COMMENTS TO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

September 12, 2022

Thank-you for taking the initiative to discuss taking steps to enhance Public Awareness and Participation of DPU efforts.  Your memorandum of August 26, 2022 sought public comments on the topics below.  As a member of Westford's Town Committee for Green Energy and Sustainability I have participated in the many discussions we've had regarding increasing needs for safe, green energy as we strive to achieve our NetZero goals.  We've been disappointed with our interactions with National Grid, and convinced ourselves that monitoring DPU efforts would be beneficial, since National Grid efforts would be driven by actions of the DPU.That is the context for my comments below:

* **TOPIC:  Improved communication with customers, community-based organizations, and local government officials to maximize public engagement in our proceedings.**

I do believe our Town Board would be very interested in having increased awareness of particular DPU activities.  Below is a list of areas we have discussed at our meetings and would be interested in monitoring:

* + Discussions or actions taken to achieve MA NetZero goals
  + Discussions or actions related to Green Communities and/or Municipal Aggregation contracts
  + Strategic Planning discussions that include
    - Assumptions regarding the speed of electrification
    - Assumptions regarding the timing of Climate effects on the grid (more AC use, floods taking out substations, droughts increasing Solar effectiveness, etc.)
    - Implications of assumptions on selection of a strategic approach to adapting our grid for NetZero
    - Actual Milestones and their rationale
    - Implications of actual milestones on Energy providers (e.g., National Grid)
    - Implications of actual milestones on Municipalities
* **TOPIC:  Whether all notices for agency proceedings should receive the same level of publication and outreach, or whether there should be some prioritization or variation in approach to avoid overwhelming or desensitizing readers with frequent notices. If there should be variation, discuss the types of proceedings that warrant additional publication and outreach efforts.**

My preference would be that activities associated with areas of particular interest to specific groups, in my case Town Boards, would have some sort of added outreach emphasis to those groups.  This could be facilitated by allowing individuals and/or groups check off boxes for areas of interest, and emails would then go out to appropriate recipients when actions in those areas of interest are being addressed by the DPU.  I recognize this would provide some burden on the DPU to maintain such a database, and to establish the mechanism for targeted emails.

* **TOPIC:  The most effective methods that Distribution Companies use currently to reach customers.**

I received this notice through our Town's Sustainability Coordinator via email.

Thank-you,

Erika Kohl

Member, Westford Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee