



Energy and Telecommunications Interim Committee

66th Montana Legislature

SENATE MEMBERS

JANET ELLIS
MARY MCNALLY
KEITH REGIER
TOM RICHMOND

HOUSE MEMBERS

LAURIE BISHOP
DENISE HAYMAN
CHRISTOPHER POPE
DEREK SKEES
BRAD TSCHIDA
DANIEL ZOLNIKOV

COMMITTEE STAFF

TREVOR GRAFF, Research Analyst
JAMESON WALKER, Staff Attorney
NADINE SPENCER, Secretary

MINUTES LOG

September 23, 2019
Room 172, Capitol Building
Helena, Montana

Please note: This document is a Minutes Log and provides a notation of the time elapsed between the beginning of the meeting and the time at which the item was presented or discussed, a motion was made, or a vote was taken. The narrative presented here is provided only as a guide to the audio or video record of the meeting. The official discussion, motion, or vote is available on the audio or video archive of this meeting. The Legislature does not prepare a transcript of meeting activities. The time designation may be used to locate the referenced discussion on the audio or video recording of this meeting.

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

REP. DEREK SKEES, Chair
SEN. JANET ELLIS, Vice Chair

SEN. MARY MCNALLY
SEN. KEITH REGIER
SEN. TOM RICHMOND

REP. DENISE HAYMAN
REP. CHRISTOPHER POPE
REP. BRAD TSCHIDA
REP. DANIEL ZOLNIKOV

COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED

REP. LAURIE BISHOP

STAFF PRESENT

TREVOR GRAFF, Research Analyst
JAMESON WALKER, Staff Attorney
NADINE SPENCER, Secretary

VISITOR'S LIST (Attachment 1)

AGENDA (Attachment 2)

COMMITTEE ACTIONS

The Energy and Telecommunications Committee (ETIC):

- Voted to object to the proposed amendment of ARM 38.2.3301 and repeal of ARM 38.2.4204 pertaining to discovery and pre-filed testimony procedures by the Public Service Commission;
- Adopted the final interim work plan.

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

09:01:55 Rep. Skees called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. The secretary called the roll.
(Attachment 3) Rep. Bishop was excused.

NORTHWESTERN ENERGY SUPPLY PLAN UPDATE

Introduction

- 09:04:01 Trevor Graff, research analyst, Legislative Service Division (LSD), said as part of the ETIC's transmission study the committee will receive an update from NorthWestern Energy (NWE) on its supply plan.
- 09:04:29 Benjamin Fitch-Fleischmann, manager, Energy Supply Planning, NWE, provided information on NWE's 2019 electricity supply procurement plan. (Exhibit 1)
- 09:15:30 Sen. Ellis asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann about investing in energy storage.
09:17:11 Rep. Hayman asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann about solar energy during the peak demand period in February 2019.
- 09:19:40 Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann continued his presentation.
09:21:02 Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann discussed the findings of the Energy+Environmental Economics (E3) study.
- 09:26:36 Sen. McNally asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann about the cost effective duration of storage and where energy improved efficiency falls on the graphs.
- 09:27:44 Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann discussed demand side management.
- 09:28:27 Rep. Skees asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann to provide a copy of the study to staff and asked why some of the slides are based on 2030 projections and others are based on 2050 projections.

09:30:08 Rep. Zolnikov asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann about cost effective reliability projections for 2050 and the price for resources used.

09:30:43 Rep. Zolnikov asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann about the factors taken into consideration in NWE's plan.

09:31:36 Rep. Pope asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann about the Mid C peak high price graph.

09:34:26 Rep. Pope asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann about the optimized energy storage by hour.

09:37:07 Sen. Regier asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann about the experience in countries that have invested in wind energy.

09:39:45 Sen. Regier asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann about concerns regarding grid reliability.

09:41:46 Rep. Zolnikov asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann about the long-term benefit of over building resources and having excess energy.

09:44:57 Rep. Skees asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann about production factors for wind and solar.

09:47:09 Rep. Pope asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann about NWE's position for the future.

09:49:41 Rep. Pope asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann about the value of investing in resources overtime.

09:52:40 Rep. Hayman asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann if the plan takes into consideration the fact that some companies will only use clean energy in the future.

09:53:23 Rep. Hayman asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann if he agrees that the future of energy is exporting.

09:54:51 Rep. Hayman asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann about the companies in the energy imbalance market and if they will be interested in Montana's energy.

