

Staff Report
Public Utilities Bureau

September 30, 2021

Subject:

Commission action necessary to ensure timely compliance with certain deadlines prescribed in Public Act 102-0662, signed into law by Governor JB Pritzker on September 15, 2021.

Recommended Action:

Public Act 102-0662 requires the Commission to take various actions to implement new programs, initiatives and directives to further the State's goals of transitioning the State to 100% clean energy; supporting a responsible transition away from carbon-intensive power generation; increasing public participation in regulatory matters; and encouraging further diversity and inclusion within the renewable energy industry. On September 30, 2021, the Commission approved several measures in furtherance of the goals of PA 102-0662. This Staff Report recommends action on additional issues.

While the Commission's role in implementing PA 102-0662 will necessitate ongoing, long-term program development and oversight, the Staff of the Public Utilities Bureau (PUB) has identified several matters requiring the Commission to take prompt action. Those measures include selection of an independent, third-party facilitator for multi-year integrated grid plan workshops, selection of an auditor to assist with the distribution planning process, as well as in docketed proceedings, and selection of technical and policy experts with relevant fields of expertise to support the Commission in the development of a renewable energy access plan. Details of each of these programs, together with Staff's recommended action to meet the statutory deadline, follow. Staff recommends the Commission adopt its recommendations as to each of these program areas.

Multi-Year Integrated Grid Plan Workshop Facilitator

Statute: 220 ILCS 5/16-105.17(e)(1)

Purpose: This new provision requires the ICC to select an independent, third-party facilitator for workshops that are mandated by Section 16-105.17 of the Public Utilities Act (PUA).

Required

Action: Initiate the process to engage a facilitator

Deadline: There is no statutory deadline, but the facilitator should be in place prior to commencement of multi-year integrated grid plan workshops, which must commence by January 1, 2022.

PA 102-0662 requires the Commission to select an independent, third-party facilitator for workshops that are mandated by Section 16-105.17 of the PUA.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends the Commission direct Staff to, subject to available appropriation, conduct a competitive solicitation to hire a third-party facilitator to facilitate the multi-year integrated grid plan workshop process.

Multi-Year Integrated Grid Plan Auditor to Assist the ICC

Statute: 220 ILCS 5/16-105.10(g)

Purpose: This new provision provides that the Commission shall have the authority to retain the services of an auditor to assist with the distribution planning process, as well as in docketed proceedings.

Required

Action: Initiate the process to engage an auditor

Deadline: There is no statutory deadline, but the facilitator should be in place prior to commencement of multi-year integrated grid plan workshops, which must commence by January 1, 2022.

PA 102-0662 authorizes the Commission to retain the services of an auditor to assist with the distribution planning process, as well as in docketed proceedings. Staff is of the opinion that an auditor will assist the Commission in understanding what investments to the grid might be necessary or beneficial.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends the Commission direct Staff to, subject to available appropriation, conduct a competitive solicitation to hire an auditor who can assist with the distribution planning process, as well as in related docketed proceedings.

Renewable Energy Access Plan Technical and Policy Experts

Statute: 220 ILCS 5/8-512(b)

Purpose: This new provision provides that the Commission shall have the authority to retain the services of technical and policy experts with relevant fields of expertise to support the Commission in the development of a renewable energy access plan.

Required

Action: Initiate the process to engage the services of technical and policy experts.

Deadline: There is no statutory deadline, but the experts should be in place in order that they may contribute to an initial draft of the plan, which is scheduled to occur in early to mid-2022.

PA 102-0662 authorizes the Commission to retain the services of technical and policy experts with relevant fields of expertise to support the Commission in the development of a renewable energy access plan. Staff is of the opinion that such experts will assist the Commission in the development of a renewable energy access plan.

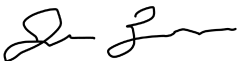
Recommendation:

Staff recommends the Commission direct Staff, subject to available appropriation, to conduct a competitive solicitation to hire technical and policy experts to support the Commission in the development of a renewable energy access plan.

Summary:

Staff recommends the Commission take such action and issue directives as are outlined herein, to ensure the Commission complies with certain directives and deadlines set forth in the Energy Transition Action.

Recommended and Approved by:



Dr. James Zolnierек
Bureau Chief
Public Utilities Bureau