Meeting Notes

DERs Connection Review (EB-2019-0207)
Working Group Meeting

Meeting Date: May 26, 2020 **Time**: 9:34am –12:21pm

Location: Ontario Energy Board
2300 Yonge St. North Hearing Room, via WebEX

Attendees:

Ryan Holder Catherine Ethier Laurie Reid Natasha Gocool Lester Yue Rachel Anderson	Ontario Energy Board
Bob Bralectic	Alectra
Nicolas Gall	CanSIA
Sarah Simmons	Power Advisory LLC (CANSIA)
Marc Brouillette	CME
Vince Green	CIMA+
Paul Luukkonen	Customized Energy Solutions Ltd. (CES)
Tatjana Dinic	Electrical Safety Authority (ESA)
Kathryn Farmer	Electricity Distributors Association (EDA)
Marty Tzolov	Elenchus Research Associates (For PWU)
Kent Elson	Elson Advocacy (On behalf of Environmental Defence) (ED)
Darcy Boudreau	Enel X Canada LTD. (Enel X)
Thomas Ladanyi (Tom)	Energy Probe (EP)

These notes are for the Working Subgroup purposes only and do not represent the view of the OEB.

Justin Wahid Rangooni	Energy Storage Canada
Ryan Boudreau	Hydro One Networks Inc. (HONI)
Mohab Elnashar	Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO)
Greg Sheil	London Hydro (London)
Peter Ronson	Markham District Energy
Bryan Pelkey	Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines (MoE)
Kerry Lakatos Hayward	OSEA
Ian Chow	Ontario Power Generation
Steve Pepper	Ontario Society of Professional Engineers
Matt Sachs	Peak Power Inc. (Peak Power)
Michael Brophy	Pollution Probe (PP)
Neil Freeman	Public Energy Inc. (PE)
Nishant Gehani	Rodan Energy Solutions (Rodan)
Larry Herod	Stem
Utilia Amaral	Stem
Hani Taki	Toronto Hydro-Electric System Ltd. (Toronto Hydro)

These notes summarize the information provided during the working group meeting and key points of the issues presented in the published materials.

Meeting Agenda

1. Introduction:

- Welcomed participants to Tranche 2, provided instructions on how to use WebEx and how to participate in the discussion.
- Outlined the purpose of the meeting as being to discuss the priorities identified by stakeholders and determine the subgroup mandate for Tranche 2 and instructions on how to interact in the discussion by using the WebEX raised hand function.
- Provided a recap of the issues raised by stakeholders that lead to the initiation of the DER Connections Review Consultation and reviewed the Working Group's scope.
- Reviewed the strategic road map for the initiative highlighting the focus of Tranche 1, which was to achieve "easy wins" or "low hanging fruit" and updated stakeholders on the status of recommendations with the OEB.

2. Update on Recommendation:

- OEB Staff outlined that 5 of 6 recommendations had been moved forward.
- The Connection Impact Assessment Application (CIA) Form recommendation was approved in principle but the content of the form is still under development at the subgroup level.
- Subgroup members in the combined subgroup meeting April 26, 2020, suggested OEB modify Hydro One Network's Form B, to include comments received by subgroup members and use that version as basis for the CIA Form.
- The Working Group will need to determine if the review of the modified CIA form should be run in parallel with Tranche 2 sessions or addressed with the Tranche 2 priorities.

3. Top Priorities for Tranche 2:

- An overview of the top priorities for Tranche 2 was provided that outlined the top listed items based on the written comments submitted by subgroup members.
- The top 3 priorities outlined by stakeholders were: Capacity Map, Dispute Resolution Process and Process Timelines.
- A suggestion was made to reduce the number of priorities dealt with during the tranche from three to two priorities given the current pandemic situation. It was cited that working remotely has provided additional challenges and a concern was raised about the working group members being able to fully dedicate their efforts to discuss and provide solutions to 3 priorities at this time.
- A member suggested that while appreciating the difficulty of committing to workload while dealing with the pandemic, it would be ideal to continue moving forward as planned by focusing on the top priorities and producing outcomes from this initiative will result in improvements in the process flow and increased opportunities that may help re-start the economy.
- A member suggested organizing smaller groups or utilize stakeholder expertise such as the IESO, who have technical expertise to address certain priorities and can assist with the workload
- It was further suggested to continue moving forward, as the latter half of 2020 will result in an increase in stimulus funding and the outcomes of Tranche 2 will help boost the economy.
- OEB acknowledges the challenges of the current situation as highlighted by a few members however advised that the subgroups can determine how they address the priorities and Tranche 2 can be extended further to accommodate additional priorities.

4. Ontario Regulatory Framework:

- A recap of the Ontario Energy Board's authority which includes the *Electricity Act, 1998* and the *Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998* was provided to the working group.
- It was cited that the OEB acts under the authority of the legislations and must abide with the requirements of the Acts.
- OEB licenses activities and establishes licence conditions by which licensees must abide. These licence conditions include provisions requiring each licensee to abide by the OEB's codes and rules which are all mandatory requirements.