09:57:39 Rep. Skees asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann to continue his presentation on NWE's supply plan.

09:57:54 Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann discussed NWE's portfolio.

10:00:48 Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann discussed next steps.

10:02:42 Rep. Skees asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann about the loss of the 600 megawatts of power after the closure of Colstrip Units 1 and 2 and the energy imbalance market in Montana.

Public comment:

10:07:49 Mark Klein, chief operating officer, Broad Reach Power

10:09:59 Eli Bailey, Absaroka Energy ([Exhibit 2](#))

10:16:44 Jeff Fox, Montana policy manager, Renewable Northwest

10:23:30 Diego Rivas, senior policy associate, Northwest Energy Coalition ([Exhibit 3](#))

10:32:36 Brian Fadie, Clean Energy Program director, Montana Environmental Information Center ([Exhibit 4](#))

10:41:28 Andrew Valainis, executive director, Montana Renewable Energy Association ([Exhibit 5](#))

10:43:39 Rep. Mary Ann Dunwell, HD 84

Questions from the committee:

- 10:47:58 Rep. Zolnikov asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann about the potential, if NWE did not build-out its resources, to buy surplus energy from other utilities in the region that did.
- 10:53:29 Sen. McNally asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann about the potential early retirement of Colstrip Unit 4 by the other owners and NWE's decision not to look at the risk and model an option of acquiring more ownership shares.
- 11:01:13 Sen. McNally said she believes it is critical to look at the opportunity to acquire more ownership shares and asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann about the build-out for increased gas plants and if the cost of expanding fuel line capacity is in the plan.
- 11:03:17 Sen. Regier asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann about the energy imbalance market and Montana's need for energy.
- 11:05:51 Sen. Richmond asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann about reducing the impact of price spikes.
- 11:08:04 Sen. Richmond asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann about NWE's model and if it looks at the penetration of electric vehicles into its demand and what that does to the load balance.
- 11:10:10 Rep. Pope asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann about the shortage of mega capacity in the state and the costs associated with transmission and natural gas pipeline considerations.
- 11:13:46 Sen. Ellis asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann about the difference between the procurement plan and the rate case before the PSC and about the timeline for the public comment period on the procurement plan.
- 11:19:52 Sen. McNally asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann about the model used to generate NWE's resource plan and the model that will be used to evaluate the request for proposals (RFP's).
- 11:22:24 Rep. Hayman asked Mr. Fitch-Fleischmann about the model and if it considers the debt ratio for ratepayers and the cost of build-out.
- 11:27:22 Rep. Skees thanked Mr. Fitch-Fleishman and provided an update for today's agenda.
- 11:28:41 Recess
- 11:32:33 Reconvene

MONTANA CLIMATE SOLUTIONS COUNCIL UPDATE

- 11:33:20 Patrick Holmes, Natural Resource Policy advisor, Governor's office, provided an update on the Montana Climate Solutions Council. ([Exhibit 6](#))

Public comment: None

Questions from the committee:

- 11:38:19 Sen. Regier asked Mr. Holmes about the need for the council.
- 11:39:56 Sen. Regier asked Mr. Holmes about the effects of climate change on Montana.
- 11:41:23 Sen. Regier asked Mr. Holmes if the council has a definition of carbon pollution to work with.
- 11:42:19 Sen. Regier asked Mr. Holmes if the governor is aware that SJ 8 (2019), a resolution for Congress to take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, died in committee.

11:42:54 Sen. Ellis asked Mr. Holmes to provide the ETIC with a copy of the executive order.

11:43:40 Rep. Pope asked Mr. Holmes about the eventual outcome and if it will include opportunities and ideas for industry and the business community to partner with the proposed solutions.

11:45:56 Sen. Richmond asked Mr. Holmes about previous projects and the need for additional resources for a new plan.

11:50:02 Sen. Richmond asked Mr. Holmes about working with the Montana University System.

11:51:45 Rep. Tschida asked Mr. Holmes about the experts participating in the Montana Climate Solutions Summit.

11:53:42 Rep. Tschida asked Mr. Holmes about the memorandum of understanding that the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has with the Center for the New Energy Economy (CNEE) and how much the council expects to attain in the transition to a clean energy economy.

11:55:49 Rep. Pope commented on his experience working with the CNEE.

11:56:51 Rep. Skees asked Mr. Holmes to provide information on the location of the sensors that were used that indicated temperature in Montana has increased three degrees and about the authority given to the governor in the executive order.

