

## Consumer Liaison Group Meeting Summary

### December 4, 2024

#### Introduction

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The **Consumer Liaison Group (CLG)** is a forum for sharing information between ISO New England (the ISO or ISO-NE) and electricity consumers in New England. The CLG meets quarterly and attracts a diverse group of attendees at each meeting. Meetings are free and open to the public. Participants generally include consumers and consumer representatives (including state consumer and ratepayer advocates), state business and industry associations, chambers of commerce, individual businesses, trade groups, nonprofit organizations, and other end users. Several New England Power Pool (NEPOOL) members and state regulators are also regular, active participants in CLG discussions.<sup>1</sup> CLG meetings generally include the following agenda items:

- **Opening remarks** from the CLG Coordinating Committee Chair;
- **Community welcome** from a member of the local community invited by the Coordinating Committee;
- **A representative from the ISO**, who provides an update on regional energy issues and initiatives that have or will be taking place at NEPOOL and ISO stakeholder meetings that can have an impact on electricity prices;
- **A keynote speech** typically from an industry or business executive, policymaker, or regulator—who provides a unique perspective on a particular topic or issue;
- **A panel discussion**, often representing industry, the ISO, regulators, and consumer perspectives, facilitated by a moderator; and
- **A community roundtable** hosted by a CLG Coordinating Committee member.

The following is a brief summary of the meeting, which was hosted in a hybrid format – remotely (via WebEx) and in-person in Boston, Massachusetts – on **December 4, 2024**.

The Consumer Liaison Group Coordinating Committee (CLGCC) selects the topic and speakers. The meeting summary is intended to capture the general discussions that took place at the meeting; it does not necessarily reflect the views of the ISO or the CLGCC.

#### December 4: Discussions with Representatives of the ISO New England Board of Directors and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Commissioner Judy Chang

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**Meeting Objectives:** To hear from Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Commissioner Judy Chang, host a discussion with representatives from ISO New England's Board of Directors, and elect CLGCC members for the next two-year term.

#### Opening Remarks

**Liz Anderson**, division chief of the energy and ratepayer advocacy division at the Office of the Massachusetts Attorney General, and CLGCC chair, welcomed meeting attendees. Anderson

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<sup>1</sup> NEPOOL is a group formed in 1971 by the region's private and municipal utilities to foster cooperation and coordination among the utilities in the six-state region for ensuring a dependable supply of electricity. Today, NEPOOL members are ISO stakeholders and market participants. More information is available at [www.nepool.com](http://www.nepool.com).

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explained the election process and then introduced Kannan Thiruvengadam for the community welcome.

**CLGCC Elections** Anderson provided an overview of the process for the election of the CLGCC members for the 2024-2026 term. Both in-person and virtual attendees were able to vote, through both paper and online ballots. Anderson explained the process, including reference to the CLGCC purpose and structure document. Instructions and nominee bios were shared via email prior to the meeting. Anderson recognized members of the CLGCC who are stepping down and not running for re-election. Anderson confirmed the list of nominees prior to opening the vote. The outcome of the election was announced at the end of the meeting (and is covered at the end of this summary).

**Kannan Thiruvengadam**, executive director of Eastie Farm, gave the community welcome. Thiruvengadam discussed best practices for how to do foster climate-focused sustainable agriculture, and highlighted the importance of bringing in the community to build stronger relationships with local government.

### ISO New England Update

**Anne George**, vice president and chief external affairs and communications officer at ISO-NE, provided the ISO's [regional update](#). George provided a brief history of the Consumer Liaison Group, beginning with its inception in 2009, around the time the ISO and stakeholders were developing a response to FERC Order 719, which pertained to ISO responsiveness to stakeholders. For the past fifteen years, the CLG has been meeting as a way to enhance interactions with consumers and consumer representatives. In the early years of the CLG the primary focus was on costs, but in recent years the conversation has shifted to include a focus on environmental issues.

### *October Wholesale Prices*

The average real-time electricity price in October 2024 was \$34.84, an increase of 43% compared to October 2023 and 9% compared to September 2024. Peak demand was down 11% year-over-year. George highlighted the October resource mix, where natural gas and nuclear made up about 82% of New England's electricity generation, and renewables represented 13%.

### *2025 Annual Workplan*

George discussed the 2025 anchor projects as part of the [2025 Annual Workplan](#). The markets anchor project is the [Capacity Auction Reforms \(CAR\)](#). To better ensure power system reliability and cost-efficiency as New England's resource mix evolves, the Capacity Auction Reforms (CAR) would transition the capacity market from a forward/annual market to a prompt/seasonal market with accreditation reforms. CAR is anticipated to be implemented ahead of the Capacity Commitment Period scheduled to start on June 1, 2028.

The Operations anchor project is the [Regional Energy Shortfall Threshold \(REST\)](#). In 2022 and 2023, the ISO worked with the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) to conduct a probabilistic energy-security study for the New England region under extreme weather events and developed the Probabilistic Energy Adequacy Tool (PEAT) for the ISO to use to assess operational energy-security risks associated with extreme weather events. Using PEAT results, the ISO is working with regional stakeholders to establish a Regional Energy Shortfall Threshold (REST). Once established, the ISO and stakeholders can evaluate whether exceeding the REST requires solutions to mitigate risks.

