EPIC Demand Committee — Meeting Minutes

Kentucky Energy Planning and Inventory Commission (EPIC)

Date: Thursday, August 20, 2026

Format: Virtual meeting via Zoom (approx. 1 hour)

Subject: Kentucky Energy Adequacy Plan (KEAP) — statewide demand forecasting approach

Note: Subject to Committee Approval

Attendance

Present

- Eric — EPIC Executive Director (chaired the meeting)
- Dr. Mike Clark — Director, Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER), University of Kentucky (presenter)
- Mary Beth Purvis — EPIC Director of Regulatory and Economic Analysis (newly joined)
- John Crockett — Committee co-chair (LG&E and KU)
- Secretary Jeff Noel — Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development
- Kevin — Committee member (GE Appliances / Appliance Park)
- Laura Sidwell — EPIC Operations
- Additional committee members and EPIC staff

Absent

- Mark Gooch
- Ashley Watts

1. Welcome and Staff Introduction

Eric opened the meeting and thanked members for their time, noting several productive meetings over the preceding weeks.

He introduced Mary Beth Purvis, who recently joined EPIC as Director of Regulatory and Economic Analysis, having been recruited earlier in the summer. Eric noted her career in the utility sector and at the Public Service Commission, and said she will work closely with this committee and the other technical committees as EPIC builds the Kentucky Energy Adequacy Plan.

Ms. Purvis introduced herself, stating her intent to bring transparency, rigor, and clear, objective analysis to EPIC's work. She described a range of prior perspectives — regulator, electric cooperative, investor-owned utility, and consultant — and said she is glad to be working on Kentucky issues again.

2. KEAP Process Update

Eric provided context on the Kentucky Energy Adequacy Plan. Kentucky has never had an independent statewide energy plan spanning all service territories, RTOs, and systems. EPIC has adopted a three-pronged committee structure — Demand, Supply, and Transmission — with co-chairs for each.

The Supply Committee met the prior week and spent much of that meeting working through scenarios to be modeled. Larry Holloway of the College of Engineering is supporting the supply-side modeling. However, supply scenarios cannot be meaningfully tested until a credible range of Kentucky demand is established, which is this committee's charge.

Eric recalled that this committee previously agreed on a 15-year planning period with low, base, and high demand cases. The purpose of this meeting was to begin adding substance to those cases. He noted that data centers and other large loads are a central part of the discussion, that projects across the state vary widely in maturity, and that the committee must also account for the opposite direction — facility closures, projects that do not materialize, and changing economic and population trends. The objective is not to predict the future precisely but to develop a range credible enough to plan against.

3. Presentation — Dr. Mike Clark, CBER

Dr. Clark presented a phased approach for developing an independent statewide demand forecasting capability. He framed the work as building on — rather than duplicating — the substantial forecasting expertise that individual utilities already apply within their own service territories, while adding an independent, statewide view.

Phase	Description	Target Timing
Phase 1	Assess the current state of electric demand forecasting in Kentucky. Interview forecasting staff at all investor-owned utilities and a sample of cooperatives and municipals to understand assumptions, methodologies (simple trend vs. sophisticated time-series models), treatment of normalized weather, demand-side programs, and scenario practices. Report findings back to the committee.	Initial conversations late 2026; possible spillover into early 2027
Phase 2	Establish a secure, efficient, repeatable process for utilities to submit forecasting data (e.g., customer counts by rate class, sales by class, load shapes, T&D losses). Publicly filed IRP data can be worked immediately; additional data requirements will be refined through Phase 1 interviews.	Q1 2027 (calendar year)
Phase 3	Evaluate options for producing the statewide forecast and report trade-offs to the committee. Option A: aggregate existing utility forecasts — low cost and fast, but may be unusable if underlying economic assumptions differ materially. Option B: build an independent CBER model at the state level using consistent economic assumptions and scenarios, allowing greater scenario flexibility.	First half of 2027
Phase 4	Develop the forecasting models and produce a 15-year forecast covering customers by class, total sales, and summer/winter peaks, with the ability to run scenarios (national economic scenarios via Moody's subscription, plus Kentucky-specific scenarios such as accelerated growth in energy-intensive metals manufacturing).	Target: end of 2027

Dr. Clark emphasized that the phases are overlapping rather than discrete.

4. Discussion

4.1 Timeline and Process for Utility Engagement

John Crockett asked how CBER intends to gather information from the utilities and how long the process might take. Dr. Clark responded that CBER would reach out to utilities relatively quickly once logistics with EPIC are settled, and expressed optimism that initial conversations could occur late in 2026, while cautioning that scheduling is largely outside CBER's control.

Mr. Crockett suggested the information-gathering and education phase could realistically be completed in the final quarter of 2026, since major utilities already publish forecasts through their IRP filings. Dr. Clark agreed this was achievable.