11:59:32 Rep. Skees asked Mr. Holmes about the ability to have a healthy debate by members of the council.

12:00:21 Rep. Skees asked Mr. Holmes to report back to the governor the concerns that the legislature has and said he would like to see a healthy debate by the council that includes disagreements on the assumptions in the executive order.

12:02:34 Recess for lunch

12:36:00 Reconvene

HJ 12: TRANSMISSION INFRASTRUCTURE STUDY

Introduction

12:36:22 Mr. Graff said the committee requested more information about the Montana Renewable Development Action Plan as well as transmission planning in the state. [\(Exhibit 7\)](#)

Montana Renewable Development Action Plan Review

12:37:11 Mark Reller, Montana liaison, Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), provided information about resource adequacy in the region.

12:39:33 Mr. Reller discussed past efforts to coordinate resource adequacy.

12:42:11 Mr. Reller discussed Northwest Power and Conservation Council's efforts on resource adequacy.

12:49:09 Mr. Reller discussed the BPA white book.

12:58:44 Mike Cashell, vice-president of transmission, NWE, provided information on the Montana Renewable Development Action Plan and said that there are 16 significant findings. [\(Exhibit 8\)](#)

- 13:01:40 Rep. Hayman asked Mr. Cashell about NWE's ability to buy transmission line capability.
- 13:02:58 Mr. Cashell continued his PowerPoint presentation on NWE's transmission system.
- 13:35:17 Mr. Reller provided information on the retirement of coal. [\(Exhibit 9\)](#)

Public comment:

- 13:35:49 Jeff Fox, Montana policy manager, Renewable Northwest
- 13:38:40 Doug Hardy, Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association

The ETIC also received written public comment. [\(Exhibit 10\)](#)

Questions from the committee:

- 13:39:02 Sen. Regier asked Mr. Reller about the generation capacity at Hungry Horse Dam.
- 13:39:22 Sen. Regier asked Mr. Reller for an update on the Columbia River Treaty.
- 13:40:05 Rep. Hayman asked Mr. Reller about BPA's financial situation.
- 13:43:23 Rep. Hayman asked Mr. Cashell about NWE's request for an increase in transmission line fees.
- 13:46:54 Rep. Hayman asked Mr. Cashell about the impact that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) rate case will have on the average homeowner.
- 13:47:38 Rep. Hayman asked Mr. Cashell if Talon Energy will see a \$5 million per year rate increase if the FERC rate case is approved.
- 13:48:27 Rep. Hayman asked Mr. Cashell about NWE's plans for an addition to the transmission line system.
- 13:50:26 Sen. McNally asked Mr. Reller about energy storage.
- 13:54:23 Sen. McNally asked Mr. Cashell about micro grids.
- 13:56:10 Rep. Pope asked Mr. Cashell about resource adequacy concerns and the amount of time needed to build natural gas capacity.
- 14:03:12 Rep. Pope asked Mr. Cashell about the ability to have enough fuel for the state.
- 14:08:06 Rep. Pope asked Mr. Cashell about how the price of natural gas capacity goes into the cost of power.
- 14:09:40 Rep. Zolnikov asked Mr. Cashell about the demand on the system, from Talon's large industrial customers, when Colstrip Units 1 and 2 are closed.
- 14:11:30 Rep. Zolnikov asked Mr. Cashell about the 13-year cost recovery period for transmission lines.
- 14:14:53 Rep. Zolnikov asked Mr. Cashell about upgrades and the possibility to increase transmission capabilities to import and export more power.
- 14:15:29 Sen. Ellis asked Mr. Cashell for an update on Colstrip's role in the future.
- 14:17:03 Rep. Pope asked Mr. Cashell how imports impact the ability to export.
- 14:18:38 Rep. Skees asked Mr. Reller about the transmission grid and if there are any infrastructure plans, on the federal level, to get Montana access to eastern markets.

PSC UPDATE

- 14:20:13 Brad Johnson, chairman, Public Service Commission (PSC), provided an update on the PSC activities.
- 14:20:45 Mr. Johnson provided information on the Integrated Resource Plans (IRP) submitted by Montana-Dakota Utilities (MDU) and NWE.
- 14:23:50 Mr. Johnson discussed the electricity rate case with NWE.
- 14:25:33 Mr. Johnson asked Zack Rogala, staff attorney, PSC, to provide an update on the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act (PURPA) dockets and Qualifying Facilities (QF) litigation dockets.
- 14:26:11 Mr. Rogala discussed PURPA matters related to NWE's supply resource deficits.
- 14:27:53 Mr. Rogala discussed PURPA related litigation.
- 14:28:52 Mr. Johnson provided information on SB 244 (2019).
- 14:30:14 Mr. Johnson discussed HB 467 (2019).
- 14:31:03 Mr. Johnson discussed HB 597 (2019).
- 14:32:08 Mr. Johnson discussed certification of eligible telecommunication carriers in order for them to receive funds under the Connect America Fund program.

