

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE

November 24, 2014 - 3:25 p.m.  
Public Utilities Commission  
21 South Fruit Street - Suite 10  
Concord, New Hampshire

IN RE: SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE:  
Review and Consideration of a  
Proposed Funding Recommendation  
Pursuant to RSA 162-H:21

PRESENT: SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE

Thomas S. Burack, Chrmn. Dept. of Environ. Svs.  
(Presiding Officer)

Cmsr. Martin Honigberg	N.H. Public Utilities Comm.
Cmsr. Robert R. Scott	N.H. Public Utilities Comm.
Elizabeth Muzzey, Dir.	DCR-Div. of Historical Res.
Brad Simpkins, Dir.	DRED-Div. of Forests & Land
Philip Bryce, Dir.	DRED-Div. of Parks & Rec.
William Oldenburg, Admin.	N.H Dept. of Transportation
Meredith Hatfield, Dir.	Office of Energy & Planning
Eugene Forbes, Dir.	DES - Water Division
Craig Wright, Dir.	DES - Air Resources Div.
Kate Bailey, Engineer	N.H. Public Utilities Comm.
(Designated as PUC Engineer)	

COUNSEL FOR THE COMMITTEE: Michael Iacopino, Esq.

COURT REPORTER: Susan J. Robidas, N.H. LCR No. 44

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6	to adopt recommendation for	
7	funding proposal by SEC members	
8	with agreed-upon modifications	
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## P R O C E E D I N G S

1  
2 CMSR. HONIGBERG: As many of you  
3 know, the Legislature acted earlier this year to  
4 change the SEC in a number of ways. SB 245  
5 restructured the Committee somewhat, changed some  
6 responsibilities. The new SEC does not yet  
7 exist. It will exist when a second public member  
8 is confirmed. That may take place on  
9 December 3rd, but we don't know if that will  
10 happen.

11 One of the requirements of SB 245  
12 was that the SEC prepare a long-term funding plan  
13 to present to the Legislature, and that plan be  
14 submitted by December 1st. The expectation in SB  
15 245 would be that the new SEC would already  
16 exist, and it would be the new SEC making the  
17 proposal. That new SEC does not exist. So it  
18 also provided that anything that the new SEC was  
19 supposed to do, if it doesn't exist, the old SEC  
20 was supposed to do. So, here we are.

21 What you have in front of you is  
22 the product of a number of meetings this fall of  
23 the working group that was put together earlier  
24 in the year in connection with SB 245. I think

1       it was -- it arose organically. Some legislators  
2       told a group of stakeholders, "You figure out  
3       what should happen with the new law." That group  
4       continued to meet and discuss what could be done  
5       throughout the legislative session last year and  
6       then started meeting again in September to try  
7       and come up with a funding plan that could be the  
8       basis for a proposal to the Legislature.

9                You see on the first page the  
10       people who attended most of the meetings. Three  
11       of us are here. Beth Muzzey, Craig Wright and  
12       myself attended I think all of the meetings, or  
13       maybe one of us missed one. But I think we were  
14       all in the meetings this fall. Others on this  
15       list also attended all or most of the meetings  
16       and discussed various options for how to go about  
17       funding and SEC going forward with certain  
18       expectations and assumptions. At no time was  
19       there ever a quorum of either the old SEC or the  
20       new SEC at any of these meetings. We had  
21       representatives of the environmental community,  
22       developers, business interests generally, and a  
23       number of state agencies and state officials.

24               The concept I'll walk through for

1       you. The first category being Baseline  
2       Operations of the SEC, you can see what's  
3       included: The cost of hiring an administrator  
4       either as a state employee or consultant, either  
5       of which is allowable under the statute; rent;  
6       equipment; paying some support staff allocated  
7       from SEC personnel. There may be a need to hire  
8       consultants and/or legal consultants for  
9       rulemaking. And then, also make sure there was  
10      money to make the per diem payments to public  
11      members who have to sit on matters going  
12      forward -- for example, budget and rulemaking --  
13      where there's no contribution from applicants.  
14      We estimated that that will be about \$250,000  
15      annually. The budget prepared and proposed and  
16      approved by the Fiscal Committee for fiscal year  
17      2015 was a total of about \$373,000. But that  
18      included a double counting of the cost of an  
19      administrator because we didn't know whether that  
20      was going to be done as a consultant or employee.  
21      And under the State's budgeting system, that has  
22      to be two different lines and can't be  
23      transferred, so it had to be budgeted twice. So  
24      this number is consistent with that number. It's

1 a little lower, but there's reasons for that  
2 having to do with what's expected to take place.  
3 But in any event, that's the annual expected  
4 outlay.

5 And the group consensus --  
6 actually, it may have been unanimous -- was that  
7 the proposed source for those expenses should be  
8 the General Fund. It may or may not ever take  
9 place, but that is -- that was the "ask" that  
10 everybody felt should be made.

11 Variable Expenses, as their name  
12 implies, will vary, and it depends on how much  
13 business there is for the SEC to do with  
14 applicants, with other types of proceedings. And  
15 the assumptions underlying the amount are that  
16 the per diems, the public members, would have to  
17 be paid, and there would be reimbursement to  
18 state agencies for some of the time agency  
19 personnel work on SEC matters, which is described  
20 in more detail below.

21 The proposal is for application  
22 fees, filing fees to cover the variable expenses.  
23 And the fees differ. There's a schedule attached  
24 to the last page of this proposal, and it's a

1       sliding scale for applications, depending on what  
2       it is: Is it transmission? Is it generation?  
3       What exactly is being proposed? How big it is,  
4       and if it's generation, what the fuel is. And  
5       you can see that the numbers differed depending  
6       on what you're talking about.