4.2 Benchmarking Against Other States

Kevin asked whether another state provides a benchmark or model for what a world-class statewide forecast looks like, noting a preference for learning from others' experience rather than being first. Dr. Clark had not yet researched this but agreed it would be a low-cost, worthwhile step.

Eric responded that EPIC appears to be fairly unique, and that he is not aware of another state that has independently modeled a grid landscape as complex as Kentucky's. He stressed that the goal is not a static plan but a standing planning framework — updated annually or biennially as technology, fuel, and other variables change — to serve as a reference for Kentucky policymakers and as the basis for EPIC's independent policy recommendations.

Ms. Purvis added that from her experience across multiple states she has seen forecasting at the RTO level (itself informed by individual utility inputs) but not at the state level. She also noted a trend in some states of utilities moving away from traditional IRP supply-side analysis in favor of RFP-based approaches.

Mr. Crockett observed that few statewide models are likely to exist because most states have multiple utilities, each planning only for its own service territory. Any state with a single dominant provider would offer a statewide view largely by default, which limits its usefulness as a comparison. He cautioned against building something new from whole cloth without first taking full advantage of the substantial planning work already underway across the state.

4.3 Kentucky's Structural Diversity

The committee discussed the particular difficulty of forecasting for Kentucky. The state contains three investor-owned utilities (LG&E/KU, Duke Energy Kentucky, and AEP/Kentucky Power), plus a full collection of cooperatives through Big Rivers and East Kentucky Power, each conducting its own generation planning and forecasting. Kentucky also sits at the intersection of four grid arrangements — PJM, MISO, TVA, and LG&E/KU's own system operation — and arguably contains three or four distinct regional economies.

A member asked how the committee should handle this diversity in demand forecasting. Dr. Clark was reluctant to prescribe an approach before Phase 1 is complete, noting that differing regional needs may themselves prove to be crucial information that shapes the forecast design. He observed that forecasting methods evolve continuously even within a single utility, and that this will be more complicated still at the state level.

4.4 Recommended Starting Point

Mr. Crockett stated that Option A — summarizing and aggregating the individual utility forecasts — is the right place to start. It is the easiest approach, and reviewing the result will show both what the aggregate tells the committee and, equally importantly, what it does not: where gaps exist due to differing methodologies or entities unwilling or slow to report. That assessment can then be overlaid with the broader plan. Several members concurred, and Dr. Clark agreed there is value in starting with the aggregate and examining the trade-offs from there.

4.5 Commercial Confidentiality and Treatment of Prospective Large Loads

Dr. Clark asked what roadblocks CBER might encounter in approaching utilities. Mr. Crockett said he did not anticipate resistance to explaining forecasting methodologies, which are already made public through regular PSC filings. The greater challenge is commercial: utilities are evaluating pending opportunities with prospective customers who may have their own reasons for not wanting their interest in a location made public before it is finalized.

Ms. Purvis suggested confidentiality concerns could be mitigated through aggregation — reporting statewide totals rather than carving out figures by individual utility or identifying specific loads. She also raised a substantive consistency issue: utilities currently include prospective large loads in their forecasts at different stages of the interconnection process (an initial inquiry, a letter of agreement, an executed contract for electric service), and apply different inclusion percentages. She recommended the committee agree on a consistent statewide standard for when and at what level prospective loads are included.

Secretary Noel cautioned against requesting prospect-level detail at all. Drawing on economic development experience, he noted that even projects with signed letter agreements frequently do not materialize, and that even completed projects sometimes change. He recommended establishing clear guidelines up front so that EPIC does not ask utilities for transactional, highly sensitive prospect information that would both invite resistance and add noise to the aggregate picture. His preference is to rely on the utility's own judgment as to when a project is genuinely likely to become reality.

Dr. Clark agreed, noting that how utilities handicap prospective loads should itself be a Phase 1 discussion topic, and that well-built models should already anticipate a portion of this growth as natural baseline growth rather than treating every prospect as additive.

Mr. Crockett offered to share his organization's methodology for evaluating prospects along the forecasting scale, noting it works well but is not exact. Ms. Purvis said that, from a regulatory perspective, evaluation criteria are the first thing she would ask about, and that the committee should be able to gather those criteria and reach consensus on an appropriate Kentucky standard — potentially a blended approach. It was noted that practice has been shifting toward greater weight on signed agreements rather than applying percentages across the prospect pipeline.

4.6 Fuel Price Forecasting

A member raised fuel price forecasting for coal and gas as a related confidentiality issue, noting that utilities typically treat fuel price detail in CPCN and IRP proceedings as commercially sensitive. He noted that his own organization subscribes to proprietary fuel price forecasts and would need to determine what can be shared, and asked how EPIC should engage to obtain fuel forecasts. Ms. Purvis agreed to review EPIC's governing statutes and regulations to determine what EPIC can do in this area compared with PSC practice.

