

Virginia Nuclear Energy Consortium Authority

Draft Virtual Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 29, 2021

The second quarter meeting of the Virginia Nuclear Energy Consortium Authority (VNECA) was held virtually on April 29, 2021. Members in attendance included Sean Agnew, Ken Ball, Bill Briscoe, John Capps, David Christian, Larry Corkey, Tom DePonty, Rich Diddams, Gene Grecheck, Andrew Hutton, Scott Kopple, Michael Lempke, and Gary Tepper. DMME staff members Al Christopher, Brandi Frazier Bestpitch, Lynne Astroth, Jordan Burns, Nam Nguyen, Alex Frazier, Erik Olson, and Barbara Simcoe were also present, as was Grant Kronenberg from the Office of the Attorney General, and April Wade from the Virginia Nuclear Energy Consortium.

The meeting was called to order at 9:02 a.m. EST by VNECA chair Tom DePonty. The General Assembly's language on holding electronic meetings was read by DMME staff and VNECA State Regulatory Coordinator, Brandi Frazier Bestpitch. A motion to approve holding this electronic meeting was made by Gene Grecheck, seconded by Bill Briscoe. The motion carried on a unanimous roll call vote. Chair Tom DePonty also provided a brief safety message on lawn and home maintenance and the importance of PPE.

The members reviewed the draft minutes from its December 16, 2020 meeting. After a few minutes of review, a motion to approve the minutes was made by Andrew Hutton and seconded by Scott Kopple. The motion was approved on a roll call vote.

The chair requested an update from Al Christopher, Director of the Division of Energy at DMME on the status of the 2020 VNECA Annual Report that was submitted to the Governor's office for review and recommendations on January 25, 2021 prior to final approval and transmittal. Mr. Christopher reported that the delay was a result of extended staff leave, however, advised that he had requested the Chief Deputy at DMME to contact the Governor's Office to assist in expediting the review.

Guest Speaker, Jeremy Harrell, Managing Director of Policy at [Clear Path](#), provided the board an overview of the current nuclear energy landscape in congress. Harrell stressed the importance of removing barriers to nuclear energy growth in order to meet clean reliable electricity needs, global GHG reduction goals as well as U.S. energy security. First and foremost, he discussed the need to enable advanced nuclear by continuing regulatory reform for Advanced Nuclear Reactors, developing public-private partnerships to enable new technologies, and establish an advanced fuel supply ([HALEU](#) - High Assay, Low Enriched Uranium). Harrell also discussed new federal programs such as the [Energy Department's Advanced Reactor Demonstration Program Awards \\$20 million for Advanced Reactor Concepts](#).

Preceding and following Mr. Harrell, Virginia Nuclear Energy Consortium Executive Director, April Wade, briefed the board on 2021 Virginia Legislature updates providing details on the [Virginia Nuclear Energy Consortium Planning Grant](#) for the purpose of developing a proposal to create a nuclear research and innovation hub in Virginia. Key activities around this planning grant include:

- Develop Working Group– Led by VNEC
- Input from additional stakeholders
 - Plan a kickoff event
 - Gather proposal input
- Develop proposal to develop a nuclear research and innovation hub in Virginia
- Oversight and Advice from VNECA

Following her presentation a motion was put forward to hand over management to VNEC. The motion was approved through roll call vote. Next steps included a request from VNEC to board members to submit recommendations for Innovation Hub workgroup participants other than VNECA members. Recommendations should be submitted to the VNECA State Regulatory Coordinator, [Brandi Frazier Bestpitch](#) and Virginia Nuclear Energy Consortium Executive Director, [April Wade](#).

Finally, Chair DePonty reminded the board that with Secretary Bob Bailey stepping down from his position at the end of last year, the board should think about voting in new and/or existing officers. Recommendations for new and/or existing officers may be submitted to VNECA State Regulatory Coordinator, [Brandi Frazier Bestpitch](#) for consideration at the next meeting.

Public comments were received from Erica Gray of the Sierra Club.

There being no further business, Chair DePonty thanked DMME staff and VNECA members and adjourned the meeting at 10:33 a.m.