7               The theory behind it is that the  
8       money coming in needs to cover the number of days  
9       that the SEC is working. And we used historical  
10      information from earlier proceedings and tried to  
11      make some good-faith guesses, guesstimates,  
12      educated estimates, but estimates nonetheless  
13      about what the future would likely bring. For  
14      example: There was a wind project a few years  
15      ago that was resolved in a total of, I think the  
16      number was 18 days of meeting time plus  
17      preparation time for the SEC. There was a more  
18      recent one that took 33 days, and which was  
19      likely to be correct. I think the judgment of  
20      the group was that the more recent number was  
21      probably a more accurate number. There was a  
22      recognition that some historical events are  
23      probably not predictors of what's going to happen  
24      in the future. I think when you read about what

1 happens with various proposals for transmission,  
2 things that would have been noncontroversial 20  
3 years ago could be very controversial today. But  
4 the group tried to make estimates as to how long  
5 things would take.

6 There's also in the fee schedule,  
7 fees set for a variety of other types of filings:  
8 Petitions for jurisdiction, transfers of  
9 ownership, things like that. The new law allows  
10 for most proceedings to go with a small  
11 subcommittee if all the participants agree.  
12 Those don't -- shouldn't take a lot of time. It  
13 shouldn't take a lot of effort by -- number of  
14 days, anyway, by members of the SEC. So the  
15 filing fees for most of those things are quite  
16 low. If larger committees, larger subcommittees  
17 are required, those numbers go up somewhat.

18 There's no change in this proposal  
19 to things that the new statute doesn't touch,  
20 like other costs that are incurred in the  
21 process, like the stenographer, like experts  
22 retained by public counsel. Those have been paid  
23 by the applicant separately and will continue to  
24 be paid by the applicant where appropriate.



1                   Reimbursement of Agency Member  
2           Time. It is a huge commitment, as all of you  
3           know better than I, actually, where some of these  
4           proceedings can take many days, many days of  
5           preparation. For a number of agencies with  
6           funding constraints who have federal funds, grant  
7           funds, where individuals are funded by those  
8           sources of funds, they can't be used legally to  
9           do anything else. It limits the flexibility of  
10          the agency. For small agencies, it limits their  
11          ability to do anything else if they are assigned  
12          to a longstanding obligation here. For agencies  
13          like the PUC, which are not generally funded, but  
14          are funded by assessments on utilities and other  
15          entities, some people would say there's an  
16          injustice in asking ratepayers to pay the review  
17          costs of a merchant project. So there are lots  
18          of policies and judgments going on here, but the  
19          reimbursement of agency time is part of this  
20          proposal.

21                   There's a recognition that not  
22          everything should be included in that. And to  
23          accommodate the legitimate concerns of many and  
24          the recognition that a lot of these proceedings

1 don't take that long, this proposal contemplates  
2 that three days of either hearing or -- a  
3 combination of hearing and preparation time goes  
4 unreimbursed to the agencies. There's a request  
5 that the chair and the administrator develop a  
6 timekeeping formula or process. But there's a  
7 proposal within here to count the half-days or  
8 full days so the paperwork doesn't become  
9 onerous.

10 Obviously, this is going to have  
11 to be subject to review regularly. The fund may  
12 build up faster than we expect, in which case  
13 there should be a review of the filing fees to  
14 reduce them, or the fund may get depleted faster  
15 than we anticipated. And if there is a  
16 contingency, the group talked about a lot of  
17 possibilities, including ratepayer assessments,  
18 the elimination of agency reimbursements, having  
19 the applicants fund some or all of the additional  
20 time that's needed.

21 What the group recommendation came  
22 up with was, though, to go back to the Renewable  
23 Energy Fund.

24 As many of you know, SB 245 funded

1 the start-up operations of the SEC with what it  
2 called a "one-time grant" -- although it was  
3 probably not the best use of the phrase -- by up  
4 to \$500,000 to fund the first year of the SEC's  
5 operations in fiscal year 2015. As I noted a  
6 minute ago, the entire request submitted to  
7 Fiscal was 373. And we know no more than about  
8 300 can be spent, even if every penny was going  
9 to be spent that could be spent. So there's  
10 money in the REF that the Legislature  
11 acknowledged was an appropriate place to fund SEC  
12 operations, at least as an initial matter. And  
13 so the proposal here is to allow the full  
14 \$500,000 to be available to the SEC in the event  
15 that we hit a shortfall.

16 And then you can see some of the  
17 specific recommendations are listed on Page 3 to  
18 implement what I've talked about, what's written  
19 above. And if you want to just take a quick look  
20 at the filing fee, I think Meredith has been  
21 doing the calculations here to my right to  
22 determine what every possible project might have  
23 to pay for an application fee.

24 I want to say a couple of things

1       about the theory behind the application fees  
2       before going further. One of the big  
3       considerations, and it's noted in the narrative,  
4       is the need for certainty by the applicants.  
5       There were some people that said they should just  
6       pay as they go. But there was a strong desire on  
7       the part of the business community, the  
8       developers, and a recognition that it would be  
9       potentially a deterrent if it weren't set up this  
10      way, for them to know what this process would  
11      cost, as best as they can up front. That doesn't  
12      mean everybody pays the same. It just means that  
13      they know what they're going to pay once they  
14      know what their project looks like. And so that  
15      was a big part of driving the upfront filing fee  
16      concept.

