CITY OF CONCORD

New Hampshire's Main Street™

41 Green Street, Concord NH 03301

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CONCORD ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CEEAC)

MEETING MINUTES

March 25, 2026 @ 6:00PM

CITY HALL 2ND FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM

41 Green Street - Concord, NH 03301

Attendees:

Committee Members: Chair Rob Werner, Councilor Mark Davie, Chuck Willing, Miriah King, Elise Foerster, Thomas Kolling, Allen Desbiens

Student Representative Elliot Clendenning, Ben Poole

Absent Members: Councilor Michele Horne, Nick Babladelis, Jeffrey Evans, Gerald Eaton, Mark Fagan

Staff Present: Beth Fenstermacher, PLA, LEED AP, Director of Special Projects & Strategic Initiatives

The meeting was called to order by Chair Werner at 6:00 pm. The committee members made introductions, and Mr. Poole introduced himself as a student at Concord High School with an interest in serving as a student representative on the Committee.

1. **Adoption of Minutes**
   A motion was made by Mr. Willing and duly seconded by Mr. Desbiens to adopt the minutes of February 25, 2026, as written. The motion to adopt passed unanimously by voice vote.

2. **Municipal Project Updates**

   West Portsmouth Street Solar Project (Lodestar)
   Chair Werner reported that he visited the site, and the construction is progressing with racks and panels in various stages of install.

   Solar Project at Landfill (Kearsarge Solar)
   Chair Werner reported that he drove by the site, which is very visible from the road and transfer station, and the construction is similarly progressing with racks and panels in various stages of install.

   Other Solar Projects
   Chair Werner reported that Revision Solar has been awarded the contract to install solar at the new Christ the King Food Pantry, which will be the first solar installation in the diocese. He reported that the solar will produce 75% of the energy needs for the facility.

   Mr. Kolling reported that solar is also being installed on the Concordia Lutheran Church, which includes 92 panels on the roof.

3. **C-PACER Update**
   Chair Werner reported that he recently spoke with James Key Wallace from NHBFA regarding the City's review of the Commercial Project Assigned Clean Energy and Resiliency (CPACER) program, and reported that Mr. Key Wallace is confident any questions from the City staff will be answered at an upcoming meeting. Ms. Fenstermacher reported that staff will report back to the Fiscal Policy Advisory Committee (FPAC) following the meeting with the NHBFA at

their April 20th meeting, and it will go back to the full City Council from there. Chair Werner reported that three other communities have adopted the C-PACER program: Bristol, Rye, and Lebanon.

4. COMMUNITY POWER

Mr. Willing distributed and reviewed a Community Power report to the CEEAC dated March 25, 2026. This report is attached. He reported that Bow and Hudson are in the process of leaving, it will be many months before that is finalized due to power purchase agreements. He reported that last year ISO-NE introduced a new market mechanism (DASI) to improve system reliability. DASI has turned out to be much more expensive than ISO-NE projected, imposing unanticipated costs on all retail electricity suppliers in New England including CPCNH. He believes that CPCNH is now past the tough period of high rates, and that should be able to end the rate period in a better financial position. CPCNH now needs to make a decision on how aggressively that want to fund the reserves in future rate periods. Mr. Willing also reported that the refresh is happening to capture additional accounts. Ms. Fenstermacher reported that she has not heard any feedback from the community on the refresh notices.

Discussion ensued about how utilities can schedule out cost recovery to maintain lower rates. Mr. Desbien expressed concern about how much Concord Community Power customers are paying over the Unitil rate, and if this trend continues into future months he will forcing the conversation about the reconsidering Concord's involvement in CPCNH. He thinks this Committee should urge Council to reconsider as there is a fiduciary responsibility. Mr. Willing stated that he expects more parity with the rates in the next period. Ms. Foerster stated the reasons to support CPCNH go beyond costs, including advocacy, expansion of renewable energy in NH, and customer choice.

