



Meeting Summary: Launch of MCAD

March 21, 2022

Attendees:

- **Project Staff:** Matthew Prorok, Abby Finis, Zach Greene, Joseph Womble
- **Community Participants:** Jeremy Caron, Des Moines; Stacy Miller, Minneapolis; Jonathan Rhodes, New Orleans; Mo McReynolds, Indianapolis; Fang Wu, Ann Arbor; Emily Ziring, St. Louis Park; Erick Shambarger, Milwaukee; Stacie Reece, Madison; Regan Watts, Eau Claire County; Morgan Mickelson, Indianapolis; Linda Schemmel, West Des Moines; James Owen, Little Rock; Jason Walker, Southwest Regional Development Commission; Tom Appel, Cottonwood County, MN; Dan Ebert, Consultant
- **Guest Speakers:** John Norris, former FERC Commissioner and Iowa regulator; Jared Policicchio, City of Chicago
- **Other Attendees:** Brian Ross, Great Plains Institute; Lori Bird, World Resources Institute; Andrew Light, World Resources Institute, Kristoffer Acuña, Great Plains Institute

Key Takeaways:

- Participants broadly agree that MISO plays an important role in their ability to achieve their clean energy, affordability, and resilience goals. However, more education is needed to fully understand the goals of this initiative and the direct benefits to communities.
- Communities are in many different places in their clean energy work with some exploring setting goals and others working to implement established policies. Other communities are interested in engaging primarily to advance local economic development and cost savings associated with clean energy. There is benefit in this diversity and an opportunity for peer-to-peer learning as an additional benefit of this collaboration.
- While the group was brought together with a focus on clean energy goals, participants see value in expanding the focus to include issues like resilience, reliability, economic development, and equity.

Action Items:

- Suggest name alternatives to project staff!
- Volunteer to participate in a governance exploratory committee if you would like to (~two 1-hour meetings over the next month. See additional detail below)



- Be on the lookout for educational sessions in April and May. The first will be a detailed discussion of MISO's stakeholder process and opportunities to provide input (1-hour webinar format)

Meeting Summary:

The goal of this meeting was to bring together the initial cohort of community participants for an opportunity to meet one another and project staff, begin education on MISO processes and opportunities, and begin identifying areas of interest and needs for the group. Throughout breakout sessions and plenary discussion, participants provided valuable feedback on how MCAD can best serve their needs and support their work to achieve the goals of their communities.

GOVERNANCE

The group discussed the need to develop governance structure and processes to facilitate efficient policy position development and to clearly communicate the commitments and expectations participants will take on when joining this effort. Project staff are still seeking four to five willing participants to serve on an initial Exploratory Committee.

We also received positive feedback at the suggestion that the group will adopt an approach similar to that of PJMCCC that allows participants to select an appropriate level of engagement and commitment, ranging from bi-weekly meetings to develop policy positions to optional educational webinars.

EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

During breakout discussions, participants were asked how project staff can best support their participation in this effort, recognizing the staffing and time limitations that exist for participants. The overwhelming response was that more education is needed. These needs include:

- What is MISO and how can we influence MISO's decisions?
- How is policy developed step-by-step at MISO?
- Who are the important MISO staff and stakeholders to know?
- What is the relationship between MISO and our utility? Can we go around the utility to talk to MISO? What is the responsibility of MISO versus our local utility?
- What is FERC's role?
- How do MISO's processes and utility resource planning intersect or overlap?
- How are other communities setting goals and what can those of us without goals yet apply to our own work?



COMMUNICATIONS & STAFFING SUPPORT NEEDS

A variety of communications and community staff support needs were identified. These needs are both near-term to help participants better understand the potential value of participating in this coalition, and for ongoing tools to help communicate that value within their organizations and more broadly.

- Resources to educate community leadership about the importance of participation at the regional level and how it connects to local goals.
- Resources to better assess the potential cost/benefit of participating in this coalition
- Project staff to serve as an aggregator of information on participants' behalf at the RTO to make sure our voices get heard
- Identification of action items, advocacy, and messaging for state legislatures, governors, MISO leadership, etc.
- Resources that summarize MISO's research and analyses into a digestible format for community leadership and participants
- Facilitate data collection efforts for communities

ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

Project staff and guest speakers provided a high-level overview of the primary issues under discussion at MISO and how they interact with community-level policy objectives. These include:

- **Transmission planning**
 - Does it account for community-level clean energy and economic development goals?
 - If not, how can they be better incorporated into transmission planning?
 - How are community-level distributed energy resource (DER) development efforts captured in transmission planning?
 - How can communities support expeditious transmission build into areas that want additional renewable energy development? Lack of transmission leading to curtailments hurt the tax base of host communities, potentially creating backlash against future development.
- **Reliability & Resilience**
 - What is the role of the bulk power system versus microgrids or other localized solutions for resilience?
 - How can communities be assured of MISO's ability to supply electricity reliably?



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- **Market participation for utility-scale distributed energy resources**
 - Will wholesale markets offer a realistic revenue opportunity for distributed energy resources?
 - Are market constructs equipped to handle a high-renewable future?
- **Complementary needs**
 - Beyond decarbonization, the group also identified a variety of other important complementary needs including local economic development, equity, and affordability. The group's work may be more effective if framed more broadly than climate action and carbon reduction.