- OEB also has the ability to issue bulletins and guidance to licensees. These include filing guidelines and frequently asked questions postings

5. Tracking Tool:

- OEB staff briefly described the issues tracking tool developed by staff to facilitate tracking of discussion issues raised by members in the working group and subgroup sessions.
- The tracking tool is intended to provide visibility and traceability of issued raised during each sessions and will continue to be updated as further Tranche sessions take place.

Action: OEB staff will circulate an updated tracking tool with new issues raised during today's session. *Post meeting: Please identify those issues that you have raised that are not included in the tracking tool*

6. Priority- Capacity Maps and Queues:

- As a lead into the capacity map discussion, OEB staff provided an overview of Ontario Regulations (O. Reg.) 326/09 which was created under the *Electricity Act, 1998* and primarily focuses on the mandatory information reporting requirements for Connection Impact Assessment Application (Form B) and CIA report for renewable energy generating facilities. Staff outlined that a suggestion was made during an earlier meeting that the information required for renewable generators under O. Reg. 326/09 should also be made available for all types of generating facilities in order to bring consistency across the sector.
- OEB staff posed the following questions to the working group members: Why do we need capacity maps? With the Tranche 1 work on the pre-consultation form and report and the information provided, are capacity maps still necessary? Where does the information reside? How should the information be provided?
- It was suggested that one of the biggest reasons for capacity maps was to allow potential proponents to identify capacity and connection constraints.
- It was also suggested to create a capacity tool in the form of an Excel table that outlines feeder capacity similar to HONI's capacity tool but is searchable by postal code.
- Members stated that there is a growing demand for this type of information as municipalities enhanced their energy planning and will result in putting incentives in place to build out DER.
- One member stated that a capacity tool is not beneficial to proponents as they will still seek information from the utility for capacity accuracy and will result in double the work

Action: Technical subgroup members will conduct a problem identification of a capacity tool to determine the feasibility and benefits for LDC's.

7. Priority: Dispute Resolution Process (DRP):

- OEB staff posed the following questions to the working group members: What is the problem and why can't the current process be used? What is the need to identify an additional process? Where are the roadblocks?
- The current DRP is mandated and outlined in the LDC conditions of service. The Conditions of Service are also filed with the OEB.

- OEB's DRP uses the Industry Relations Enquiries (IRE) system which assures confidentiality of the information provided to the OEB. The information shared can only be shared with permission of the stakeholder.
- Potential options to consider during the development of new DRP would be using 3rd party mediation via an Ombudsman.
- A member requested that the OEB outline the adjudicative process and identify the process timelines that currently exists.
- The WG reviewed an example of a utility's DRP. The concern raised was the lack of escalation levels.
- A member asked where utility dispute escalation processes are published.
- Members suggested the OEB create a landing page that contains links to each utility's dispute resolution process.
- Members suggested that OEB to create a minimum dispute resolution process (which includes definition and minimum expectation of process).
- CanSIA noted that they will follow up their members to identify the issues with the DRP. CanSIA will report back to the Process subgroup their membership's feedback.

Action: Process Subgroup will conduct a problem identification of the dispute resolution process

8. Priority: Process Timelines:

- WG members reviewed a reorganized list of priorities based on relevance to the overall connection process.
- WG members reviewed the current DSC DER categorization methodology including the typical number of CIAs involved. Under Micro (≤ 10 kW), no CIA is typically required. For Small (≤ 500 kW), 1 CIA is usually required. For Mid-Sized (≤10 MW but > 500 kW), 2 CIA's are typically required and for large (> 10 MW), 3 CIA's (2 CIA's + 1 IESO SIA) are required.
- Members reviewed an example of a multi-level screening process used by the FERC, NREL, IREC. The example was based on a set of screens.
- For low risk application, each screen is established with technical requirements with costs associated in a stream line process that is more consistent.
- If a project fails the screens for Level 1 to 3 (and all screens exclude exporting projects), it is considered a higher level of risk to the system. Level 4 projects require a full application with a fee based on the size of the project, a system study, and potentially a facilities study. This process, which can take up to 150 days, is comparable to the current DSC process of 120 days compared. The applicant commits to an in service date of no more than 2 years with off ramps and potential penalties if that cannot be met.
- Members suggested explicitly including risks and use cases in the priorities list.
- Members reviewed the Lean Principles and DMAIC Methodology to be used for connection process optimization as it pertains to process timelines reduction.

Action: Process subgroup to decide on whether FERC/NERL process is feasible to implement and technical subgroup to review the risk and use cases as another means (other than size) of categorizing DERs in the interconnection process flowcharts.

Wrap Up and Next Steps:

- OEB staff will update the issues tracking tool and circulate to the Working Group for review
- OEB staff to send the mandate for to Working Group for review, comment and approval
- If the Working Group approves a the Subgroup's mandate focus, OEB staff will schedule Tranche 2, Subgroup Meeting #1 (for Technical and Process subgroup) on June 16, 2020. If addition discussions are required on the Subgroup's mandate focus, this meeting slot will be used for another Working Group meeting instead.

Next Working Group Meeting: TBD