

**Outline of Testimony of James Volz**  
**Public Service Board FY 2017 Budget**  
**February 5, 2016**

- Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify. I want to highlight the major areas of work for the Public Service Board and then answer any questions you may have.
- Siting. Cases and proceedings involving siting continue to expand as a significant part of the Board's workload, continuing a trend over the last five years.
  - The Board has responsibility for approving siting and construction of electric and natural gas transmission lines and generation facilities, as well as telecommunications facilities when the carriers elect to apply to the Board.
  - Renewable development continues at a strong pace and continues to occupy a significant part of our workload.
  - Historically the largest solar projects seeking siting approval from the Board were 2.2 MW or less; the vast majority of these projects were participants in the state's Standard Offer Program. However during the past year the Board has seen a significant increase in the size of proposed solar projects. Currently the Board is reviewing 7 proposed projects of slightly less than 5 MW and 1 proposed project of 20 MW (Coolidge Solar in Ludlow and Cavendish).
  - In addition, 4 more proposed 20 MW solar projects and 1 proposed wind project of up to 20 MW are currently seeking Board approval of power purchase agreements. These projects have not yet sought siting approval from the Board.
  - The number of net metering projects continues to increase significantly. In FY13 the Board processed 1,070 net metering applications. In FY14, that number grew to 1,190. In FY15 that number grew to 2,238. In the first 6 months of FY16, the Board already has received 1,180 such applications.
  - Wireless communications service expansion and deployment of new capabilities has meant more cell tower siting. In FY13, the Board processed 109 telecommunications facilities applications pursuant to 30 V.S.A. ' 248a and ' 248n. In FY14 that number grew to 138. The Board received another 138 applications in FY15. In the first six months of FY16, the Board received 44 such applications.
  - The Board expects that the next year will be more of the same.
  - The Board continues to examine aspects of Vermont Gas Systems' expansion of its system to Middlebury.

- Over the last year, the Board continued to receive complaints regarding projects after they are built. This is a challenge for the Board because we do not have any enforcement staff.

! Renewable Policy Issues

- " The Board continues to spend a substantial amount of time on implementation issues related to the standard offer and net metering programs.
- " As a result of new legislative requirements, the Board is currently engaged in an extensive public process to develop a proposed revised net metering rule. 5.100
- " As a result of Act 56, the Board is currently conducting an extensive collaborative proceeding to implement the state's new Renewable Energy Standard. , T3?
- " The revised standard offer program requires regular RFPs for new power, updates of prices caps, and other implementation matters.
- " We expect these to continue.

! Vermont Yankee

- " Even with the closure of the Vermont Yankee plant at the end of 2014, there is much related work left to be done by the Board related to site restoration standards and siting of a new spent fuel storage pad.
- " We expect Vermont Yankee to consume more Board time and resources this calendar year.

! Ongoing Oversight of Companies Subject to Board Jurisdiction

- " Review of rates. With alternative regulation and competition in the telecommunications sector, this is a smaller, but material part of our workload. This year, with VGS incurring large construction costs, review of a rate increase request is likely. (KK + VGS question)
- " The Board also expects to receive a request for a new VGS alternative regulation plan.
- " We expect examination of GMP=s rates to continue; the Board is currently reviewing GMP=s rate design.
- " Service Quality. The Board is continuing to examine FairPoint=s service quality.

- " This year the Board will be reviewing Comcast's request to renew its certificate of public good.
- " Overall, in FY14 the Board opened 207 dockets, many of which related to renewable energy and telecommunications matters. In FY15, the Board opened 229 dockets, many of which also related to renewable energy and telecommunications matters. In the first six months of FY16, the number of new proceedings is 120.

! Energy Efficiency Utility

- " The Board has ongoing work overseeing the EEUs, including completing a formal performance assessment of BED.
- " This year the Board will start a proceeding to develop EEU budgets and savings goals for the 2018-2020 performance period.
- " The Board is also engaged in follow-up activities related to the appointment of VGS as an EEU.

! Deployment of the Board's New Electronic Case Management System

- " The Board has a contract to deploy an electronic case management system and is working with the contractor to get this system up and running. We expect this work to continue into FY 17 and to require substantial effort, as it has over the last year.
- " In the end, we expect this will create greater efficiency and ease of use for regulated companies, the public, and interveners who have business with the Board.

! Performance Measures

- " Once our new electronic case management system is in place, we will be able to efficiently collect the data necessary to report on our preferred performance measures which are:
  - Percent of cases disposed of or otherwise resolved within established timeframes;
  - Percent of public inquiries and information requests satisfied within established timeframes; and
  - Percent of consumer complaints about utility service resolved using simplified, accessible procedures.

*Q1 2016 launch how long? → delayed*

- " For now, we are able to collect and report on the following performance measures:
- Number of certificates of public good issued or deemed issued (FY15 – 1,583);
  - Number of public records requests received (FY15 – 224); and
  - Percent of public records requests satisfied within established timeframes (FY15 – 94%).