



www.community-renewables.org

Executive Director Report

Mike McArthur

January 20, 2022

OPUC Commissioner Mark Thompson - The OPUC Commissioners have reached out to CREA for individual conversations (apparently this has been done in the past). We are honored that CREA was one of the organizations that was chosen for these meetings. The appointment scheduled for Mark Thompson and me coincided with our rescheduled CREA Executive Board meeting. So I asked if he would like to meet with our board. He conveyed that he would like to have a conversation with our county commissioners (and city councilman), the electeds in other words. I think it is very important for to CREA to establish the fact that we are a public entity and our board (5 of 7) are elected officials who in turn can speak for their respective constituencies. Our developer members are a very important element of what makes CREA unique as an organization and they bring a variety of expertise to the organization but it is the judgement of our elected public representatives that directs CREA. So this conversation with Commissioner Thompson will be with those officials. I hope that each you will introduce yourself, give some background (time in office, previous work etc.) and then talk about what is going on in your jurisdiction with regards to energy and specifically renewables. We can't really talk about specific dockets that are currently before the commission but we can discuss CREAs larger policy goals and objectives and why we are engaged with the OPUC, legislature, FERC etc. Mark Thompson was appointed to the Oregon Public Utility Commission by Governor Kate Brown in November 2019 to a four-year term.

Prior to his appointment, Commissioner Thompson was a partner at a small law firm that specializes in energy and administrative law, where he provided counsel and representation to energy project developers, utilities, energy consumers and other businesses involved in energy. Commissioner Thompson also previously worked as the Senior Director of Rates and Regulatory Affairs at NW Natural Gas Company, and prior to that, was Staff Counsel for the Public Power Council, where he represented northwest consumer-owned utilities before the Bonneville Power Administration and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

Commissioner Thompson serves on the Oregon Broadband Advisory Council and the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners Committee on Natural Gas.

He holds a Juris Doctorate degree from Lewis and Clark Law School, and a Bachelor of Science degree in Conservation Biology from Brigham Young University.

OPUC: Our Vision

Our vision is to improve the lives of Oregonians through effective utility regulation and leadership in the utility sector. We serve Oregon by:

- holding utilities to high standards of performance and value
- guiding a transformation in utility services consistent with Oregon's social, environmental, and economic goals, and
- adapting regulatory processes to improve inclusion, learning, collaboration, and problem-solving

Our success depends on recruiting and retaining talented and engaged employees to provide independent analysis in support of agency decision-making. We strive to offer meaningful work, mentoring and training, and a positive workplace culture.

Our Values

Accountability: Our responsibility to serve utility customers drives us to be diligent in our work, and efficient and effective in managing financial and human resources.

Integrity: As individuals, we are honest, trustworthy, and respectful. As an organization, we use open, fair processes and independent analysis to reach informed and just decisions.

Inclusion: We strive to advance equitable access, engage diverse perspectives, promote collaboration, and recognize our impact on all communities.

Adaptability: We develop expertise and adapt our skills, our organization, and our regulatory processes and tools in order to meet rapid change in our regulated industries.

How the PUC Works for You

The rules governing PUC proceedings and the regulatory process are set forth in [Oregon Administrative Rules \(OAR\) Chapter 860](#), while the [PUC's Internal Operating Guidelines](#) inform the public of our decision-making process and describes the responsibilities of the PUC.

These rules and guidelines help the PUC to:

- Ensure the safety, reliability, and quality of essential utility services
- Scrutinize utility costs, risks and performance to ensure just and reasonable rates
- Manage customer and community choices to ensure value for all customers
- Encourage the community to be engaged and better informed on utility-related issues by participating in regular public meetings or submitting comments on topics of interest.

[<https://www.oregon.gov/puc/about-us/Pages/Commissioners.aspx>](https://www.oregon.gov/puc/about-us/Pages/Commissioners.aspx)

Consent Agenda - Minutes and financials available separately. Please approve. Our invoices are being sent out by MCEDD the same as last year with an updated cover letter. <CREA membership letter 2023.pdf>.

Cascade Renewable Transmission - At a meeting of CGBREEZ on January 9th, I learned that PowerBridge LLC, proponent of the Cascade Renewable Transmission project (which CREA has endorsed) [<https://www.cascaderenewable.com/>](https://www.cascaderenewable.com/) was applying for a federal infrastructure grant due in one week and was in need of a public partner for the project. So I contacted Chris Hocker and Susan Brown and volunteered CREA as that public partner. They had not realized that CREA was a public entity. So after consulting with Chair Perkins and MCEDD we moved ahead to add our names to the concept paper that was submitted to Department of Energy. If successful Cascade will receive a “Letter of Encouragement” to proceed with the formal application. This project increasingly looks like the best bet to expand transmission from east to west. We hope the CREA Board will continue to support our partnership with Cascade and PowerBridge.

[<https://powerbridge.us/our-projects/>](https://powerbridge.us/our-projects/)

Adam Schultz ODOE - Adam will present highlights from the Department of Energies Biennial Energy Report < <https://energyinfo.oregon.gov/ber>>. Adam has been the Electricity & Markets Policy Work Group Lead. He works on a variety of subjects, including energy resilience, resource adequacy and capacity planning, energy markets, and federal hydropower issues. He is the departments liaison for public power entities, including the states consumer-owned utilities, The BPA, and NW Power Council. He has worked on identifying the scale and pace at which clean energy deployments must occur for Oregon to achieve its clean energy and policy objectives.

“I’m writing to let you know that I’m moving on from the Oregon Department of Energy. I’ve accepted a job as Manager, Regional Coordination with the California ISO. In my new role, I hope to build on my experience and the relationships I’ve built over the last decade working in California and Oregon. We have a lot of work to do to help forge a mutually beneficial path forward on increased regionalization for the electric sector in the west. I’ll be working on Stacey Crowley’s team, for those of you who may know her.

And physically, I’m not going anywhere. Given the regional focus of my new role, I’ll remain based here in Portland. So I expect, and hope, that our paths will continue to cross. It’s been great getting to work with each of you over the last several years and I look forward to staying in touch. I’m including here my personal contact information:”

Adam Schultz

AdamCSchultz@gmail.com

(240) 818-2113

Obsidian Renewable Hydrogen Hub - David Brown will talk about what’s next after receiving the “Letter of Encouragement” from Federal DOE.

Oregon Energy Siting Policy Conversation - We continue to participate with this workgroup as chair of the sub-committee on Local Siting Process. We have some consensus about providing planning grants to counties to identify least conflict sites for renewable energy.

Energy Resilience Workgroup - This is the group convened by Rep. Marsh to consider measures that would improve the states energy resilience. I am chairing the sub-committee on Microgrids. A PGE representative stated they are developing some proposals in conjunction with their Clean Energy Plan due in March.

Legislative Report - Tess Milio and I have gone through all the bills relating to renewable energy and assigned positions and priorities. We don't have time to go into much depth at this meeting but hope to cover some high priority bills.

Next Meeting - Friday February 10, Virtual?

CREA is an ORS 190 intergovernmental association. Members include counties, irrigation districts, project developers, for-profit businesses and non-profit organizations. CREA supports business and economic opportunities through renewable energy development in a competitive environment. We support use of free enterprise principles to create economically and environmentally responsible electric generation within the State of Oregon.