Public comment: None

Questions from the committee:

- 14:33:12 Rep. Hayman asked Mr. Johnson to provide a copy of the rules for HB 467 once they are available.
- 14:34:07 Rep. Hayman asked Mr. Johnson about making a decision on net metering.
- 14:35:31 Rep. Pope asked Mr. Johnson about the PSC process to respond to opportunity asset requests from a utility.
- 14:40:58 Rep. Pope requested that the committee receive updates on HB 461 (2019) requesting the PSC to look into rates for charging stations for electric vehicles.
- 14:41:20 Sen. McNally asked Mr. Johnson about the PSC's analysis of the bills regarding its oversight that were brought during the last legislative session.
- 14:45:05 Sen. McNally asked Mr. Johnson about the evaluation and analysis of IRPs.
- 14:49:38 Sen. Richmond commented on SB 278 (2019) and SB 331 (2019).
- 14:50:26 Sen. Richmond asked Mr. Johnson about setting rates for wind plus storage and solar plus storage.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COUNCIL UPDATE

- 14:53:25 Joe Kolman, director, Legislative Environmental Policy Office, LSD, provided information on the Environmental Quality Council (EQC) and discussed the agenda for its meeting in Libby this week.

INTRODUCTION TO HB 715 MONTANA'S CHANGING ECONOMY

- 14:58:51 Quinn Holzer, Legislative Fiscal Division (LFD), introduced Marci Lewandowski and Rob Miller, fiscal analysts, LFD.
- 14:59:27 Mr. Holzer provided information on HB 715 (2019). ([Exhibit 11](#))
- 14:59:47 Rep. Skees left the meeting and Sen. Ellis assumed the duties of the Chair.
- 15:01:27 Mr. Holzer provided information on a 20-year history of state finances for all state agencies and specific information for the PSC. ([Exhibit 12](#))
- 15:06:03 Rep. Skees returned to the meeting and resumed the duties of the Chair.
- 15:06:07 Mr. Holzer discussed Phase 2 of HB 715.

15:07:03 Mr. Holzer discussed the quarterly financial reports for the DEQ and the PSC. [\(Exhibits 13\)](#)

Questions from the committee:

15:08:32 Sen. Ellis said the ETIC does not have oversight over DEQ. Rep Zolnikov said he would like to continue to receive the DEQ report for information only.

15:09:33 Rep. Skees asked Mr. Holzer to provide information about legislative week scheduled for the second week in January.

15:12:57 Rep. Skees said Mr. Graff is working on a schedule for the committee for legislative week. Rep. Skees reviewed the remaining agenda items on today's schedule.

15:14:09 Rep. Hayman asked about information she had requested from David Hoffman, NWE. Rep. Skees said Mr. Hoffman is unavailable and he asked that Rep. Hayman send him an email so he can send her the data.

MONTANA ENERGY LAW GUIDE

15:14:39 Mr. Graff said the committee needs to update the ETIC publication, *A Citizens Guide to Montana Energy Law*. [\(Exhibit 14\)](#)

15:17:06 Rep. Skees said committee members can forward their suggestions to Mr. Graff.

15:17:33 Mr. Graff said it will be an ongoing process and he will provide an update at every meeting.

Public comment: None

Questions from the committee:

15:18:23 Rep. Hayman asked Mr. Graff about updating the data tables in the guide.

15:19:18 Rep. Hayman asked Mr. Graff about adding information on electric vehicles. Mr. Graff said the publication is concerned with the law and administrative rules and that the ETIC publication, *Understanding Energy in Montana*, is a broad look at industry.

15:20:41 Sen. McNally said [Understanding Energy in Montana](#) is available online. Mr. Graff said he will send a link to the committee.

15:21:14 Rep. Skees asked staff to provide a hard copy to Rep. Hayman.

