EV Working Group Meeting Minutes - April 21st 2022

IIJA Update: National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Formula Program
Cassie Powers, Senior Managing Director, National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO)

- Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Program (Competitive)
  - Through Federal DOT
  - 1/2 of funds to corridor build out
  - 1/2 of funds to community charging

Questions:
Shaina- Municipality of Anchorage: Works with Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transit Solutions. Is there guidance for what organizations should be doing at this time?

A: Identifying stations, identifying infrastructure, identify station locations and potential challenges.

Dimitri: When is the soonest we could see the money hit the streets in Alaska?

A: Plans have to be approved by the Joint Office by September 30th.
Find the plan template here: state-plan-template.docx (live.com)
Please visit Home Page · Joint Office of Energy and Transportation (driveelectric.gov) for more information on the guidance for the program.

Is Alaska or the Railbelt certified as an USDOT Alternative Fuel Corridor? There are no interstates.

Is there an AK DOT and AEA team creating the Alaska request for funding in NEVI due in August? Yes.

AEA EV Program Update, Alaska Sustainable Energy Conference, and Volkswagen Settlement (VW) Installation Updates
Audrey Alstrom, PE, Director of Alternative Energy and Energy Efficiency, AEA
Brandy M. Dixon, Communications Director, AEA
Taylor Asher, Project Manager, AEA

Questions:
Sean Scaling: Can you un-designate a corridor? Is the expectation that FY23 will mostly be the year of building out the corridor?

A: You are required to have at least one designated alternative fuel corridor, so Alaska would not be able to undesignate the corridor. Yes, FY23 will likely be the year of building out the corridor. The Joint Office said that no "fully build out certifications" will be issued in the next year.

Josh Craft, MEA: Line extensions are being evaluated going east and north in their service territory.

Tim Leach, Launch Alaska: Formula funds for transmission grid resources for reliability and electric vehicle charging is a part of that. Some IIJA programs have flexibility for match requirement to be waived, in communities where there is hardship or distress. Has AEA asked that question, can the match be waived for certain grantees that fit into that criteria?

A: Not sure at this point, can pass on to Joint Office and hopefully receive clarification on a case by case basis.

Adam Bradway, Mat-Su Borough: Community Grant slide was gone over too quickly. Can you please provide more information on the community grants.

A: Fifty percent (50%) of the amount made available under the AF Corridor Program in each year is reserved for community grants (not to exceed $15 million each). Projects funded by community grants are not required to be located along a designated alternative fuel corridor. An eligible entity that receives a community grant is permitted to contract with a private entity for the acquisition, construction, installation, maintenance or operation of the project however, the private entity will be required to pay the eligible entity's share of the total project cost. AEA will inform the working group when a request for applications is released.

Devon Kibby: Wearing my Juneau Electric Vehicle Association hat, what is the status of the VW funds for Southeast Alaska and non-rail belt areas? At the last AEA Board meeting I believe it was stated that this $400,000 was going to be used for NEVI planning and not for infrastructure for the areas stated in the state approved VW plan?

A: Currently there are no plans for the VW funds to be used for SE or Rural AK specifically. AEA is determining best next steps and it may be to use the remaining VW funds for match for the IIJA funding.

Sitka Electrification Strategy
Carol and Toby, Transition Sitka Group

Research in Sitka through the Transition Sitka group. Contacted all of the stakeholders that operate in Sitka. All of the bus operators are interested in electrification, but the plans depend on availability of grants. 5+ year out at least, not much conversation between the stakeholders at this time. Goals is to allow the stakeholders to connect.

Fast chargers are thought to be helpful for light vehicles. Large busses are going to need larger chargers. Lots of tour companies don't exactly realize this. How do we maintain the busses? Sitka has about 140 electric vehicles in Sitka, all charge at home. Started to think about the commercial entities that have larger vehicles and could be a good market for fast chargers, if they were to become available in Sitka.

Electric Utility that is municipally owned has promised informally to provide potential sites where the electrical infrastructure would be available for use. This will be helpful with contacting stakeholders with regards to placement.

For more info on EV in Sitka contact
Carol Voisin cjvoisin@yahoo.com; Kay Kreiss k2occdoc@gmail.com ; or Toby Campbell ak.campbells@gmail.com

New EV Rates Railbelt
Sean Skaling

One of the major barriers to EV Fast Charging was demand charges. RCA recently accepted new EV charging rates and they are currently available.

The Chugach kWh rate effectively equivalent to the residential rate
Owners of EV charging stations can now charge by the kWh unit

Chugach Electric has charging incentives on their website. They have simplified the incentives and now have residential charging rebate program and two commercial rebate programs.
https://www.chugachelectric.com/

Chugach has been counting and posting the number of EV's on their website. Find the EV page and the information is online. Would be interested in seeing DMV do this from now on, rather than Chugach having to pay for it. Chugach willing to work with DMV on this and help out with keeping that information at the state level. Statewide ~1,800 EV's.

Questions:
Comment from Dimitri: DMV data includes a lot of human error related to motor size etc. Thank you to Devon Kibby who worked on the demand charge modifications. Every utility is different with their demand charge rates, Chugach is the least expensive but GVEA is still very expensive, almost 3 or 4 times the amount that Chugach is charging.

Additional Working Group Member Updates and Announcements
Taylor Asher, Project Manager, AEA
Michelle Wilber, Research Engineer, Alaska Center for Energy and Power

Michelle Wilber-- The UA researchers are conducting interviews with Rural Alaskans to understand the barriers to EV implementation in Rural Alaska. This research is going to shed light on barriers to EV adoption as well as grid restrictions.

Josh Craft: MEA Level 2 pilot program is rolling out. Program meant to collect data on charging habits at the Level 2 level. Participants will be given level 2 chargers, and MEA will be monitoring that equipment for a number of years to understand how and when people are charging. How is the commuter population charging? We will hopefully gain information on how to quantify the effects of cold weather on charging habits.

RFI will be posted on MEA's website.
<Josh.craft@mea.coop>

Dimitri Question for Josh: When will MEA fast charger rate be effective? Rate will be retroactive to April 1st once it is setup.

Tim Leach: Electrify Everything Webinar May 5th-6th. Focused on EV's, transportation and heating. Perspectives from different areas, researchers, national labs etc. Transportation Session on May 24th at the Sustainable Energy Conference

Electrify Everything webinar (May 3-4)
https://acep.uaf.edu/acep-news/2022/18-april-acep-this-week/should-we-electrify-everything.aspx;

Alaska Sustainable Energy Conference (May 24-26)
https://alaskasustainableenergy.com/agenda/

Shaina (SWS, Municipality): Pilot program Box Truck 220 EV at SWS that they've had since July. Operating well, handful of weird issues that were programmed wrong. Programmed to mimic a diesel, too slow to start. Still don’t have the 520 garbage trucks, probably will have them by the end of the year, behind schedule. Box truck is 2 wheel drive and wasn't used much this year. Collecting data now with ACEP.