**Meeting Summary**

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| **OEB Smart Grid Working Group** |

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| **Meeting Date:** | November 8, 2012 | **Time:** | 9:30 am – 4:45 pm |
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| **Location:** | 2300 Yonge Street, 25th Floor, ADR room | | |

**Board Staff:** Russ Houldin, Rachel Anderson

**Meeting Topic:** Development of smart grid guidance in light of the [Report of the Board – A Renewed Regulatory Framework for Electricity Distributors: A Performance Based Approach](http://www.ontarioenergyboard.ca/OEB/_Documents/Documents/Report_Renewed_Regulatory_Framework_RRFE_20121018.pdf)

The purpose of the first meeting of the reconvened Smart Grid Working Group (SGWG) was to discuss:

* smart grid guidance in light of the Board’s recent report on the Renewed Regulatory Framework for Electricity Distributors which made two key determinations in respect of smart grid issues;
* staff’s conceptual framework for regulatory documents in order to implement smart grid guidance;
* cyber-security and privacy issues; and
* facilitation of access to meter data.

***Smart Grid in light of RRFE Report of the Board***

**Key observations from the discussion:**

1. The RRFE Report of the Board in general, and the two specific smart grid determinations therein, generally well received by the group.
2. There is interest in the specifics around the demarcation of behind-the-meter services and what utilities’ responsibilities will be around facilitating access to meter data.