The System Planning anchor project is the competitive solicitation for Longer-term Transmission Planning (LTTP) solutions. In 2025, the ISO will implement an RFP process in response to a request

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from the states, through NESCOE, for a competitively selected transmission solution to address New England's future, clean energy needs in connection with the 2050 Transmission Study. Additionally, the ISO will continue compliance with and implementation of FERC Order Nos. [1920](#), and is assessing the assimilation of FERC [Order 1920-A](#) with New England's innovative LTTP framework.

#### *Winter Outlook and Preparations*

George highlighted how the ISO calculates available capacity to compare to anticipated demand under both normal and abnormal weather conditions. The capacity analyses and energy assessments show the region is well-positioned heading into the winter 2024/2025 season. George discussed the [21-Day Energy Assessment](#), which raises awareness about energy availability so resources can take action. The information is posted to the ISO website and the ISO mobile app.

#### *Emissions Report*

The [2023 ISO New England Electric Generator Air Emissions Report](#) found that there were significant reductions in emissions from 2001 through 2023. Emissions were also reduced in 2023 as compared to 2022, primarily driven by lower demand on the system and the reduction of the use of oil and coal on the system.

A question-and-answer period followed. George responded to questions on penalties for generators with supply obligations who fail to perform and the role of demand response in ISO markets. More information on demand response is available on the ISO [website](#).

#### **A Discussion with Representatives of the ISO New England Board of Directors**

**Cheryl LaFleur**, chair of the ISO New England board of directors, and **Michael Curran**, a member of the ISO board of directors, held an open dialogue with CLG attendees. LaFleur began with opening remarks on the purpose and structure of the board of directors, and the work at the ISO to run markets efficiently while maintaining reliability to keep the lights on. LaFleur outlined several of the key projects currently undertaken by the ISO, including changes to markets, development of new transmission to account for new resources coming onto the grid—highlighting the value of the LTTP. Simultaneously, LaFleur discussed upscaling IT infrastructure to account for these changes. LaFleur touched on how this is a challenging time in the energy space due to a pending change in federal administration, including changes to leadership at FERC, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and US Department of Energy (DOE). She observed, however, that much of the energy policy is being driven by the states. Curran provided opening remarks and discussed his background and differences between the MISO and ISO-NE regions.

A question-and-answer period followed the opening remarks. LaFleur and Curran responded to questions regarding the CLG purpose and structure document; carbon pricing and damages associated with fossil fuels; transmission planning; incorporating public feedback; the generator interconnection queue; harmonizing buildout of state and regional transmission; wholesale electricity market costs; the role of gas in the ISO market; and, the role of demand response.

#### **Keynote Address**

**Judy Chang**, commissioner at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) provided the keynote address. Chang said it is an exciting time for FERC, and the organizational structure of the Commission. Chang touched on the importance of the public stakeholder process in conducting business and project development. Chang detailed the responsibilities of FERC, including regulating interstate transmission and wholesale electricity, interstate sale and transport of natural gas, and interstate oil pipeline rates. Chang reaffirmed that FERC does not make any decisions about siting or what kinds of generation should be invested in, and that those decisions are left to the states.

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Chang emphasized the work of the FERC Office of Public Participation, and the Office's efforts to communicate with consumer and public groups. Chang discussed the importance of FERC Orders 1920 and 1920-A to encourage the country to plan for the longer term in order to understand what growth is happening, what resources are needed and identify actions to maintain reliability and lower costs. Chang remarked that this was an important step in breaking down barriers in the planning space as well as cost allocation across states and regions. Regarding AI and datacenters, Chang discussed how FERC is seeing an increase in electricity consumption as a result of growth of artificial intelligence (AI) and datacenters. Chang expressed support for programs to increase demand-side flexibility.

A question-and-answer period followed. Chang responded to questions regarding navigation of the stakeholder process; evaluating prudence in rates and how projects are planned; consideration of impact on climate in FERC decision-making; fuel neutrality; and, market structure and design.

### **Closing Remarks**

**Liz Anderson** provided the results of the CLGCC election results, thanked outgoing CLGCC members, offered closing remarks and thanked everyone who helped to organize the CLG meeting.

**Election Results Liz Anderson** announced the election results for the 2025-2026 CLGCC term. The following thirteen individuals were elected to serve a two-year term on the CLGCC. Anderson noted that as there are only thirteen nominees for fourteen positions, and only one representing Rhode Island. The CLGCC is structured to have two representatives for each state, so Anderson announced that the newly elected coordinating committee will elect a second RI member by majority vote of the committee to fill the vacancy.

1. Joshua Macey (CT)
2. Jamie Talbert-Slagle (CT)
3. Cole Cochrane (ME)
4. Andrew Landry (ME)
5. Robert Laraway (ME)
6. Benny Meshoulam (MA)
7. Nathan Phillips (MA)
8. Regine Spector (MA)
9. Rev. Kendra Ford (NH)
10. Don Kreis (NH)
11. Jamie Dickerson (RI)
12. Drew Hudson (VT)
13. Julie Macuga (VT)

A [recording](#) of the meeting can be found on the [CLG page](#) on the ISO website.