ADMINISTRATIVE RULE REVIEW

15:21:51 Jameson Walker, legal staff, LSD, provided a copy of a proposed amendment and repeal of rules from the PSC. [\(Exhibit 15\)](#)

15:22:45 Mr. Walker discussed the administrative rule report. [\(Exhibit 16\)](#)

15:24:26 Mr. Walker discussed the proposed rule from the PSC that allows the PSC to participate in certain data requests and discovery processes. Mr. Walker said he will prepare a summary of the rule and email it to the committee.

Questions from the committee:

15:26:19 Rep. Skees said he is against the rule and the authority it gives the PSC and said he recommends sending a letter to the PSC to delay the rule.

15:26:49 Mr. Walker said the committee can object to the rule and delay its adoption.

15:27:55 Sen. McNally said she agrees and recommends waiting to make a decision until the committee receives the summary from staff.

15:28:25 Rep. Skees commented on the rule and the power of discovery.
15:29:13 Rep. Zolnikov commented on the rule and the authority granted to the PSC.
15:30:52 Rep. Skees said he recommends having the PSC and the Montana Consumer Counsel (MCC) at the next ETIC meeting.
15:31:11 Mr. Walker said the statute contemplates that the committee will take it up at its next meeting and can invite the agency and all interested parties to comment on the rule.
15:31:31 Sen. Regier asked if anyone from the PSC is in the audience to give insight into the rule.
15:31:51 Robyn Arnold, policy analyst, PSC, said she did not know the specific details of the rule, but would try and answer some of the committee's questions.
15:32:14 Sen. Regier asked Ms. Arnold about the reason for the rule.
15:33:20 Rep. Skees asked Ms. Arnold about the PSC's current legal right to ask questions.
15:34:23 Rep. Pope asked Mr. Walker about the reason for the rule.
15:36:18 Sen. McNally commented on the expertise at the PSC versus the MCC.
15:37:06 Rep. Zolnikov commented on creating a firewall group of individuals within the PSC, who are advocates for the consumer, to be an intervener.
15:38:25 Sen. Richmond commented on the discovery process at the Board of Oil and Gas and said he agreed on the need to delay the rule.
15:40:53 Mr. Walker commented on the process to object to the rule.
15:41:51 Rep. Hayman said she would like more information and recommends inviting the PSC and all interested parties to the next meeting.
15:42:20 Rep. Skees said he recommends writing a letter to the PSC and delaying the rule.

Motion

15:43:51 Sen. Richmond moved to send a letter to the PSC objecting to the proposed rule and that the ETIC will address the objections at its next committee meeting.
[\(Exhibit 17\)](#)

Discussion on the Motion

15:44:05 Mr. Walker

Vote

15:44:24 The motion carried unanimously by voice vote of those present and voting.

Public comment:

15:45:41 Ms. Arnold said there is a roundtable discussion scheduled for November 5 to discuss implementation of SB 244 (2019).
15:46:18 Rep. Zolnikov asked Ms. Arnold about SB 244.
15:47:25 Rep. Hayman asked Ms. Arnold about the date for the roundtable discussion.
15:47:45 Sen. Richmond asked Ms. Arnold if SB 244 addresses discovery. Rep. Skees said it does not.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION STUDY

Introduction/ Commission Structures Overview

15:48:42 Mr. Graff provided an introduction and discussed the report the committee received that provides an overview of the PSC and details the utility commission structures of several surrounding states. **(Exhibit 18)**

Public comment: None

Questions from the committee:

15:56:49 Rep. Hayman asked Mr. Graff about the comparisons between states for staffing and FTE.

15:58:21 Sen. Ellis asked Mr. Graff about looking at population per district.

16:00:11 Sen. Regier asked Mr. Graff about the comparison between states and if the commissions all oversee utilities, water districts, and monopolies.

16:01:17 Rep. Skees commented on the study and looking at the available data on population per district.

16:02:13 Sen. McNally asked Mr. Graff about the process for appointing commissioners.

16:06:30 Sen. McNally said she would like more information about the process from states that have citizen legislatures.

16:06:49 Rep. Zolnikov commented on the study and finding out how to make the commission work better and getting the utilities perspective.

16:07:56 Rep. Skees agreed and said he recommends engaging the MCC to find out its role and creating a 50,000 foot view white paper.

16:11:12 Rep. Zolnikov said he recommends asking the PSC about staffing issues.

16:12:15 Mr. Graff asked about the information the committee wants from the panel discussion at the next meeting.

16:14:10 Rep. Skees opened discussion on next steps for the study.

16:14:20 Sen. McNally said she recommends hearing from third parties, like developers, that would like to be heard before the PSC.