**Discussion notes:**

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| ***Utilities*** | * (*Why not seeing greater SG deployment?*) My take is that you are probably looking at a specific area, e.g., behind the meter technologies, which may not be progressing as rapidly as other technologies. Any other pillars of SG, EV, storage, distributed automation, analytics, seeing no obstacles so far. We have been progressing with initiatives. SG in terms of development (capital, O&MA deferral accounts) we are looking at piloting and demonstrating. We have several technologies that we have piloted successfully and have worked them back into capex program and they are now part of our operations. I actually see no obstacles at all to SG. Forever checking prudence and not repeating what has already been done, ensuring that things make sense from scalability and longer term. I see SG as active over the past year than it’s ever been. Our plan for next 5 years looks to continue this growth. * The activity that is taking place, not as smart and dumb but requisite. What is that requisite technology in terms of upgrade, given where industry is going. The requisite technology is going on in a rapid pace (e.g., analytics). 3 things that cause us to hesitate: there is no recognized way of calculating benefits, dependent on a case and it is an issue if it gets agreed or not agreed in filing. Case with Texas and California. 2nd issue, because of its foundational aspect, foundational aspects are invisible and still in the works. Rest of SG is only hitting those LDCs where policy is driving it, other LDCs are dormant. Other locations are very visible (China, India, Japan), because of the size. e.g., 4000 MW of wind every year. If you look forward to the next 10 years, the foundation we are building now will be a superstructure * Disaggregated benefits is another challenge. The fact that we say by doing this, he or she will benefit and they lie outside our jurisdiction. And then we get the question of how do we know that these other folks will benefit? * The price of the commodity is low here. There is a process. Business case prevents the growth of EV / SG etc. because the energy price is so low. * Initial thoughts were no surprises based on previous discussions. One of the challenges we are trying to sort out, whether it’s the Green Button approach or otherwise, do we set up an affiliate to compete behind the meter? Greatest areas of discussion from a strictly SG point of few. Looking at the other RRFE frameworks, this coordination – our concern is that there is overlap between 2 or more of the 4 groups and we weren’t really looking out for that. We have representation on the capital side but not the other 2 committees. Supplementary report should close any gaps. * If we can clarify what is going to happen how do we reconcile GEA with OEB guidance? Need a firm stance on what the going forward regulation is…that considers all these sources. Some gaps in EV and energy storage. Some constraints in terms of justifying the value and the cost of engaging in even a small demonstration. We need to align new guidelines with the old one. * We were excited / interested in seeing how the new rate applications process goes. We are getting more active in the rate application space, taking a proactive role * 2 aspects of the RRFE we are struggling with. BTM language is welcome, but we are having a hard time reconciling this with the fact that we are doing a lot behind the meter now. What happens to our existing programs that are BTM after 2014? Other aspect is that we expect SG development to be coordinated on a regional basis, how would this play out? * Not too many surprises, generally well received. Have already started some regional work. We all have our own SM networks but have joined with Waterloo Region to develop tower network to collect readings. Like having the meter as the demarcation point, but we need to create a standard way of allowing customers to connect with the BTM services. * Approach is BTM services is an economic development of the process. We recognize that the brand and the agency of trust is the LDC’s and the gas companies and others, and so we will be brought into it in some shape or form. We will not be in BTM, but we will be with it. Welcome regional planning. New technologies require coordination, specifically energy storage. For storage, there is a 10 MW available in the code, but we need clarification on how we can work towards a demonstration. The blurring of T&D will happen more. Where do we go with respect to a hard line between T&D as SG gets rolled out more. Anything on the DX will be the LDCs proxy-controlled by the IESO. Need some foundational case. We have the right to curtail if our limits are violated. We are not load balancing identities, but the IESO is. There was a market panel of the IESO that said that perhaps we will govern this generation that give us the proxy ability to control. This is incorporated into our SG planning. If this is going to be impacted by 2014 changes, someone needs to tell us to stop. Have the right to curtail only when it violates our wires limits, very blurry area. Anything that is a violation to foundational assets, we have the right to curtail. We cannot control for the function of maximization. We are not a load-balancing authority. LDCs should go to a load-balancing authority in the future. IESO did say they may want to revisit the rules. Could become that 50% of province could come through green energy connections. They are economically at 0, so they should be locationally dependent, not just on the marginal cost * Whether the Board actually looks at the technical detail or not is one aspect, regardless, the board should be cognizant that some SG technology is more expense, and so should not stop SG on basis of cost * Utility needs to develop a standard. A demonstration requires 2 years. Once it is a standard it can be embedded. Smart meter life cycle is 10-15 years, and now some of these smart meters are already getting obsolete. Most of the technologies we are trying to bring through demonstrations are going to be obsolete. Its complex…we either move or we don’t get anything done. * We treat SG as separate from our capital planning process. I think regional coordination is well addressed in the Board Report. Small utilities do not have a specific SG plan. Need to consider regional issues around large LDCs. Planning and strategy is a big issue * NIST is viewing to keep the 4 technology options open. Even if they do accept this, the market is still fragmented. There is an infrastructure that can or cannot take it, we need to consider this. This will be the weakest in the enable of BTM * Latest German standard is very prescriptive. If we do take this standard that has been taken 6 months ago. Who in Ontario would say thou shalt? We don’t have a body here that can do this. |