4.7 Focus on Large Load Growth

Mr. Crockett noted that new generation cannot be brought online quickly — a new combined-cycle gas unit is roughly a five-year process from approval through construction — and that the IRP planning process has become far more fluid than it was four years ago, with IRPs becoming outdated more rapidly. He predicted this pace-of-play issue would emerge as a significant gap in the gathered data.

While acknowledging that residential demand, energy efficiency programs, and other inputs all matter, he urged the committee to concentrate on large load growth — including existing industrial investment such as GE Appliances at Appliance Park and Toyota at Georgetown, in addition to data centers — as the factor that will most move the needle.

Ms. Purvis concurred, noting that IRPs across the board show relatively flat residential growth, with large load representing the principal source of uncertainty and the driver of new generation need.

4.8 Site Selection Consultants

Secretary Noel suggested EPIC consider speaking with one or two highly regarded site selection consultants to understand how they evaluate a state on behalf of large load customers — what information they rely on, how reliable they find it, and what questions they ask. He recounted a recent meeting in which a consultant had better information on Kentucky's import/export position than expected. His hope is that when EPIC's product is delivered in 2027, Kentucky is seen by these experts as a leader in the quality and reliability of its energy information. Eric agreed to take the suggestion forward, noting that the Cabinet's economic development professionals could help identify appropriate firms.

4.9 Demand Scenarios (Agenda Item 5)

Eric turned to the demand scenarios on the agenda and invited co-chair comment.

- 15-year planning period: reaffirmed as the correct horizon, with the caveat that the first five years are the most impactful and change most rapidly.
- Facility closures: the committee recommended de-emphasizing attempts to forecast facility closures. Closures are specific to individual companies and driven by commercial factors that are very difficult to predict; absent historical average data, little value is expected from this line of analysis.

- Priority: focus on growth of large load customers, including data centers.

4.10 Economic Development Alignment

Members discussed EPIC's ultimate purpose: attracting and retaining economic development in Kentucky over the next 30 years. It was noted that existing Kentucky companies are already asking what to expect in five to ten years regarding pricing, capacity, and availability, and that reliable EPIC data could support their own investment planning.

Secretary Noel reported that the Cabinet has asked Kentucky's state universities to identify internal subject-matter experts across 14 targeted industries in order to conduct formal SWOT analyses, and that all universities have agreed. A longer-term goal is to project the future of each targeted industry in the aggregate relative to demand and growth. He offered to share that work with EPIC and invited input on what analysis should be requested of those experts.

5. Closing

Mr. Crockett summarized that the item demanding most immediate attention is the gathering process — collecting what is publicly available from the utilities, holding conversations with their forecasting and planning teams to understand how and why their approaches differ, and identifying the gaps that will need to be filled. He acknowledged that given the unique nature of the endeavor, some gaps and imperfect information will simply have to be accepted, but that the committee will at least know where they are.

Eric closed by noting the meeting had moved the process forward and produced clear direction. He committed to following up with Dr. Clark and Ms. Purvis and keeping the co-chairs and committee members apprised of next steps. He thanked Dr. Clark and his team, the co-chairs, and the committee, and adjourned the meeting.

6. Action Items

Action / Next Step	Owner	Timeline
Finalize logistics for CBER's engagement with EPIC so utility outreach can begin	Eric / Dr. Clark	Near term
Begin Phase 1: interview forecasting staff at IOUs and a sample of co-ops and municipals; review existing IRP forecasts	Dr. Clark / CBER	Initial conversations by end of 2026
Report Phase 1 findings on the current state of Kentucky demand forecasting back to the committee	Dr. Clark / CBER	Following Phase 1
Research whether other states have developed comparable statewide forecasting models and what lessons they offer	Dr. Clark / CBER	Not specified
Develop a secure data submission process for utility forecasting data	Dr. Clark / CBER	Q1 2027
Present forecasting method options (aggregation vs. independent state-level model) with trade-offs	Dr. Clark / CBER	First half of 2027
Develop proposed statewide standard for when and at what level prospective large loads are included in the forecast	Mary Beth Purvis / committee	Not specified
Review EPIC statutes and regulations regarding handling of commercially sensitive information, including fuel price forecasts	Mary Beth Purvis	Not specified
Identify and arrange conversations with one or two leading site selection consultants	Eric, with Cabinet for Economic Development assistance	Not specified
Share targeted-industry SWOT analysis work from state universities with EPIC	Secretary Jeff Noel	As the work matures
Share organizational methodology for evaluating prospective loads along the forecasting scale	John Crockett	Offered; not scheduled
Keep co-chairs and committee members apprised of next steps	Eric	Ongoing