 really all-time lows and are expected to remain at

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2 very low levels this summer, which is good news for
3 consumers.

4 So to conclude, overall at this point,
5 going into the summer, it's expected that supply
6 costs will be slightly higher than last summer, but
7 if the market price -- if the market does experience
8 unexpected price swings, the full-service mass-market
9 customers will be protected from the utility -- or
10 from -- from those price swings because of the
11 utility's hedging.

12 Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN RHODES: Thank you, Paul.

14 Thank you, Vijay.

15 I hear this as an outlook that is good
16 news for New Yorkers, giving us comfort that we can
17 confidently expect adequate supply and reasonable
18 costs.

19 As Mike mentioned, we also know and
20 are constantly reminded and currently reminded, that
21 weather can be a wildcard. We will have storms and
22 some of them will have impacts, even severe impacts,
23 which is why preparedness is so critical.

24 Preparedness in terms of our ability
25 to respond, when events happen and Mike talked a

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2 little about that. And then with this item,
3 preparedness, in terms of adequacy of supply and
4 resources.

5 This is -- this is a good report.

6 Thank you very much.

7 Are there any other -- are there
8 comments, or -- or questions from any of my fellow
9 Commissioners?

10 COMMISSIONER SAYRE: Just a brief
11 comment.

12 Good news and good work by staff.

13 COMMISSIONER BURMAN: I concur.

14 Thank you very much.

15 The one question -- or the one comment
16 I have, is looking at as we go towards the summer and
17 the demand-response programs, we do have a lot of
18 experience with ConEd's demand-response programs.
19 There is a new program in that area with the NYPA
20 program and the load program in the NYCHA building.
21 So, that is something that we should keep an eye on,
22 just in terms of looking at the success and sort of
23 the impact on the load in that territory, but also
24 the demand-response programs in other areas and how
25 that affects the summer issues, so that we can make

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2 some predictions, for future load and as we're
3 looking at DER penetration, what that means and how
4 we may need to make modifications.

5 So, it's just something that I think
6 is important and looking at the different pilots and
7 REV demos that are focused on that and what some of
8 the challenges and opportunities are and lessons
9 learning, that are coming out of that, that will help
10 us with our policy initiatives, that we can take heed
11 from and -- and learn from.

12 So, thank you.

13 COMMISSIONER ALESI: Just a very quick
14 thank you for all the hard work that on a day-to-day
15 basis, goes into everything that the Department does
16 here.

17 This is a good report. It's --
18 provides some optimism, looking forward to reasonable
19 costs and healthy supply.

20 So, I guess we can hope for all the
21 best and maybe quote from another state division of
22 lottery, hey, you never know, but let's go forward.

23 Thank you for your work.

24 CHAIRMAN RHODES: And in the spirit of
25 thanking folks for their hard work, can I just take a

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2 moment to thank the people about a hundred miles
3 south of us, the linemen and the tree crews that are
4 out there seventeen hours a day, bringing service
5 back to New Yorkers.

6 We will now move to the consent
7 agenda.

8 Do any of my fellow Commissioners wish
9 to comment on, or recuse from voting on any items on
10 the consent agenda.

11 COMMISSIONER ALESI: Well, Mr.
12 Chairman, yes.

13 I would like to recuse myself from
14 voting on item 563, case 18-C-0242, Green Light
15 Networks.

16 CHAIRMAN RHODES: Thank you,
17 Commissioner Alesi.

18 Commissioner Burman?

19 COMMISSIONER BURMAN: Thank you.

20 On items 261 and 262, I will be
21 concurring. These are orders to show cause for UPP
22 violations. The overarching issue here, is with
23 regard to failure to file required documentation as
24 required under the UPP, which outlines maintaining
25 ESCO eligibility.

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2 It appears to me, based on looking at
3 the items that the companies may no longer be in
4 service, in -- in New York and may no -- may not have
5 customers. And it's important for us to identify
6 that, if they are no longer operating in New York.

7 So, this -- these items are important
8 for us, notices of apparent failure to provide that
9 documentation. So with that, I will concur.

10 The other item is item 264, which is
11 the -- confirming order, the -- that the chairman did
12 on the ESCO interrogatory appeal denial.

13 After the confirming order, there were
14 recent filings on

15 -- in the ESCO case and after
16 consulting with our counsel about those recent
17 filings, the question of whether the one commissioner
18 order denying the delay, reply -- reply-brief
19 deadline should be confirmed and looking at the
20 issues. The filings do not appear to affect the
21 specific question and the one commissioner order was
22 really limited, solely to addressing the reply brief
23 deadline and it did not address the broader process
24 issue discussed in the recent filings.

25 So, to the extent that the one

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2 commissioner order is limited in the reply-brief
3 deadline issue and the reply briefs have been filed,
4 as I look at it, it really closes the loop
5 procedurally and it really -- since the reply briefs
6 have been filed, it makes it somewhat moot in the
7 confirming aspect of it. And therefore I will
8 concur, solely limited to that and not the broader-
9 procedural issues, which may -- may have a difference
10 of opinion on. So, for that, I will concur.

11 CHAIRMAN RHODES: Thank you very much.

12 With that, we will proceed to -- to
13 voting. My vote is in favor of the recommendations
14 on the consent agenda.

15 Commissioner Sayre, how do you vote?

16 COMMISSIONER SAYRE: Aye.

17 CHAIRMAN RHODES: Commissioner Burman,
18 how do you vote?

19 COMMISSIONER BURMAN: I vote yes,
20 except to the extent that I acknowledge my
21 concurrence, in the other three items.

22 CHAIRMAN RHODES: Thank you.

23 Commissioner Alesi, how do you vote?

24 COMMISSIONER ALESI: Yes, with one
25 exception.

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CHAIRMAN RHODES: The items are approved and the recommendations are adopted.

Secretary Burgess, is there any further to come before us today?

MS. BURGESS: Nothing further for today.

The next commission meeting is June 14th, in Albany.

CHAIRMAN RHODES: Thank you very much.

We are adjourned.

(The meeting adjourned.)

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STATE OF NEW YORK

I, JAMIE-LEE GREENE, do hereby certify that the foregoing was reported by me, in the cause, at the time and place, as stated in the caption hereto, at Page 1 hereof; that the foregoing typewritten transcription consisting of pages 1 through 21, is a true record of all proceedings had at the hearing.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name, this the 24th day of May, 2018.

JAMIE-LEE GREENE, Reporter

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