17                   I think that's a summary. Craig  
18      and Beth may have more to add. What we will  
19      need, though, is approval by the SEC of this or  
20      some modification to it -- I hope not much --  
21      that can be dressed up and put into something  
22      that can be sent to the Legislature, as required,  
23      a week from today.

24                   Beth? Craig?

1 DIR. WRIGHT: I think you did a  
2 really good summary, Commissioner.

3 DIR. MUZZEY: Me also.

4 CMSR. HONIGBERG: Does anybody  
5 have any questions or -- yeah.

6 DIR. BRYCE: DRED will be on this  
7 in one form or another. So, does the  
8 reimbursement to state agencies include prep and  
9 review time?

10 CMSR. HONIGBERG: Yes, there's an  
11 expectation that it's roughly one day for one  
12 day, that if you have a day of hearing, you'll  
13 have a day of prep time. And it may not always  
14 be exactly one to one, but in the -- over the  
15 long haul, you would expect it to be about one to  
16 one.

17 DIR. BRYCE: Regarding the budgets  
18 for -- to operate the agency, I don't have a  
19 suggested change for this. But I have, you know,  
20 thoughts about presenting it, in terms of what --  
21 how it's funded now, how the resources come to it  
22 now versus how it's going to happen under the  
23 budget, because I don't know -- you know, I  
24 haven't been following this very closely. But

1       there's probably some things, like hiring an  
2       administrator.  Somebody's doing that function  
3       now; correct?  That function is getting taken  
4       care of in some way or not?

5                   CHAIRMAN BURACK:  To the extent  
6       that the Department of Environmental Services,  
7       and with some support from PUC historically,  
8       we've been able to, for lack of a better term,  
9       "rob Peter to pay Paul," we have had people  
10      spending whatever time was absolutely essential  
11      to be able to get the work done.  But it was  
12      taking away from other work that the departments  
13      were otherwise required to do.

14                  DIR. BRYCE:  Right.  And I think  
15      that kind of -- because the question -- unless  
16      it's stated clearly, it's been subsidized  
17      primarily by DES and PUC taking away from  
18      other -- you know, the thing is, they're just  
19      adding -- you know, as a legislator, I might just  
20      think, "Oh, they're just adding a staff person  
21      for no reason, and this wasn't done before."

22                  CMSR. HONIGBERG:  They've already  
23      done that.  The good news is that SB 245 took  
24      care of that.  That decision was already made.

1       They've added that position. That position  
2       exists in law.

3               DIR. BRYCE: Yeah, well, getting  
4       the funding is -- I'm just worried about  
5       getting -- I have a lot of stuff that's in law  
6       that we don't get funding for historically. So  
7       I'm just -- so that's my concern, is really  
8       having a very spelled-out justification for the  
9       budget.

10              And then the second -- I just have  
11       three comments. And then the second is, I assume  
12       this is comparable with other -- do we know what  
13       other states do? And I apologize if I ask  
14       obvious questions that you've done the work on.  
15       Do we know what other states charge for these  
16       sorts of things?

17              CMSR. HONIGBERG: There is --

18              DIR. BRYCE: Or they don't charge  
19       anything? They're just funded with general  
20       funds?

21              CMSR. HONIGBERG: No. Almost all  
22       of them have filing fees of some sort, and they  
23       are -- this was based, I think, on New York?

24              DIR. MUZZEY: Yeah.

1 CMSR. HONIGBERG: Yeah.

2 DIR. BRYCE: Yeah, okay. All  
3 right.

4 CMSR. HONIGBERG: I mean, it ended  
5 up being very different ultimately from what New  
6 York does. But the original sort of concept was  
7 the New York model for this.

8 DIR. BRYCE: And I'm not -- do we  
9 know of any state agency that's been successful  
10 in getting the authority to not go to Fiscal with  
11 up to a 20-percent change in fees? Is there any  
12 history around that within New Hampshire state  
13 government?

14 CMSR. HONIGBERG: Off the record.

15 (Off the record.)

16 DIR. BRYCE: I have a concern.  
17 That's the only one I really have a concern about  
18 and, at a minimum, have a caveat: Provided that  
19 there's a shortfall, an impending or existing  
20 shortfall in an approved budget, so it's not just  
21 like raising the fees to create a kitty. That's  
22 my only suggestion.

23 CMSR. HONIGBERG: I think that's a  
24 good suggestion.



1 DIR. BRYCE: Thank you.

2 CMSR. HONIGBERG: Other questions,  
3 comments? Yes.

4 DIR. SIMPKINS: I had a question.  
5 Under the Reimbursement of Agency Member Time, so  
6 that's the first three days in any particular  
7 proceeding. So if you had, say, four different  
8 things during a fiscal year, you could have up to  
9 12 days non-reimbursed. Is that the correct way  
10 to read that?

11 CMSR. HONIGBERG: Yeah.

12 DIR. SIMPKINS: Do we know --  
13 looking in the past, it seems like some years  
14 there's been a lot of applications. Like what  
15 year did we have, like, the most applications?  
16 Just trying to get an idea on that. Seems like  
17 it must have been fairly recently.

