Board Action
Amending Utility Strategic Roundtable Operating Rules

May 23, 2012

Summary

Amend utility strategic roundtable operating guidelines to reflect lessons learned from two-year trial period.

Background

- In 2009, after extensive conversations with the utilities and other interested parties, the board adopted operating principles for a "utility strategic roundtable" for a two-year trial.
- In 2010, roundtables were convened in February and April, and the utilities led a discussion at the board's June 2010 retreat on industry drivers that could significantly influence utility and Energy Trust collaborations. In 2011, roundtables were convened in February, August and October to discuss the effects of changes in Oregon's energy tax credits.
- During late 2011, a subset of the board policy committee discussed with the utilities and interested parties whether to continue the roundtable and if so, whether there should be changes in it.
- In general terms, the parties have found the roundtables helpful, and in some cases very helpful.

Discussion

- Conversations with the parties raised several issues, which the board policy committee have discussed with staff:
    - *Permanent or extend for another two years?* The committee recommends revising the operating rules to remove the sunset date and replace it with policy committee review every three years, as with other policies.
    - *Stick to core issues; consider exploring broader policy issues.* The committee would retain the current focus on "strategic and longer-term ideas, opportunities and concerns, with the goal to ensure the entities are working well together to pursue energy efficiency and renewable energy in the most effective and coordinated way possible." It would also allow a party to propose other strategic energy issues, which could be added to the agenda if parties do not object.
    - *Clarify agenda items so we know what we are trying to accomplish*. The committee recommends revising the operating rules to provide "Any party may nominate an agenda item, together with a clear statement of the purpose of the proposed item."

- Several other issues were raised in the parties' discussion, which the committee has not addressed but believes can be left open for discussion:
    - Have utilities host meetings; rotate locations; utility 101 presentations.
    - Consider co-chair option.
    - Change scheduling so meetings follow rather than precede board meetings, allow social time.
    - Use a less formal structure, table arrangement, setting.

RESOLUTION 631

AMENDING STRATEGIC UTILITY ROUNDTABLE OPERATING RULES

WHEREAS:

1. **In 2009, after extensive conversations with the utilities and other interested parties, the board adopted operating principles for a "strategic utility roundtable" for a two-year trial.**
2. **A number of roundtables were held in 2010 and 2011.**
3. **In late 2011, members of the board policy committee discussed with the utilities and interested parties whether to continue the roundtables and if so, whether there should be changes in it.**
4. **In general terms, the parties have found the roundtables helpful, and in some cases very helpful.**
5. **The board agrees, and hereby extends the operating rules for the roundtable, to focus on strategic energy issues proposed by the parties.**

It is therefore RESOLVED:

1. **The Energy Trust board operating rules for the strategic utility roundtable are amended as shown in the attachment.**

Moved by: Seconded by:

Vote: In favor: Abstained:

Opposed: [list name(s) and, if requested, reason for "no" vote]

ATTACHMENT: UTILITY STRATEGIC ROUNDTABLE OPERATING PRINCIPLES

The Utility Strategic Roundtable is designed to facilitate the utilities' expressed interest in communicating with the Energy Trust Board on a strategic level.

1. The Utility Strategic Roundtable is composed of the Energy Trust Board and Executive Director, and representatives of the electric and gas utilities served by the Energy Trust: Cascade Natural Gas, NW Natural, PacifiCorp and PGE. Members of the public and other stakeholders, including representatives of customer groups, the environment, workers, and efficiency and renewable energy trade groups, have been invited to attend and participate in the discussions.

2. The Roundtable meets at the request of any participant, and at least annually. If possible, meetings should be timed with regular Energy Trust Board meetings so all Board members can attend.

3. Roundtable participants are encouraged to appoint decision-level representatives to the roundtable, ensure that the appointed person attend all meetings, and try not to vary representation from meeting to meeting.

Roundtable agendas are determined by the Energy Trust Board President in consultation with the full Board, the utilities and interested parties. Any party may nominate an agenda item, together with a clear statement of the purpose of the proposed item. Agendas should allow the utilities to engage in a dialogue on matters of interest to them, and may include suitable agenda items suggested by others. In general, agendas should focus on strategic and longer-term ideas, opportunities and concerns, with the goal to ensure the entities are working well together to pursue energy efficiency and renewable energy in the most effective and coordinated way possible. A party may suggest other strategic energy issues, which may be added to the agenda if parties do not object.

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4. Each agenda item will have a sponsoring entity, which will be responsible for providing background material on the issue at least 10 days before the roundtable meeting.

5. All meetings will be open except for any portions of meetings that the Energy Trust President determines would involve trade secrets, proprietary or other confidential commercial or financial information. Energy Trust will provide public notice of meetings.

6. Roundtables will discuss issues and may make recommendations to the Energy Trust board or others. No votes will be taken. Roundtables are not authorized to take action on behalf of the Energy Trust board.

7. Minutes will be kept and a roster of potential action items would be brought back for full Energy Trust Board discussion and staff consideration before commitments are made.

8. The Energy Trust policy committee will review these operating rules at least every three years to determine if the roundtable continues to be an effective way to promote strategic communications.

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