

# The PSC Pulse

## *IRP HEARINGS BEGIN*



Over two-and-a-half days in April, the Georgia Public Service Commission heard testimony from Georgia Power executives regarding the company's Integrated Resource Plan (IRP). The IRP is Georgia Power's long-term plan that it must present to the Commission every three years to forecast the state's electric power needs and to explain to Commissioners how it plans to meet those needs.

Georgia Power presented ideas including adding 1,000 megawatts – or 1 gigawatt – of solar power to Georgia's grid. The Brunswick News reports that Georgia leads the region in watts per customer of solar power (280 wpc) but other states are catching up. Commission Chairman **Lauren "Bubba" McDonald** and Vice Chairman **Tim Echols** have said the Commission is likely to require Georgia Power to increase its solar output.

The Commission will hear more testimony in May and June and is scheduled to release a final decision on July 16.



## IMMEDIATE HELP AT GEORGIA PSC



It's a normal workday. You're talking with a colleague when, suddenly, he can't catch his breath. He says his chest is pounding. Who do you call? 911?

A call to 911 is always appropriate in an emergency, but you might also call **Lynn Page** in the Chairman's Office or **Reece McAlister**, the executive secretary.

Both are certified in first aid, CPR, and AED — the use of an automated external defibrillator.

Two of such defibrillators are located within our offices. One is in the 2nd floor mail room. Another is in the break-room on the 1st floor of the 254 building.



Automated External  
Defibrillator — 2nd Floor

## HopeWorks: MAKING A DIFFERENCE

This winter, a 91-year-old widow was living in a house with no heat. A heat exchanger in her furnace had rusted through, so the furnace had to be disabled to prevent carbon monoxide from escaping into the house. Mrs. Terrell, on a fixed income, didn't know what to do. The few space heaters she had just weren't up to the task. A friend gave her the number to HopeWorks.



In 2015, the Georgia Public Service Commission approved a grant for the HopeWorks program through the Atlanta Gas Light Company Universal Service Fund. The program can repair or replace gas furnaces or hot water heaters for seniors who own and live in their home and who meet financial restrictions.

Mrs. Terrell went through the qualifying process and was approved. HopeWorks installed a new high-efficiency furnace in her home. It didn't cost her a dime.

"Those space heaters weren't doing much," Mrs. Terrell said. "I was very cold, but now I'm warm. Thank you all so much. You have been a blessing."



HopeWorks is always looking for volunteers or donations via its Website: [www.hopeworks4us.org](http://www.hopeworks4us.org).

## UTILITY STAFF MEMBER VISITS VIETNAM THROUGH NARUC



Utility Analyst **Rob Trokey** visited Hanoi, Vietnam to participate in the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners' International Peer Review on Ancillary Services, Direct PPAs and Smart Grids.



## PSC CHAIR SPEAKS TO GREEN COUNCIL

In Macon, Chairman **Lauren “Bubba” McDonald** discussed his love for solar energy while speaking before the U.S. Green Building Council’s Middle Georgia Sustainability Showcase.

In 2013, he said, there was no solar energy in Georgia Power’s Integrated Resource Plan. He approached company officials with a suggestion: Georgia Power and the PSC should work as partners, rather than adversaries. Together, they ensured a market-driven approach would create the successful environment to grow solar power in Georgia. The partnership would be a “win-win,” McDonald said.

Solar power continues to grow in the state with no upward pressure on rate-payers and no state subsidies.

Currently, Georgia Power’s IRP suggests adding 1,000 megawatts of solar power. McDonald said people should expect the Commission to ask for more.



## GOV. KEMP PROCLAIMS APRIL ‘SAFE DIGGING MONTH’

**Commissioner Chuck Eaton**, PSC staffers **Lynn Page**, **Michelle Thebert**, **Will Culbreath**, and **Tom Krause** joined utility crews and officials with Georgia 811 as **Gov. Brian Kemp** ratified a petition declaring April “Safe Digging Month.”

Gov. Kemp noted that 15 years ago, before the 811 system existed, he was working a backhoe that hit a line and cut off power to a hospital. He had called for the survey of utilities, but the lines were improperly marked.

Gov. Kemp used that story to underscore the importance of calling before you dig. Even shallow excavation can damage water lines, gas lines or other utilities. Repair can be costly and it keeps crews away from important work on Georgia’s infrastructure.