18 DIR. BRYCE: I can update you  
19 later at the bar.

20 CHAIRMAN BURACK: What we know --  
21 and I'm sorry. I don't have all the graphs with  
22 us. But we can certainly share graphs that we  
23 prepared for presentations to committees. But  
24 what we've seen is a substantial uptake in recent

1 years. Prior to, if I recall correctly, the  
2 mid-2000s, we might have seen anywhere from zero  
3 to two applications per year. And after that  
4 time, it took off fairly sharply, to the point  
5 now that we have in some years seen as many as  
6 six, eight, maybe even ten applications in a  
7 year. And I think we're reasonably anticipating,  
8 within the next 12 months or so, at least a  
9 half-dozen to maybe as many as a dozen different  
10 matters that could come before the Committee.  
11 And I think it's also fair to say that we're  
12 seeing them of all kinds of different lengths.  
13 And this notion of for a relatively short  
14 proceeding -- and I don't know whether, when you  
15 total up the amount of time the committee has  
16 spent on this particular matter, whether it's  
17 been three days or more than three days. This  
18 particular matter that we just heard today  
19 relating to the Granite Reliable Wind Park would  
20 probably come in at or under three days. So, it  
21 probably would not be something for which an  
22 agency might expect to be reimbursed for its  
23 time. But looking back in time to other projects  
24 that we've heard recently, such as the biomass

1 facility in Berlin, my recollection is that that  
2 was roughly a 10-day to two-week project.

3 Various wind projects have averaged anywhere from  
4 three to five weeks or more of time. And so it  
5 was really for those larger projects that parties  
6 were agreeable to paying for the actual agency  
7 time.

8 DIR. SIMPKINS: Okay. Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN BURACK: Is that helpful?

10 I do have a question for those who  
11 were directly involved in these discussions, and  
12 that is: Evidently the notion is that, if a  
13 proceeding's actual costs exceed what is  
14 collected in application fees, I gather the hope  
15 is there are sufficient funds in a reserve  
16 account initially funded by the Renewable Energy  
17 Fund to be able to make up that difference; is  
18 that correct?

19 CMSR. HONIGBERG: I would say  
20 close.

21 CHAIRMAN BURACK: How would you  
22 modify that?

23 CMSR. HONIGBERG: I think that the  
24 hope is that the fund will have money in it from

1 application fees that will cover both those that  
2 take more and those that take less. For those  
3 that run over, the hope is that there were more  
4 that ran under so that the funds will build. In  
5 the event there is a shortfall, yes, then you  
6 would look to go to the REF.

7 The reason I disagree -- I want to  
8 change it is that it's not the REF money up front  
9 that should be the backstop, because there will  
10 be a filing fee if there's some big proceeding  
11 that starts. And so that fee we hope would be in  
12 the fund and be available to make the necessary  
13 payments to cover the operations, to cover the  
14 variable costs. It's only when that money gets  
15 depleted that you need to think about where's  
16 your next dollar coming from. Is that a fair way  
17 of putting it?

18 DIR. WRIGHT: Yeah, I think I  
19 would add, I mean, we were pretty conservative in  
20 making our estimates of how long it would take to  
21 do any of these procedures, so all these formulas  
22 are kind of based on a conservative estimate of  
23 the number of days to process that. So I  
24 think --

1                   CHAIRMAN BURACK: When you say  
2 "conservative," you mean you erred on the longer  
3 side or the shorter side?

4                   DIR. WRIGHT: Yes, we erred on the  
5 longer side. And then, on top of that, I think  
6 if you go back to the three days, I think the  
7 idea is that three days of us not charging on any  
8 type of proceeding would help to build the fund  
9 up over time, to give us that little bit of  
10 cushion.

11                  CHAIRMAN BURACK: Because there  
12 would still be an application fee charged for the  
13 --

14                  DIR. WRIGHT: Exactly. But we  
15 wouldn't be accounting for --

16                  CHAIRMAN BURACK: Right. But it  
17 was also the recognition --

18                  (Court Reporter interrupts.)

19                  DIR. WRIGHT: So we wouldn't be  
20 accounting for those first three days in the  
21 charges to that particular application.

22                  CHAIRMAN BURACK: But as I recall,  
23 that three days was also in recognition of the  
24 fact that, under current law, as it's been for

1       many years, the departments have not received any  
2       reimbursement at all for their time, and this was  
3       a way of saying the departments will still  
4       continue to make a financial commitment to the  
5       process.

6                     DIR. WRIGHT:   Yes.

7                     CMSR. HONIGBERG:  I think that's  
8       in the narrative.  There's a recognition of that  
9       sharing, historical aspect.

10                    CHAIRMAN BURACK:  Okay.  If I may,  
11       and I know, Director Bryce, you want to come back  
12       in here, this discussion of the Renewable Energy  
13       Fund, though, has me concerned, because there  
14       is -- if I'm understanding things correctly, the  
15       notion here is that, if the fund runs out --  
16       maybe this is what my question is:  If the fund  
17       actually runs out, and there isn't enough money  
18       in the fund or the account to pay agency time and  
19       cover other costs of a particular proceeding, is  
20       the expectation that the Committee would  
21       immediately raise fees for pending or future  
22       matters, or is it that the Committee would be  
23       able to go to the Renewable Energy Fund and draw  
24       monies beyond the initial \$500,000 grant?

1 CMSR. HONIGBERG: Neither. The  
2 expectation is that you would have gone up -- you  
3 would take what's left of the 500. And if you  
4 have gone long enough that you can see that  
5 coming, you would have proposed an increase in  
6 the fees. But if you see a shortfall coming,  
7 you're not going to be able to increase fees  
8 immediately to get that done. That's what the --  
9 the REF is there as a backstop. Is that clear?