5. RESILIENT BUILDINGS GROUP ENERGY EFFICIENCY COLLABORATION

Chair Werner reported that a meeting with Resilient Buildings Group (RBG) and representatives from Unitil and Liberty Utilities was held on March 10th, and that the utilities are motivated and funds are available. Chair Werner has the lawn signs and large banner from the previous Weatherize campaign. The banner will need to be reviewed by the utilities and NHSaves for approval since some logos may have changed. Ms. Foerster reported that the meeting was productive and there is a path forward with utilizing RBG moving forward. She has had great experience with RBG in projects on the sea coast, and most recently was involved in an event where RBG was very helpful with coordinate with and they helped residents understand the entire process. Mr. Kolling stated that he too felt that working with RBG was the way to go. Next steps: Chair Werner will send photos of the banner to the group for review and approval; a report will go to City Council in May notifying Council of the launch; another meeting of the subcommittee with RBC will be scheduled.

6. POLICY AND PROJECT UPDATES

a) ICLEI-USA Update

Chair Werner reported that the City was invited by ICLEI to apply to be part of the Race to Resilience Culture (RTRC) Academy; however, due to capacity issues, he will notify ICLEI that the City will not apply this year.

b) UNH Sustainability Fellow Institute Update

Ms. Fenstermacher reported that Danielle Melius has accepted the fellowship position with the City, and will start the last week in May. Ms. Fenstermacher will be working on the workplan, due in mid-April.

7. New Business/Announcements

Ms. Foerster provided a list of upcoming events that may be of interest to the committee:

a. 3/26: League of Conservation Voters Maple Event (Chair Werner provided additional information)
b. April 2nd: BIA NH Energy Symposium at the Grappone Conference Center at 8 am
c. May 4-8th: Clean Energy NH Energy Week
d. May 7th: New England Women in Energy and the Environment (NEWIEE) Gala

Mr. Willing reported that the CPCNH Annual Meeting is scheduled for April 30th at the Grappone Conference Center. He will forward the registration link, it is free to attend.

8. Other Business

None.

9. **Next meeting:**
   Chair Werner and several other members reported they will not be able to attend the next meeting, scheduled for April 22, 2026. Ms. Fenstermacher suggested an Earth Day clean-up event in lieu of the meeting, she will send a follow up email in April to confirm details.

10. **Adjourn:**
    A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Kolling and duly seconded by Ms. Foerster. The motion passed by unanimously voice vote.

Meeting adjourned at 7:13 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Beth Fenstermacher, Director of Special Projects & Strategic Initiatives

Community Power Report to CEEAC (March 25, 2026)

First of all, this month CPCNH hired its Acting General Manager Henry Herndon as its permanent Executive Director. CPCNH expects to hire a Director of Power Resources and a Director of Finance in the near future.

Again, here are the utility and CPCNH electricity supply rates for the Spring 2026 (2/1/26-7/31/26) rate period:

	Utility Rates (cents/kwh)	CPCNH Rates (cents/kwh)
Eversource territory	11.303	14.663
Unitil territory	12.060	14.942
Liberty territory	13.735	14.637
NHEC territory	11.117	14.504

CPCNH and the utilities will have new rates effective 8/1/26. Those rates will be approved and announced in late June 2026.

When community power customers in Unitil territory seek to switch to Unitil energy supply, Unitil's practice is to move them into Unitil's monthly variable rates for the remainder of the rate period, then onto Unitil's 6-month rates starting in the following rate period. The Unitil monthly variable rates for the rest of this rate period are as follows –

April 2026	9.665 cents/kwh
May 2026	9.323 cents/kwh
June 2026	10.194 cents/kwh
July 2026	12.442 cents/kwh

If a community power customer wants to switch to Unitil, now is a good time to do it because the next couple of monthly rates are the cheapest. Monthly variable rates are highest in the winter and summer months and lowest in the shoulder months because monthly variable rates track closely with wholesale power rates. Community power customers in Eversource would move to Eversource's 6-month rate, listed above.