| ***Technology Vendors*** | * Agree with LDCs on foundational up to meter issues. Every utility in the room is doing a lot of work in pilots and demonstrations etc. Takes time. The OEB would not allow way faster growth in terms of recovering the rate. Behind the meter, there is still work going on. IESO now has all the metering data, but where is the business case, who is asking for the data? The data is going to come, but takes some time for the value. Have OPA with all the conservation efforts, driving pilots and conversation. Utilities may use data for other aspect that are not under the mandate of the OEB * Not a lot of big surprises, but very happy to see the lack of distinction between normal operating costs and SG investment. Not clear on how we define what is a SG investment? Is it capital to enable capital assets that enable the SG? Or is it software and services that enable the SG. There is a whole area of discussion around what do we mean when we say SG? Certainly getting behind the meter, SG is about getting the feedback and data to as many users as possible * We are interested in time of use data. * Interoperability, behind the meter access for use of customer data, and questions on what this means for me. I think a lot of this lies in and around the NIST framework, which will ideally address interoperability, future proofing, etc. By adopting a standardized architecture for the SG, everyone can rally around and use as a framework for investments. SG Corporate Partners Committee (CPC) framework endorsed the NIST framework. And embodied within this is the ESI, energy services interface, which by definition is to allow 3rd parties to conduct value based services with the architecture of the SG to address customer value. Is there a role for the LDC or not, can the LDC provide a 3rd party access to data that is not the LDC? CPC thinks this should be okay, assuming privacy and security, who owns the data etc. ESI is a good way to unlock SG and all the benefits of it. * I would argue that standards are not how, they are the what. If we can agree on standards, there may be multiple choices that agree to that standard. * Standards not a Board issue, it’s an industry issue. * Every other market has the market making the decisions, such as with cell phones (IOS, android, etc.). Standards are driven and adopted by the consumers who buy the products. * Also about education, educating consumers so they don’t think SG is this new thing that is coming. It has been coming for years. Need to stop talking about SG as different. Consumers need to realize that incorporating SG is just the way LDCs are doing business. |
| ***Consumer Groups*** | * SG, why aren’t we seeing more applications in Ontario? We’re considered a leader in SG, but not seeing the applications. * Get a lot of comments on “we can’t connect to the grid”. Paris has electric vehicle charging systems within the city. How did they do this without problems, when their infrastructure is a lot older than ours. Connection is not a technical issue so much, it’s more of a business issue. * The inclusion of the SG in the rate setting with no distinction is a good step forward that we support. Continuing to see SG move forward and incorporated into every day planning is important * Happy about what the board has said about BTM. Blurring of T&D is real. If you look at it from a high level, the ability of the RRFE to get better integrated geographic planning will include a blurring of T&D. In terms of SG investments being treated as normal investment, have a couple of problems. Don’t know what a SG is, have a good idea about what pieces are and what it might do, don’t know if you can define it. If I was to think about where to go with filing requirements; don’t allow reinvestment in technologies that don’t work with SG. Reclosers etc. which will not support storage, DG, etc., you don’t support these investments because they don’t support SG. * 5 year planning horizon. There is some comfort in there about doing some planning. The need for new line stations and so on is seen by utilities as evolving over time. It is not necessarily easy to future proof your plans, but if you can make them adaptive, you are doing better * Key to respect customer value and to ensure it is not forgotten. Particularly with respect to your time horizon. Market can’t wait for OEB’s timeline, especially with behind the meter. Support of having a clear demarcation at the meter. Great to have this, but also great to LDCs cooperation with this. Important that we have agreement here, but we need agreement everywhere. Importance to make sure that transparency is protected. Need to ensure we don’t pick a winner. Green button idea is fine, but we should not forget the fact that the customer needs to have independent and direct access to their information. The OEB should ensure ultimate access to data is protected. Importance to have barriers removed, but it has to be completed with a practical resolution process. The speed of innovation is not compatible with the OEB timeline or process and the OEB should address this. Waiting for 3 to 5 years is too long. If we can only raise an issue at a rate hearing, this will be too slow. How can these issues be resolved in a cooperative way without issue? * Regarding Board’s objective of promoting SG. Putting in an adder for energy efficiency projects because of the longer term nature and to consider additional benefits. * These energy efficiency companies overcame the challenge (of quantifying environmental benefits) by adding a adder on the business case in the valuation. * Unless we are talking about environmental benefits that sit outside of…energy consumption itself should be a good metric of how this is calculated. Kwh are easy to measure |
| ***Agencies*** | * Like the idea making it clear what the utilities behind the meter and so on. Aligns with the safety regulations on which regulation is applied where. Thinking more about cybersecurity and how to include that. Our idea is that we can approach it similar to safety standards. * Support of no distinction between SG and other investments. Approach going forward, reminder that we should be careful not to be too prescriptive. Guiding principles are important, but all utilities across the province are different. Barriers to SG development: because there are so many ways to define what SG is, think it is important that for the OEB to achieve objectives we need to understand what the barriers are on the individual paths, identifying unique barriers. One of barriers will be culture change. Supportive of 5 year planning for rate cases for LDCs. Experience of putting investments into individual buckets…may find that one investment would fit in different buckets for different LDCs depending on the objectives. An unknown in this process is the Distribution Sector Panel; this process may be impacted by this * There are no standards for measuring environmental benefits. And interveners will need to understand the rules that distributors have been asked to play by. |