10 DIR. HATFIELD: Can I ask a  
11 follow-up to that? Says, "The group recommends,  
12 however, that the Legislature authorize use of  
13 the full \$500,000 Renewable Energy Fund grant  
14 that was included in Senate Bill 245." I think  
15 the confusing part is the next clause is, "in the  
16 event the SEC fund is or may be depleted." So,  
17 is that a future grant, or are you saying to the  
18 Legislature, Please give us the full 500 in FY15  
19 and allow us to continue to hold those funds in  
20 case we need them?

21 CMSR. HONIGBERG: What you just  
22 said, the latter part.

23 DIR. MUZZEY: There probably --

24 DIR. WRIGHT: It's a one-time

1           \$500,000.

2                   DIR. MUZZEY: There probably is a  
3 more clear way to state what the group came up  
4 with. But I can relay that what to do in the  
5 event that our estimates are horribly off and we  
6 don't have time to go get the law changed or go  
7 before Fiscal, we spent an enormous amount of  
8 time looking for a backstop. It was very hard to  
9 agree on that, and so this is what the group was  
10 able to come up with that was agreeable. It  
11 probably just needs to be said in a more clear  
12 way.

13                  CHAIRMAN BURACK: I think the  
14 technical term you're talking about is having  
15 that \$500,000 appropriation be "continuously  
16 appropriated"? I think that may be the correct  
17 term, "continuously."

18                  DIR. BRYCE: "Non-lapsing."

19                  CHAIRMAN BURACK: "Non-lapsing."

20                  DIR. MUZZEY: Well, you have to  
21 also look back at the SB 245 language, because it  
22 was appropriated in a way that had some different  
23 type of wording. And so it was a struggle to  
24 work with that wording and come up with the right



1           wording in this proposal.

2                       CMSR. HONIGBERG:   SB 245 did  
3           create the dedicated fund. There are limitations  
4           on that dedicated fund. So the Legislature --  
5           we're asking to modify it slightly to make it  
6           continue. But I think what we want them to do is  
7           to put -- is to make that entire REF grant  
8           available in that dedicated fund. Some of it  
9           will be spent in fiscal year 2015, but we don't  
10          know how much. As far as I know, none has been  
11          spent to date. In fact, I know none has been  
12          spent.

13                   CHAIRMAN BURACK: Phil, you had a  
14          comment?

15                   DIR. BRYCE: So, how many  
16          proceedings did you say that we may be seeing,  
17          just a few minutes ago? We saw one or two in the  
18          mid-2000s. So we may see four or five --

19                   CHAIRMAN BURACK: Yeah, I mean,  
20          the numbers have crept up, I think we recently  
21          anticipated. But it can change from day to day.

22                   Attorney Iacopino, you may have  
23          further information you can share. I think we  
24          can reasonably anticipate the filing of at least

1 a half-dozen matters within the next 12 months.  
2 Is that a fairly accurate description of what  
3 your current understandings are?

4 MR. IACOPINO: Probably, if you've  
5 been reading the papers, you know that -- well,  
6 Northern Pass, first of all, says they're going  
7 to file in March. I don't know if that's  
8 really --

9 CMSR. HONIGBERG: What year?

10 MR. IACOPINO: This coming March.  
11 There was just a newspaper article where the  
12 Kinder Morgan pipeline has now become -- the  
13 alternative route through New Hampshire has  
14 become the preferred route.

15 There was also an article about  
16 the Scobie-Tewksbury transmission line in The  
17 Union Leader just about a week and a half ago.  
18 They are -- these companies are all right now in  
19 the process of communicating with the various  
20 towns where their pipeline or transmission line  
21 is to go through. So I think we can reasonably  
22 expect by the end of the year we'll probably see  
23 some movement from them. Not this year. End of  
24 2015.

1                   There is -- and it is public --  
2                   there is a plan for a new Antrim Wind application  
3                   that has been debated robustly in Antrim and is  
4                   the subject of much press and public meetings out  
5                   there. That's the one, by the way, that took I  
6                   think a total of 33 days, just so you know, last  
7                   time.

8                   So I think 2015 will be a fairly  
9                   prolific year for the Site Evaluation Committee.

10                  DIR. BRYCE: So, three days, half  
11                  a dozen -- I want to make sure I understand this.  
12                  That's potentially 18 days, which is over three  
13                  work weeks, closing in on four, that the agency  
14                  has to put up in terms of time for free. So,  
15                  basically, probably 10 percent of the working  
16                  time of a staff person for a year, if you take in  
17                  holidays and vacations and everything, that you  
18                  would have to put up -- and maybe I don't  
19                  understand how people are allocated. But do I  
20                  have that one right?

21                  CHAIRMAN BURACK: I think you do.  
22                  And, again, understand that under the new statute  
23                  there's going to be flexibility for the chair of  
24                  the PUC to be able to establish smaller

1 subcommittees than we currently have and also for  
2 the commissioners in the departments to be able  
3 to designate senior administrative staff to sit  
4 on behalf of the department. So, DRED, DES, DOT,  
5 DHR would each only have one person sitting on  
6 any one particular proceeding. No more than one  
7 person.

8 DIR. BRYCE: No more than one  
9 person. But I don't see that that changes the  
10 math at all. It might change the workload, but  
11 it doesn't change -- 'cause we look at DRED as  
12 one big, happy family and --

13 CHAIRMAN BURACK: That's correct.  
14 From that perspective, it does not change the  
15 math.

16 I want to be respectful of the  
17 time we have here because I think we're going to  
18 need a motion here to approve this, or approve  
19 this with some modification.