This month, CPCNH is in the process of doing customer refreshes, planned since last year. Customers that have new utility accounts since the launch of Concord Community Power are receiving letters stating that they will be moved into Concord Community Power unless they opt out. The letter will give them instructions on how to opt out or opt up from Granite Basic to other products with more renewable content. By contrast to the preexisting Concord Community Power customers who opt out (discussed above), new customers who opt out in response to this letter will remain on Unitil's 6-month rate, where they had been already. No one who previously opted out will receive a letter or be moved into Concord Community Power unless they affirmatively choose to opt in.

CPCNH expects to start seeing the effects of its new higher rates in the form of increased revenue starting next month (rates took effect during the month of February and customers were first billed on those rates in March). The rates should put CPCNH in a much stronger financial position at the end of this rate period.

A couple of years ago, the PUC caused utilities to change the way they purchase power, moving from purchasing 100% of their energy supply in advance via all-requirements contracts to purchasing no more than 50% of their energy supply in advance under all-requirements contracts and purchasing the rest of their supply on the spot market. This reduces the premium that utilities pay but increases their price risk. When CPCNH began operating, it took more price risk than the utilities but now the utilities take more price risk. The utilities include their future wholesale power purchases (half their purchases) in their current rates by calculating a "proxy price" using a PUC-ordered approach ordered that is based largely on historical price averages. This backward-facing "proxy price" mechanism has most likely caused utilities to under-collect their costs. We can anticipate that the utilities will seek to recover those under-collections in their future rates starting as soon as next rate period. Also, the most recent PUC rate orders required the utilities to change their backward-facing approach to a more forward-facing approach as soon as next rate period, and to recover any reconciliations within 6 months. More details about these changes are discussed in the attached CPCNH Energy Market Update.

Another factor that will affect energy supply rates is ISO New England's Day Ahead Ancillary Services Initiative (DASI). DASI cost retail electricity suppliers a considerable amount of money over the past year, especially in January 2026. More details on DASI are set forth in the CPCNH Energy Market Update.

A settlement agreement between Unitil and other parties in PUC Docket No. 25-025 contains terms that should help lay the groundwork for time of use and other innovative rates, recognition of and perhaps eventual compensation for load settlement and introduction of solar + storage projects, among other things. A hearing on the settlement agreement was held at the PUC yesterday. The settlement is discussed in more detail in the CPCNH Energy Market Update.

CPCNH will hold its Annual Membership Meeting and Board of Directors Meeting on Thursday, April 30 (registration opens at 8:30, membership meeting starts at 9 am, lunch and a presentation at 12:15, board meeting at 1:15) at the Grappone Conference Center in Concord. The meeting is open to the public so all are welcome to attend (register in advance on-line to facilitate seating and lunch – I can send a link to anyone interested in attending).

24 hours ago · 4 min read

Market Update & Resources: Spring 2026

Updated: 5 hours ago

No ratings yet

Updated: 3/24/26

Energy markets are dynamic. This update covers some recent changes including ISO New England's new Day-Ahead Ancillary Services Initiative, the status of New Hampshire's competitive energy landscape, and other recent developments. **Use Print Post (3 dots in top right corner) to print entire post.**

Day-Ahead Ancillary Services Initiative (DASI)

What is DASI?

The **Day-Ahead Ancillary Services Initiative** (DASI) is a new ISO New England ancillary market that launched in March 2025. DASI allows the grid operator to secure reliability services one day in advance instead of only reacting in real time with the intent of improving reliability and resilience.

Is DASI driving up electricity costs in New England?

During its first 11 months, **DASI added about $921 million in cost to New England's electricity**, representing roughly 9% of total wholesale energy and ancillary service costs, equivalent to about $8.58/MWh of load served. This is significantly higher than ISO New England's original estimate of roughly $140 million.

Who does DASI affect?

DASI affects all suppliers and ultimately all customers in the New England market.

In March, Governor Kelly Ayotte called on ISO New England to address this significant cost overrun (see WMUR coverage). **Suppliers, Community Power providers, and utilities across the region have been reacting and notifying customers of associated rate increases** (see here and here).

NH Competitive Supply Landscape

How has utility default supply changed in recent years?