***Conceptual Framework for Regulatory Documents***

**Key observations from the discussion:**

1. A challenge for the group is how to demonstrate (whether quantitatively or qualitatively) benefits of smart grid proposals, including those benefits that accrue to parties other than the distributor and the customers within its service area. To what degree should demonstration of benefits be standardized among all distributors?
2. There are concerns about balancing the need to allow for variation among distributors (e.g. smart grid will mean different things to different distributors depending on the needs of their customers and the current state of their networks) while still facilitating some degree of consistency where appropriate for customers across Ontario.

**Discussion notes:**

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| ***Utilities*** | * We just file a basic plan with the recent rate filing. We are always concerned about the deferral accounts and how they are going to be interpreted. Having full transparency is very important, including the numbers and the five year plan period. Until a decision is made on the deferral accounts, there is always going to be that risk. Guidelines on prudence and suitability. * We have been more risk adverse in terms of pilot projects. Not all utilities are able to accept the same level of risk. * We have a very clear guideline, we use the benefit cost ratio over the life of the initiative. If it is <1, then the investment is not undertaken. This is the first hurdle it needs to pass. Next is scalability; ensuring that technology can be applied to system. This is all at the pilot demonstration stages. Once it proceeds to a level where it applies to whole system, it needs to compete with all other capital projects. Many times some of the initiatives don’t get completed because of more pressing demands for capital. We didn’t have this in house. We looked at what the larger US utilities were doing. We had Navigant help us develop the models for benefit-cost valuation. This CBA covers 80% of technology, but some initiatives won’t be able to be handled by the model, e.g. EVs. Have a gray area because of the other impacts of these ideas. * Is this a list of projects against objectives? How do you evaluate, a dollar value? If this is a multi-year project, are we talking about one list for each year or a multi-year list? It is about applying a submission approach that we all agree on. . . * Need to have a dollar value for these other objectives. Need to come up with a CBA in some situations, e.g., level 2 chargers * Strategic value can be assigned to various components, which is based on what the corporation thinks it is important. Can’t just give SG a weighting of a certain amount, needs to be aligned with corporate strategy. * Yes (CBA metrics and parameters) are shared with the OEB. Would be surprised if any of the LDCs have similar strategies or visions but some may have some comparability. So comparison across utilities may not be worthwhile (e.g., HONI and Toronto Hydro) * Every year our board revisits our strategy because things change on the horizon…aging plants, customer issues, etc. As long as you are trying your SG activities into your corporate objectives, there is consistency * Small utilities are not in a position to hire a consulting firm, but there is a need for a CBA. The investments are not scrutinized at a granular level. Would be open to participating in a process to come into a valuation system. Using common measurements to help prioritize investments. * Often SG projects are slotted into other types of investment categories. The increasing need to filing asset management plans, you could have asset management plans consider these objectives, which may be less burdensome. It is more natural to look at it as an asset management plan, as it is an exercise to rate and prioritize projects against criteria. * Past president was conservative with spending. Going through strategic planning exercise now. We are going to come up with criteria specific to our utility, which will have overlap with other utilities, but how do our differences between neighbours strategies affect regional planning? * We have an asset mgmt. optimization process. The word benefit is within a context, glass gets full even before you think benefits. Ldcs are reactionary. If we look just at benefits, we wouldn’t have smart meters in this province. We have a DMS because of FIT, MicroFIT, etc. Need to have a level of understanding beyond foundational pieces and the last application of a technology. If policy drivers are not there, we would be where we were in 2003. Some SG ideas are more challenged with foundational pieces. May take a while to get to a positive NPV, but doesn’t mean we shouldn’t do it. Bulk of benefit is beyond the wires. Need to think about long term benefits and enablers from a softer perspective, we have some technology that has no benefit now, but will enable something 3 years from now that drive lots of benefit. E.g., laying fiber-optic cables to start the internet didn’t’ drive financial benefits for the company laying the cables, it was the ‘last application’ that makes the money, such a Facebook * Can’t just make decision based on pure business. Must be underlying reasons if we really want to drive SG forward. |
| ***Technology Vendors*** | * Are these CBA metrics and parameters shared and compared with the OEB? * How would Ontario achieve leadership in SG if strategic plans in 78 LDCs did not all have SG in the forefront, or could not operationalize what they need to do to achieve SG excellence? |
| ***Consumer Groups*** | * If we’re going to be looking at promoting SG type solutions, how does this process promote innovation and alternative opportunities? Where do the other considerations come into it? Deferral account is like throwing the dice, you may or may not get it. * If you can justify that something is a SG initiative, could you not just add a few points on the evaluation? * Board can’t look at all the possibilities, there is a general principle to how to deal with SG. * Many utilities may not have articulated strategies and can’t go and hire a consulting firm without blowing their budgets. May be helpful to the Board to provide default valuations / guidance. The board can issue some guidance on default measures that utilities can apply lacking customer research and their own valuation methods. This could also apply to demand efficiency. FIT program may be good starting point for putting a value on energy efficiency / green etc. One of critical things we haven’t talked about is what is the value of extra customer information. If OEB is going to truly promote SG, it is going to need to incent the efforts of LDCs to invest in SG * May want to think about the sort of business cases and methodologies that the board accepts for non standard SG projects. E.g., an industrial park is coming in, we’d like to make some investments in SG opportunities. Need to find a way to generate an acceptable business case * LDCs are still a monopoly. Customers don’t have a choice. Customer value should be OEB’s number one objective other than safety and reliability, to promote innovation. Ontario is not large enough to have the customer base of US and international players, so we need to have a similar game plan across the province. * Why a regional view rather than a provincial view? Different economies and priorities between regions, e.g., Thunder Bay vs. Toronto * Does anyone have any good research on how the costs and benefits stack up? Need to make sure you don’t spend a lot of money on smart grid when the cost of person A when the benefits go to person B. SG has a higher CB ratio in Toronto vs. in places like Hearst, where it may be a burden on the utility up there |
| ***Agencies*** | * All this variability between corporate strategies introduces uncertainty. Utilities lose the certainty about if they will get cost recovery if they really value different objectives differently. Thinking is that the core value will be the same: reliability, cost effectiveness etc. * Balance of prescription vs. higher guidelines. Could define performance in terms of availability, etc. and then have a solution example of how to achieve the performance (very prescriptive). Can keep adding to this example. ESA electrical safety code is very prescriptive, but in certain circumstances, we will consider deviations. Don’t be prescriptive, but provide a prescriptive example to groups. * Some initiatives should be provincial in scope, some should be regional. * There is an Ontario plan for SG and then there should be regional plans that support this. There is a risk that regionally some will develop quicker than others. Do we end up creating ‘SG ghettos’ here and there. Do we need an overarching theme that supports a minimal development of SG across the board |