20 The only modification that I would  
21 ask that we consider to what's been proposed here  
22 is that, in the event that the Legislature is not  
23 comfortable with, or we don't otherwise have a  
24 financial backstop in the event that costs of

1 proceedings exceed what's actually set aside in  
2 the account, that at that point we do have the  
3 ability to charge the applicant the actual  
4 additional costs associated with the proceedings.  
5 Now, that may not be politically acceptable to  
6 some. I understand that. But I would just put  
7 that out there as to whether that's something  
8 that others would feel comfortable including as a  
9 further recommendation that we as a committee  
10 might make.

11 DIR. BRYCE: Are you going to drop  
12 the 20 percent then? Do you need it?

13 CMSR. HONIGBERG: That's going to  
14 be a hypothetical, because those of us who sat  
15 with that work group, we would tell you that is a  
16 non-starter.

17 DIR. WRIGHT: Yes.

18 CMSR. HONIGBERG: I will --

19 DIR. MUZZEY: Could I just ask,  
20 Commissioner, to clarify? So you're talking  
21 about, if the fund runs out of money, we're still  
22 in the middle of a proceeding, the state agencies  
23 will be able to directly charge the current  
24 applicant for their per diem costs?

1                   CHAIRMAN BURACK: That would be  
2                   the thought, yes. Now, maybe politically it's  
3                   inexpedient. The challenge, of course, is that  
4                   agencies are being asked -- we're being asked to  
5                   cap our costs. But we all understand that the  
6                   applicants themselves -- meaning no disrespect in  
7                   this -- their experts, their agents, their  
8                   consultants, their attorneys, I sincerely doubt  
9                   are capping their costs or their fees.

10                  So, anyway, I just put that out  
11                  there as a thought. It may be that there isn't a  
12                  consensus on doing that at this point, but I just  
13                  think it's an important thing to be thinking  
14                  about, depending on how the conversations go with  
15                  the Legislature.

16                  DIR. WRIGHT: I think it was clear  
17                  that a lot -- just to let you know, Commissioner,  
18                  that a lot of developers, I think, had a lot of  
19                  concern with that. I'm sure Commissioner  
20                  Honigberg could tell you that, and Direct Muzzey  
21                  as well.

22                  DIR. MUZZEY: Yes.

23                  CMSR. HONIGBERG: Absolutely.

24                  DIR. WRIGHT: That was their

1 biggest -- certainty was really their biggest  
2 concern.

3 CMSR. HONIGBERG: The one thing I  
4 would remind everybody is that this is just the  
5 SEC's required recommendation or proposal to the  
6 Legislature. It's going to go into the  
7 legislative process, and lots of people will have  
8 lots of opinions about how different it should be  
9 come May when they end up voting on it.

10 DIR. HATFIELD: Just a couple  
11 questions. I believe that SB 245 retained the  
12 authority for the SEC to require applicants to  
13 pay for certain studies required by the public  
14 counsel and the SEC. So there still is that.

15 CMSR. HONIGBERG: There is a  
16 paragraph in here that mentions that.

17 DIR. HATFIELD: Okay. In terms  
18 of -- on Page 3, you have specific legislative  
19 recommendations, and No. 2 is to establish the  
20 recommended application of filing fee schedule.  
21 And I wonder if there was discussion about  
22 whether that would be more appropriate to do  
23 through the SEC rulemaking that is about to start  
24 rather than having that fixed in legislation.

1 DIR. WRIGHT: I said yes, it  
2 should be in the rule, but I didn't think we felt  
3 like we would get that authority under the  
4 legislation. But...

5 DIR. HATFIELD: And so is there a  
6 feeling -- or is SB 245 clear that SEC doesn't  
7 have that authority in the rulemaking that's  
8 about to start?

9 CHAIRMAN BURACK: I don't believe  
10 that -- and I could be mistaken about this, but I  
11 do not believe that the Legislature in SB 245  
12 gave the SEC the authority by rule to adopt fees;  
13 otherwise, we wouldn't be going through the  
14 process we are now.

15 I will withdraw my other  
16 suggestion, but let me make one other,  
17 understanding that this may be problematic as  
18 well, and maybe this is accounted for by the  
19 authority to modify the fee schedule, or maybe  
20 this is an alternative to this. If the  
21 Legislature is going to adopt a fee schedule by  
22 statute, we must have the equivalent in some  
23 fashion of an inflation or cost-of-living  
24 adjustment on an annual basis to that fee,



1       because costs are rising every year, and we must  
2       be able to address and recover those costs. So  
3       that may or may not have been discussed by the  
4       committee, but I would urge the SEC as a body to  
5       include that as a modification, or certainly as  
6       an alternative to the authority for us to be able  
7       to raise fees by 20 percent by rule.

8                 DIR. MUZZEY: That was discussed  
9       very early on, and I think it's a point that we  
10      lost along the way. But there had been early  
11      discussion of, you know, raising it by 3 percent  
12      every year to account for that. And I'm not  
13      sure --

14                CMSR. HONIGBERG: And I don't know  
15      that I would object to it, although I'm not sure  
16      that -- we can't really speak for the working  
17      group on that. That would have to come from this  
18      group. We have to make it clear that it came not  
19      from the working group but from the SEC.

20                DIR. WRIGHT: You could use  
21      something like the Consumer Price Index defined  
22      by the department of something.

23                CMSR. HONIGBERG: Yeah. I mean,  
24      but in this proposal you would just say "with an

1       appropriate inflation adjuster" because we're not  
2       writing legislation.