*Gov. Kemp in his Ceremonial Office displays his proclamation declaring April “Safe Digging Month” in Georgia.*

**Commissioner Chuck Eaton** stands at the left.

## COMMISSONER ECHOLS SPEAKS AT FINTECH



PSC Vice Chair **Tim Echols** sat on a FinTech panel discussing the financial gap and how technology can help lower-income Georgians pay their bills. Specifically, he discussed Georgia Power's Pre-Pay program.

## COMMISSION CHAIRMAN DROPS IN ON ISAKSON



On a recent stop in Washington, DC, PSC Commission Chair **Lauren "Bubba" McDonald** and his wife, Shelley, stopped by the office of his old friend, U.S. Sen. Johnny Isakson. The three had lunch together.

## COMMISSIONERS PRIDEMORE AND SHAW ATTEND NARUC TRAINING IN D.C.

Over two days in April, Commissioners **Tricia Pridemore** and **Jason Shaw** attended the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners' New Commissioner Regulatory Orientation.



The training gives new commissioners insight into the regulation of electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications. It also provides tips on commission management and state vs. federal jurisdictions and responsibilities.

Commissioner Pridemore was appointed by Governor Nathan Deal in 2018 and was elected to the position in November. Commissioner Shaw was appointed in January.

The orientation, held at NARUC's offices in Washington is designed for commissioners with less than a year of commission experience.



## PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION TO OVERSEE EMCS THAT DELIVER BROADBAND SERVICES

As the 2019 session of the Georgia General Assembly drew to a close, Legislators put the finishing touches on a bill that would allow Electric Membership Corporations to offer broadband Internet services to their customers.

Among the many issues that caused friction was the proper authority for potential complaints against the EMCs. Some Legislators wanted the courts to preside over disputes; others wanted the



Public Service Commission to make the call. In the end, the General Assembly trusted the PSC to handle issues related to EMCs and compliance with the new broadband law.

Legislators hope the EMC's foray into Internet service will result in a big step forward as Georgia tries to ensure all households, including those in the most rural parts of the state, have adequate Internet services.



## LEGISLATURE, COMMISSIONERS AND STAFF HONOR PIO BILL EDGE UPON RETIREMENT



Commissioners **Eaton**, **Shaw** and **McDonald** wishing Bill Edge well in his retirement.



**Bill Edge**, with his wife **Debbie**, speaks in the rostrum of the Georgia State Senate while receiving a resolution in his honor.

PIO and Legislative Liaison **Bill Edge** retired at the end of March after 18 years with the PSC. His longevity as a state employee was recognized in a resolution presented by the Georgia State Senate.

At the PSC offices, fellow employees held a retirement party where commissioners and staffers got the chance to say their goodbyes.

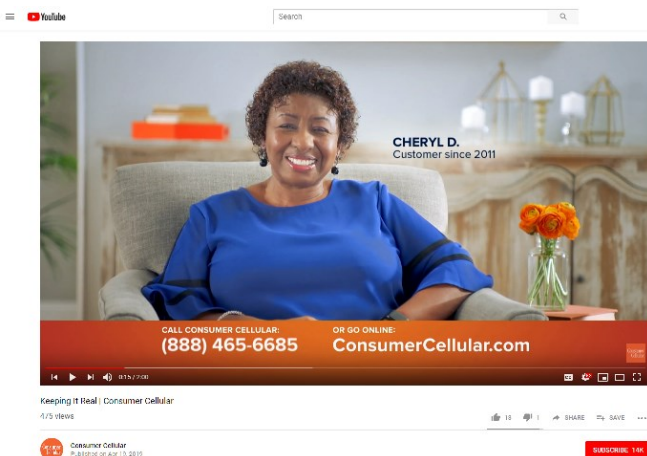
Before his time with the PSC, Edge spent nearly 20 years working as a TV and radio journalist. He also served as a Navy Reservist for 30 years earning the rank of Captain.

## HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR STARS IN COMMERCIAL FOR CELLULAR COMPANY

Human Resources Director **Cheryl Dumas**, a longtime Consumer Cellular customer, was given the opportunity to appear on camera in an ad touting the phone service. She said it was actually very casual. They asked her questions that were not prepared in advance,

so everything remained unscripted and conversational.

She said this was not a “paid testimonial.” She really does enjoy Consumer Cellular and had a great time filming the commercial.



## PSC STAFFERS TOUR VOGTLE

As Southern Nuclear finishes construction on the No. 3 and No. 4 reactors at Plant Vogtle, a handful of PSC staffers were led on a detailed tour of the site, including a visit inside the No. 3 containment unit. (No nuclear fuel has been placed in the unit as of yet).