***Cyber-security and privacy***

**Key observations from the discussion:**

1. There is agreement that the current privacy framework is effective but that without cyber-security there can be no privacy.
2. Cyber-security is of critical importance but at the same time there is recognition that it comes at a cost so it is important to determine what level of cyber-security is appropriate for utilities and to avoid making large investments securing assets that don’t present great risks.

**Discussion notes:**

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| ***Utilities*** | * If it is a license requirement, there are things that you don’t touch; it means so much to you as an LDC that you are not likely to jeopardize it, so much more likely to be watched and maintained. * Are 3rd parties subject to the same codes, such as Enbala? If they are not, then how does the board plan to bring them on board. * Need to be aware that there are other service agreements outside of the authority of OEB * Biggest pipe of data is from meter to MDMR * License / code requirements would have a huge impact on small utilities. * LDC’s already have the opportunity to partner with others to work and lower the cost. 3 of us in this room are already doing this on a cyber-security initiative * If we self-certify, would still need to do an audit on the pipes that go out to service providers, so that we can say we are secure as a whole * There are high-risk and low-risk assets, need to spend money wisely. Should only high risk assets be cyber-secure? * Should distinguish between operations and customers or other buckets, as they should be treated differently |
| ***Technology Vendors*** | * No objection to NIST’s cyber-security standard, but wondering where it is right now. NIST extends beyond if data is secure and protected from breach. Shouldn’t the province provide direction on what the standard should be? * When you are coming up with rules, do you look to other jurisdictions for guidance? E.g., New York |
| ***Agencies*** | * There will be services in the future where unlicensed bodies may do things that create complaints. Who do people go to complaints against these organizations? * If a service provider is directly engaged with an individual and that individual needs to sue a company, and if they aren’t legally sophisticated or have the means to sue a large company, is there a need to have another body to look out for consumers? * NIST is moving forward in the US because there is no other alternative. Some may suggest that a threat based framework is better than guidance. The OEB should be not be too prescriptive. |

***Facilitation of customer access to meter data***

**Key observations from the discussion:**

1. General agreement that customers and authorized third parties should have access to historical data; billing quality interval data, real-time data ‘direct from the meter’.
2. No option for providing data has emerged as the clear choice especially given current technological constraints; moreover there is agreement that the Board should avoid picking a ‘winning’ technology/standard. There is support for providing a standardized method of accessing data however there is also recognition that this is not necessarily possible right away without incurring significant costs to replace/upgrade existing AMI systems.
3. General agreement that the potential capability of the MDM/R should be leveraged as much as possible.