3                 DIR. BRYCE:   So you're replacing  
4       the 20 percent or not?

5                 CMSR. HONIGBERG:   No.

6                 CHAIRMAN BURACK:   No.   I would  
7       provide it as an alternative.   The 20 percent is  
8       with the understanding that DES -- or that the --  
9       I'm sorry -- the SEC could, without legislative  
10      action, raise its fees up to 20 percent.   And  
11      we're saying, if you don't give us that authority  
12      and you insist -- the Legislature insists on  
13      setting the fees by statute, set the fee for the  
14      first year by statute, but include an automatic  
15      cost-of-living adjustment so that that fee will  
16      automatically adjust itself in future years --

17                DIR. BRYCE:   So, are you --

18                CHAIRMAN BURACK:   -- by operation  
19      of statute.

20                DIR. BRYCE:   Right.   So, are you  
21      setting your fees -- there's three ways to set  
22      fees:   Through the legislative through a bill,  
23      through regular legislative action; through the  
24      Fiscal Committee and --

1 DIR. MUZZEY: Rulemaking.

2 DIR. BRYCE: -- and then  
3 rulemaking, right. Which one is this? Do you  
4 have to go back -- is the Legislature setting the  
5 fees the first time, and then subsequent fees  
6 you're going to Fiscal? Is that what's going on?  
7 Or do you have to go back to the Legislature  
8 every time you want to change fees, or are you  
9 going to rulemaking? I mean, when you say  
10 "Legislature," that includes all three to me.  
11 Which one is it?

12 DIR. MUZZEY: I believe how it's  
13 meant to be written here is that the Legislature  
14 initially sets the fee. And then there was  
15 recognition that we could have estimated these  
16 fees all wrong, and so there needed to be some  
17 sort of reassessment, probably on a yearly basis,  
18 that maybe they should go up or maybe they should  
19 go down to meet actual costs. And that would be  
20 done through -- if it's no greater than  
21 20 percent, the actual SEC can do it. But if  
22 it's greater than 20 percent, Fiscal does it.

23 DIR. BRYCE: Right. Well, I think  
24 you need an exception from 541-A, because that

1 requires you to do fees through rulemaking. So,  
2 keep that -- your rules attorneys can tell you  
3 that. Because we need that for the parks fund.  
4 For our fees for state parks, we need, first, an  
5 exemption from 541, and then a direction to go to  
6 Fiscal. So I don't know if that's still  
7 necessary or not, but that may be something you  
8 need to consider.

9 But yes, that's the way -- to just  
10 go to Fiscal is definitely the way to do it. But  
11 I think that needs to be more clear. That  
12 didn't -- that concept did not come across. I  
13 think you need to be more specific than saying  
14 "Legislature."

15 CHAIRMAN BURACK: Okay. With  
16 these --

17 DIR. HATFIELD: On the -- sorry.

18 CHAIRMAN BURACK: Go ahead.

19 DIR. HATFIELD: On Schedule A,  
20 which is the proposed fees, at the bottom there's  
21 a section for administrative proceedings. And I  
22 wondered, is the intent that these would apply,  
23 regardless of who files? And the reason I ask  
24 is, if a municipality was filing, or some party

1 other than the applicant was filing an  
2 enforcement action or something, would that apply  
3 to anybody, regardless of who was filing?

4 CMSR. HONIGBERG: That is  
5 discussed in the narrative, but I didn't talk  
6 about it. If someone else is filing, there's no  
7 filing fee up front. If the result of the  
8 proceeding is, for example, that someone is now  
9 within the SEC process, then that person, that  
10 project, would be responsible for paying the  
11 petition for jurisdiction fee and whatever  
12 application fee is appropriate for the  
13 proceeding. There may be some proceedings that  
14 will end up fee-less, but that's got to -- that's  
15 within the overhead of the agency in this  
16 context.

17 CHAIRMAN BURACK: Okay. Thank  
18 you. So I think where we are is we're looking  
19 for a motion to... how do you want to put this?

20 CMSR. HONIGBERG: I will move for  
21 the adoption of this recommendation by the SEC,  
22 with a handful of modifications: One is to  
23 clarify the REF use; another is to clarify the  
24 level of legislative involvement needed for the

1 change in fees; third is to include a proposal to  
2 have a cost-of-living inflation adjuster in the  
3 fees that are adopted. Those are the three that  
4 I can remember.

5 DIR. BRYCE: I understood that to  
6 be if the 20 percent didn't fly.

7 CMSR. HONIGBERG: No, I think it's  
8 got to be separate. There's got to be two  
9 separate things there. You need them both.

10 DIR. BRYCE: Oh, okay.

11 CHAIRMAN BURACK: That's fine.

12 CMSR. HONIGBERG: You need them  
13 both.

14 DIR. BRYCE: All right.

15 CHAIRMAN BURACK: Okay. I think  
16 the other things that were discussed were just  
17 adding some further justification up front for  
18 why the fees are needed, that there needs to be  
19 more precatory language here in the actual  
20 document that the committee submits laying out  
21 why -- how this has been funded in the past and  
22 why, you know, as SB 245 found, why it's  
23 necessary to have staff to support this. And  
24 let's see. I don't know whether there's a

1       necessity. I think Phil was suggesting that  
2       there should be further language explaining that  
3       the 20-percent increase should be only in the  
4       event of an actual or impending shortfall.