Southern Nuclear’s Mike McCracken and Georgia Power Senior Engineer Duoug Nguyen discussed safety measures including the shielding around the containment unit that can withstand the force of a plane crash and procedures for shutdown safety that include redundancy after redundancy.

Any PSC employee who has not taken the tour should speak to his or her supervisor. It is well worth the trip.



From left to right — **Dennis Sewell**, **Nancy Gibson**, **George Brown**, **Tom Krause**, Georgia Power staffer **Kelley Balkcom** and **Nick Hall**.



## NARUC MEETING IN WASHINGTON DC



From left to right, **Samuel Johnson, Janey Chauvet** and **John Gunnells**. Members of the Natural Gas Staff visited the Cove Point LNG Terminal during the recent National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners meeting in Washington.

## PSC STAFFER HELPS WRITE PAPER

Renewable Energy Manager **Jamie Barber** co-authored a paper on net energy metering policies along with a principal researcher at the National Regulatory Research Institute. She was thanked for her “valuable assistance” in the paper’s Acknowledgements section.



Review of State Net Energy Metering and Successor Rate Designs

Tom Stanton  
Principal Researcher for Energy and Environment  
National Regulatory Research Institute



**Tom Krause** became the new PIO/Legislative Liaison on April 1, 2019

## HIS FIRST TURKEY SHOOT



Commissioner **Jason Shaw** and his 6 year old son Slaton took advantage of the March opening weekend of Turkey hunting in South Georgia. Slaton, who had never been turkey hunting before shot a double!

## WELCOME

**Tom Krause** came to the PSC from the Georgia Senate, where he worked as the Majority Leader’s chief of staff.

He has a long history in communications, starting with a Master’s degree in Journalism from the University of Miami. For 15 years, he worked for newspapers including The Macon Telegraph and The Tampa Tribune.

He lives near Midtown with his wife, Rachel, his three daughters, and an entirely-too-hyper rescue lab named Cooper.

**HAPPY  
ANNIVERSARY!**



**25 YEARS**

Earnest Whatley  
Contract Specialist

**20 YEARS**

Alicia McBride  
Utilities Analyst

**5 YEARS**

Preston Thomas  
Legal

**CONGRATULATIONS!**

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The average person changes jobs 12 times during a lifetime. The average man spends 4.3 years at the same job. The average woman spends 4 years at the same job. (Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)

With so many longtime staffers at the Georgia PSC, this must be a great place to work.

**NEW BEGINNINGS**



**Commissioner Chuck Eaton** and his wife Erika adopted Lilian Kay Eaton, the girl they have been fostering since birth. Lily is pictured with her parents, her sister Lydia and Judge Bradley Boyd.

**Preston Thomas**, in the Legal Department, married Sarah “Mimms” Hodges, at Perimeter Church. They held their reception at Country Club of the South in Johns Creek.



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**FAREWELL**



Public Information Officer and Legislative Liaison **Bill Edge** retired after 18 years with the Georgia Public Service Commission.

*See story on page 5*



## COMMISSION CALENDAR

### May 2019

2 — Committee Meetings

7 — Administrative Session

9 — Committee Meetings

13-16 — IRP: Staff and intervenor direct testimony

16 — Committee Meetings

21 — Administrative Session

30 — Committee Meetings

### June 2019

1-5 — SEARUC

6 — Administrative Session

11-12 — IRP: Rebuttal Testimony

13 — Committee Meetings

16 — Father's Day

18 — Administrative Session

27 — Committee Meetings

### July 2019

2 — Administration Session

4 — Independence Day

11 — Committee Meetings

16 — Administrative Session

21-24 — NARUC

## HOLIDAYS COMING UP!



**Monday, May 27**



**Thursday, July 4**



**Monday, Sept. 2**

### **Georgia Public Service Commission**

**244 Washington Street**  
**Atlanta, Georgia 30334**  
 Phone: 404-651-4501  
[www.psc.state.ga.us](http://www.psc.state.ga.us)



### **COMMISSIONERS**

**Lauren "Bubba" McDonald, Chairman**  
**Tim G. Echols, Vice Chair**  
**Chuck Eaton**  
**Tricia Pridemore**  
**Jason Shaw**

The Public Information Office publishes The PSC Pulse for the Georgia Public Service Commission. Information for The PSC Pulse should be sent to the attention of **Tom Krause, Public Information Officer** or **Lynn Page, Newsletter Editor**.

**Executive Director: Deborah Flannagan**  
**Executive Secretary: Reece McAlister**