Starting in 2024, regulators directed utilities (Eversource, Liberty, Unitil) to transition to buying increasing amounts of energy directly from the ISO New England spot market as opposed to the traditional practice of securing fixed-price contracts.

What are utility "proxy rates" for energy supply?

Utilities now set "proxy rates" for energy supply by estimating what the spot market will cost over the coming rate period. **Spot market purchasing can create volatility and potential financial losses when rates underestimate costs. Conversely, when market prices are lower than projected, spot market procurements can yield savings.** This highlights that the risks and benefits of this approach can cut both ways, though the potential for price spikes and under-recovery often presents greater exposure.

If losses are excluded from default service supply rates, deferred to the future, or moved into distribution charges paid by all customers, the utility default service supply rate may not fully reflect the true cost of service and can distort competitive comparisons in the market.

Do utility proxy rates reflect the full cost of energy supply?

The PUC prescribed the methodology that utilities are to use to set "proxy rates." Representatives of utilities in NH have acknowledged in proceedings before the PUC that the method for setting proxy rates is more likely than not to underprice actual market costs. For example, see transcript of Unitil 12/10/25 hearing at page 28.

In March 2026, Liberty Utilities proposed a rate increase for May through July 2026 to achieve more complete recovery of $4.15 million in under-recoveries through July 2025 that the PUC approved for recovery last June. This was only half of a total of $8.3 million under-recovery of default service costs through July 2025 – much of which is attributable to the proxy price being lower than the actual market costs for that period.

The extent of Eversource, Unitil, and Liberty under- or over-collections from the current period (August 2025-July 2026) will not be known until the rate filings for the August – January period, expected no later than June. These filings will include a full year of 50% market exposure for the small customers during a period of record high winter costs.

How are policy makers responding to the proxy rate question?

HB 1733 would re-enforce the existing requirements in New Hampshire law that utility default service be "designed to minimize customer risk, not unduly harm the development of competitive markets, and mitigate against price volatility without creating new deferred costs" (RSA 374-F:3 V(e)). It does this by establishing clearer guardrails around how electric utilities procure default service and how any under- or over-collections are recovered (i.e., when rates do not reflect the cost of supply).

The legislation would ensure that costs associated with utility default service are borne only by the customers receiving that service. The bill also requires utilities to return to use of fixed-price contracts and cease spot market purchases for residential and small commercial customers. **HB1733 passed the NH House with a unanimous ought-to-pass recommendation from the Science, Technology, and Energy Committee and is under consideration by the Senate as of late March.**

Purchase of Receivables

What is Purchase of Receivables (POR)?

Under Purchase of Receivables (POR), utilities buy the supply portion of customer bills from third-party energy suppliers, including CPCNH, at a small discount to account for bad debt or customer non-payment. Utilities file a discount rate with regulators; a percentage of total receivables estimated to be uncollectible along with amortization of costs to implement POR and assume the responsibility for trying to collect customer non-payments.

How is POR changing and why does it matter?

Utilities are proposing significant reductions to their discount rates for POR in 2026, driven by lower bad debt, reduced capital costs, and reconciliation since POR began in 2025. These downward adjustments will provide marginal rate relief for customers with third-party suppliers, including with CPCNH.

- Eversource proposed reducing the POR discount rate from 1.285% to 0.399% (residential) and from 0.370% to 0.274% (non-residential);
- Unitil (UES) proposed reducing the POR discount rate from 1.63% to 1.01% (residential) and from 0.43% to 0.22% (general); and
- Liberty proposed reducing the POR discount rate from 1.439% to 0.000% due to over-collection as initial implementation costs and bad debt proved to be less than previously estimated.

Unitil Progress on Data, Rates, and Distributed Energy

Unitil is proposing improvements to its data access, billing capabilities, and load settlement systems that would enable suppliers like CPCNH to:

- Serve more net metering customers
- Offer time-of-use and other innovative rates
- Support solar + storage and other demand flexibility programs
- Better align customer programs with real-time market costs

Implementation of these commitments remains subject to approval by the PUC in the Unitil electric distribution rate case (DE 25-025). Click here for more information.