**Discussion notes:**

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| ***Utilities*** | * (Re: options for enabling BTM services) Depends on the type of the meter technology. Not an easy question to answer. * Smart meter was originally created for the purpose of billing, and that is why it was unidirectional, not bidirectional. How long will we hold the data? * I would support (using MDM/R as single source for accessing data) and a number of LDC’s did, but others didn’t, but the IESO backed away from providing this service. * We are only talking consumption data, not any of the other telemetry data. MDMR doesn’t support demand data. Using the MDMR would represent a considerable uptake in scope. * Nothing to say we can’t go back on this in the future. Can look at this in the next 5 years * But LDC’s don’t’ necessarily have hourly interval data. Utilities would need to do some significant work to feed data on an hourly basis for the EBT system. we do collection, but we don’t have the data to do validation. * Technology deployed over the first few years, prevents some of this from being doable. Need to expand the bandwidth of the mesh to have bidirectional meters. * Utility needs to provide the connection into the home * Does Board do a lift analysis of the impact on what its policies / code changes etc. will do? (Yes). |
| ***Technology Vendors*** | * You could leverage the existing MDMR to collect and use data so that it is not a burden on the utilities. * Data isn’t given to retailers like it is to LDCs. We need data to bill and settle on a product that I’m offering. We have access to customer data today, we just don’t have it to the level of detail that is required to offer certain projects. * Customer may want retailer to have access to the data, and may not want LDC to have access to it at all. There may be an ecosystem BTM that we haven’t even thought of yet. * There is a lot that can be done here. It’s about educating consumers to push into the mode of conservation. Not clear yet on how the data should be made available. * MDM/R capability to provide one-window access to customer data is not there today, but this capability could be there. But it would be one entity making these upgrades rather than a number of utilities. * Let’s say the NIST framework becomes the standard, then there already is a standard on access to data to the ESI. * We should have real time access even at the residential level. One of the promise of the whole SG architecture that will leverage this data in real time. * As the SG implementation and rollout occurs across Ontario, that architecture should not create an inability to have access to data at the meter level / and behind the meter. |
| ***Consumer Groups*** | * There is customer access to their own data, and access of others to the data of customers outside of the LDC. Please speak to this. I believe customer access to data is foundational because it deals with privacy. * Think it’s foundational that customer gets access to data. Banking data is protected; we are looking at the same thing. How does the utility ensure the privacy is there? Being able to access data and remove the barriers so that data is readily available and practical to access it. * Board has never been good at picking winners. Don’t want to pick a winner. Want to make sure that we have the principles: data availability, etc. * Banking, transactions are shared with no-one else. What is the extent to which the utility can use that data…for just the utility business or to facilitate other business? * Doesn’t customer ownership of data underscore all of this. Customer must permit anyone else to access the data . . . Dr. Kavoukian says that the customer owns the data, utility has right to access it. * Last time we talk about the benefit of real time monitoring, it was said that we weren’t on the same page. Customer should get access to data and should get it in real-time, at least for the commercial and industrial markets. Technology exist and benefits are proven; especially considering Global Adjustment class A and B make it more important. Don’t want something like Green button to threaten this. * Board’s responsibility should be primarly to the rate payer. If the utility installed meters that don’t allow the customer to get access to their data, the utility should have to go back to replace this meter with one that gives access. * Non electric utility we have dealt with had a Green Button type solution, and this was promised for 2011 and is now forecasted for 2013. We shouldn’t pick a winner because the marketplace can come up with a solution faster than regulation. * Putting a SM in benefited the utility because they had the detail of data to identify when a customer was down. How far away are other utilities away from giving data to customer like THES? (A: most are doing this). * Billing system goes through MDMR…that’s the only option. * If we are trying to benefit ratepayers and ratepayer have an obsolete meter they should be able to upgrade. * we have a lot of not so smart meters out there today. Want to get to bidirectional meters down the road. Don’t make reinvestments in things that aren’t going to get you where you are going. Customers who would like to get on a smarter meter, can pay to get their schedule advanced |
| ***Agencies*** | * Understanding that (providing one-window access to data for authorized parties/customers) is not a capability of the SME right now. * Should not limit or 3rd parties and retailers from getting access to data |

***Next Scheduled Meeting:***

* November 20, 2012