16:15:20 Rep. Zolnikov agreed and recommended hearing from utilities, developers, and previous commissioners.

16:15:43 Rep. Hayman said she recommends addressing attendance issues and asking commissioners how effective they are if they do not attend the meetings.

16:16:27 Rep. Skees agreed.

16:16:45 Rep. Pope commented on some of the issues and said it is important to provide staff with a framework for the study.

16:18:54 Rep. Zolnikov said he recommends keeping the study an open conversation with the PSC on what help they need rather than a critique.

16:19:37 Rep. Skees agreed.

16:19:56 Sen. McNally said she recommends including commissioners.

ADOPTION OF WORK PLAN OPTIONS

16:20:26 Rep. Skees asked Mr. Graff to provide a brief overview for the work plan and the committee discussion from the last meeting.

16:20:43 Mr. Graff discussed the decision matrix. **(Exhibit 19)**

16:22:00 Rep. Skees left the meeting and Sen. Ellis took over the duties of the Chair.

16:22:18 Sen. Ellis opened discussion on the work plan. ([Exhibit 20](#))

Motion

16:22:25 Sen. Regier moved to adopt the work plan as presented.

Discussion on the Motion

16:22:46 Rep. Pope

Rep. Skees returned to the meeting.

16:23:22 Rep. Zolnikov

Rep. Skees resumed the duties of the chair.

16:24:21 Rep. Skees

16:24:46 Rep. Regier

16:25:29 Rep. Zolnikov

16:25:44 Mr. Graff

16:26:59 Rep. Pope discussed the scope of an electric vehicle study.

Substitute Motion

16:30:24 Rep. Zolnikov made a substitute motion to put .35 FTE on the HJ 12 study and .05 FTE on a study of electric vehicles.

Discussion on the Substitute Motion

16:30:47 Rep. Skees

16:30:57 Sen. Richmond

16:31:59 Sen. McNally

16:33:00 Sen. Regier

16:33:16 Rep. Pope

16:34:44 Mr. Graff

16:35:20 Sen. Ellis

16:36:06 Rep. Skees

16:36:55 Mr. Graff

16:37:32 Rep. Skees

16:37:47 Mr. Graff

16:37:57 Rep. Skees

16:38:30 Sen. Richmond

16:38:45 Rep. Skees

Vote

16:38:52 The substitute motion carried unanimously by voice vote of those present and voting.

OTHER BUSINESS/INSTRUCTIONS TO STAFF

Review of January Meeting Items

16:39:02 Mr. Graff asked about next steps for the transmission study.
16:40:35 Sen. Richmond
16:41:50 Mr. Graff
16:43:45 Sen. McNally
16:45:18 Rep. Zolnikov
16:47:05 Rep. Skees
16:47:12 Rep. Pope
16:47:49 Mr. Graff
16:49:28 Sen. McNally
16:49:36 Rep. Skees
16:49:46 Mr. Graff provided a review of next steps for the PSC study for the January meeting.
16:50:39 Rep. Skees agreed.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON MATTERS WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF THE ETIC

None

OTHER BUSINESS/INSTRUCTIONS TO STAFF

Review of Committee Budget

16:51:17 Mr. Graff provided information on the committee budget and asked about potential travel for field trips.
16:51:45 Rep. Skees said he recommends touring a dam near Helena, in the spring, and asked about other ideas from the committee.
16:52:12 Sen. Richmond said he recommends taking a tour of the balancing facility in Butte.
16:52:25 Rep. Skees agreed and asked Mr. Graff to get more information.
16:52:31 Mr. Graff
16:52:57 Rep. Tschida
16:53:26 Rep. Skees
16:53:31 Mr. Graff
16:54:09 Rep. Skees
16:54:24 Sen. McNally
16:55:00 Rep. Pope said he recommends looking at the areas east of Billings and the changes happening to those communities and the new technology developments.
16:55:59 Mr. Graff
16:56:37 Rep. Skees asked Mr. Graff if a decision to finalize travel can be made at the January meeting. Mr. Graff agreed and asked which meeting the committee wanted to schedule for its travel. Rep. Skees said it will be in May.
16:57:04 Rep. Skees commented on the time he allowed for discussion at today's meeting and said he will follow the committee's lead at future meetings.
16:58:48 Rep. Zolnikov said he appreciated the discussions today.
16:59:09 Rep. Pope agreed.
16:59:18 Rep. Skees said he always welcomes comments from the committee.

ADJOURN

16:59:31 Rep. Skees adjourned the meeting at 4:59 p.m.

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