5               DIR. BRYCE: Correct.

6               CHAIRMAN BURACK: I guess one  
7       other thought I'll share. Frankly, looking at  
8       these fees, these fees seem to me lower than what  
9       I had previously anticipated and what I thought  
10      were the numbers being considered. And I think  
11      there's going to be a risk that the Legislature  
12      may look at these fees and say, Well, that's what  
13      they thought was the right amount. But they must  
14      have padded the numbers, and so we're going to  
15      cut those by 50 percent. And I would just  
16      encourage us to really be able to provide the  
17      data that demonstrates how we arrived at these  
18      fees and why these fees really are close to the  
19      minimum, and a very reasonable number, and that  
20      we have not made these of necessity on the high  
21      side, anticipating that there would be an effort  
22      by the Legislature to reduce them.

23              CMSR. HONIGBERG: I think we're in  
24      a position to do that.

1 DIR. WRIGHT: We have  
2 spreadsheets, and we can show those.

3 CMSR. HONIGBERG: We have  
4 spreadsheets and historical information about  
5 time lines. I mean, it would have been possible  
6 for us to try to pad, with the expectation that  
7 someone would cut. But we chose not to do that.  
8 We would have had a lot of fighting, I think,  
9 within the group. You know, remember who we had  
10 here. We had business representatives,  
11 developers, the environmental community and  
12 governmental representatives. I don't think that  
13 group would have agreed to "pad," as it were, a  
14 request, and we did not do that. And I think  
15 Craig has the spreadsheets, and we have some of  
16 the other data to back that up.

17 CHAIRMAN BURACK: Very good.

18 CMSR. HONIGBERG: So my motion, as  
19 modified by you with the addition of the  
20 information up front and the clarifying statement  
21 that an increase is to deal with an actual or  
22 impending shortfall, we can -- we will modify  
23 that and turn it into a proposal.

24 CHAIRMAN BURACK: Very good. So



1 we have a motion by Commissioner Honigberg. Is  
2 there a second?

3 DIR. WRIGHT: I would second.

4 CHAIRMAN BURACK: Second by  
5 Director Wright.

6 Any further discussion of the  
7 motion?

8 MS. BAILEY: Can I just ask a  
9 point of order?

10 CHAIRMAN BURACK: Yes.

11 MS. BAILEY: Should I be voting on  
12 this? Because I'm a designated member in this  
13 SEC for today --

14 CMSR. HONIGBERG: Probably no.

15 CHAIRMAN BURACK: I think that's a  
16 fair question. And Engineer Bailey, probably not  
17 appropriate for you to vote.

18 MS. BAILEY: That's what I  
19 figured.

20 CMSR. HONIGBERG: If we need to  
21 you break the tie...

22 CHAIRMAN BURACK: But I think  
23 everybody else can vote. Should we do a roll  
24 call? What would be --

1 CMSR. HONIGBERG: Sure.

2 CHAIRMAN BURACK: Why don't we  
3 just do a roll call vote here so that it will be  
4 very clear who was here.

5 Attorney Iacopino, would you call  
6 roll?

7 MR. IACOPINO: Director Forbes.

8 DIR. FORBES: Aye.

9 MR. IACOPINO: Director Bryce.

10 DIR. BRYCE: Aye.

11 MR. IACOPINO: Director Wright.

12 DIR. WRIGHT: Yes.

13 MR. IACOPINO: Director Oldenburg.

14 MR. OLDENBURG: Aye.

15 MR. IACOPINO: Director Hatfield.

16 DIR. HATFIELD: I'm going to  
17 abstain.

18 MR. IACOPINO: Commissioner  
19 Honigberg.

20 CMSR. HONIGBERG: Aye.

21 MR. IACOPINO: Director Muzzey.

22 DIR. MUZZEY: Yes.

23 MR. IACOPINO: Commissioner Scott.

24 CMSR. SCOTT: Aye.

1 I have a quick comment to make for  
2 a placeholder. We just -- in this last  
3 proceeding, we just tasked a state organization  
4 to effectively act as our agent, Fish & Game,  
5 without any revenue associated. I'd like to --  
6 in future rulemaking discussions, you know, is  
7 there a way to accommodate that? But "yes" is my  
8 answer to this.

9 MR. IACOPINO: Director Simpkins.

10 DIR. SIMPKINS: Aye.

11 MR. IACOPINO: Mr. Chair.

12 CHAIRMAN BURACK: Yes.

13 MR. IACOPINO: The "ayes" have it.

14 CHAIRMAN BURACK: Very good.

15 Thank you. Thank you all very much. We want to  
16 say a special thanks to Marty and Craig and Beth  
17 for their work with the subcommittee work group  
18 that put together this long-term funding proposal  
19 and --

20 CMSR. HONIGBERG: I move we  
21 adjourn.

22 CHAIRMAN BURACK: We stand  
23 adjourned. Thank you.

24 (Proceedings adjourned at 5:11 p.m.)

## C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Susan J. Robidas, a Licensed  
Shorthand Court Reporter and Notary Public  
of the State of New Hampshire, do hereby  
certify that the foregoing is a true and  
accurate transcript of my stenographic  
notes of these proceedings taken at the  
place and on the date hereinbefore set  
forth, to the best of my skill and ability  
under the conditions present at the time.

I further certify that I am neither  
attorney or counsel for, nor related to or  
employed by any of the parties to the  
action; and further, that I am not a  
relative or employee of any attorney or  
counsel employed in this case, nor am I  
financially interested in this action.

---

Susan J. Robidas, LCR/RPR  
Licensed Shorthand Court Reporter  
Registered Professional Reporter  
N.H. LCR No. 44 (RSA 310-A:173)

- November 24, 2014  
SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE Review and Consideration of Proposed Funding

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