

Breakout Group Notes: Ownership, Governance and Regulation

- Public utilities provide a model that demonstrates a different way of running a utility
- Massachusetts - consumers, not the utilities, own the RECs, and MA has much higher proportion of clean energy
- We should explore other ownership models – see Branford Sewer Authority as an example of a public entity that has the authority to oversee construction and management of a system and charge user fees
- COGs could become the authority as a form of electricity ownership
- Large cities may be their own authority (opt out of COG authority)
- VT model – do they have a statewide public utility?
- Are there models/examples of an investor-owned utility transitioning to public or consumer-owned?
- Do we need to own both distribution and generation to reach our goals for clean energy?
- We need to shift utilities away from being profit-driven
- Require all utilities to prepare plans for review and approval by the regulator and the public to meet the climate goals and policies established by the climate change action plan developed by GC3
- Principle – move control away from investor-owned utility

Notes: More Distributed Energy Resources (DER) and local control breakout group

- I. What level of local control? Should it be handled regionally? Is town focus too small, too local?
  - a. Who are we speaking to when say “local control”?
  - b. Regional or county level seems desirable (like w/ transportation)
  - c. Town has more control though, easier to organize
    - i. Example: Simsbury’s clean energy task force thinking about going aggressive on renewables
    - ii. Smaller scale has better buy-in, county has more disparate interests
    - iii. Concern about “haves and have nots” if take town-centric approach (wealthy towns will benefit)
- II. Would like to see more idea-sharing between leading towns and laggards
- III. Towns are resource-constrained, especially in CT – need help with funding to do more with DER
- IV. Maybe require towns to do “strategic grid plans”, perhaps starting with basic assessment
- V. What are roles of utilities w/ towns in particular? Involved with everything, but how helping specifically.
- VI. Messaging/framing/approaches that might work?
  - a. Emphasize “control”
  - b. “When reach for light switch, do you want more control?”
  - c. Fear of monopolies and corporations
  - d. Opportunities w/ youth and being more involved in local planning and land use
  - e. Community colleges should focus on this topic in developing a track on local energy & green jobs
  - f. great appeal here is to tap into more conservative tendencies, chance to grab people in the middle, suspicious of big corporations and large institutions (someone mentions Green Tea Party movement in South)
  - g. Excitement about microgrids, not necessarily about climate change
  - h. Talk about security, resilience, energy control and independence
  - i. More power over local utility
- VII. Need to recognize that utilities have hand in all decisionmaking, large lobbying efforts; they dominate the state (campaign contributions significant)
- VIII. History of muni utilities may be worth digging into (look into CMEEC)
  - a. How are they governed?
  - b. Some skepticism about whether truly increases local control
  - c. Mixed reputation in the state
  - d. What’s process for creating muni utility?
- IX. Want to know more about community choice aggregation
- X. Key underlying question: How much control do people really want over their energy use?

Breakout Group Notes: Just Transition for Workers

- Restructure energy distribution and supply
- How to conduct a benevolent transition with respect to jobs
- How many jobs would be lost/created?
  - 6700 net new jobs; 360 lost utility jobs
  - Jobs will not all be lost at once but would be gradual
- Messaging needs to focus on job growth
- Workers need re-training
- Open trade/vo-tech schools at night
- Where would 110 Bridgeport coal jobs go?
- CT schools are ready to train in solar, energy efficiency, renewable energy jobs
- Not a lot of union jobs in renewable energy
- Carpenters would likely see a transition to clean energy as a jobs loser
- Municipal co-op development
- IBEW sees maintenance work as more ongoing

3 guiding principles:

- No worker left behind
- Just transition
- “10 for 1” (i.e. more jobs gained than lost)