NRG ENERGY, INC. Form DEF 14A March 26, 2015

Use these links to rapidly review the document <u>TABLE OF CONTENTS</u>

Table of Contents

UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION Washington, D.C. 20549

SCHEDULE 14A

Proxy Statement Pursuant to Section 14(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (Amendment No.

Filed by the Registrant b

Filed by a Party other than the Registrant o

Check the appropriate box:

- o Preliminary Proxy Statement
- Confidential, for Use of the Commission Only (as permitted by Rule 14a-6(e)(2))
- b Definitive Proxy Statement
- o Definitive Additional Materials
- o Soliciting Material under §240.14a-12

NRG ENERGY, INC.

(Name of Registrant as Specified In Its Charter)

 $(Name\ of\ Person(s)\ Filing\ Proxy\ Statement,\ if\ other\ than\ the\ Registrant)$

Payment of Filing Fee (Check the appropriate box):

- b No fee required.
- o Fee computed on table below per Exchange Act Rules 14a-6(i)(1) and 0-11.
 - (1) Title of each class of securities to which transaction applies:
 - (2) Aggregate number of securities to which transaction applies:
 - (3) Per unit price or other underlying value of transaction computed pursuant to Exchange Act Rule 0-11 (set forth the amount on which the filing fee is calculated and state how it was determined):

(4)	Proposed maximum aggregate value of transaction:
(5)	Total fee paid:
Fee p	aid previously with preliminary materials.
	a box if any part of the fee is offset as provided by Exchange Act Rule 0-11(a)(2) and identify the filing for which the offsetting fee aid previously. Identify the previous filing by registration statement number, or the Form or Schedule and the date of its filing.
(1)	Amount Previously Paid:
(2)	Form, Schedule or Registration Statement No.:
(3)	Filing Party:
(4)	Date Filed:

o

_				\sim		
Tа	h	е	Ωt	(``∩	nte	nts
14	D		OI	w	HIC	ш

March 26, 2015

Dear Stockholder:

We are pleased to invite you to attend NRG Energy, Inc.'s Annual Meeting of Stockholders, which will be held at 9 a.m., Eastern Time, on Thursday, May 7, 2015, at The Ritz-Carlton, Philadelphia located at 10 Avenue of the Arts, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102. Details regarding admission to the meeting and the business to be conducted are more fully described in the accompanying Notice of Annual Meeting and Proxy Statement.

Your vote is important. Whether or not you plan to attend the Annual Meeting, we hope you will vote as soon as possible. Information about voting methods is set forth in the accompanying Notice of Annual Meeting and Proxy Statement.

On behalf of everyone at NRG, I thank you for your ongoing interest and investment in NRG Energy, Inc. We are committed to acting in your best interests. If you have any questions with respect to voting, please call our proxy solicitor, MacKenzie Partners, Inc., at (800) 322-2885 (toll free).

Sincerely,

HOWARD E. COSGROVE Chairman of the Board

THIS PROXY STATEMENT AND PROXY CARD ARE BEING DISTRIBUTED ON OR ABOUT MARCH 26, 2015.

NRG Energy, Inc. 211 Carnegie Center, Princeton, New Jersey 08540

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF STOCKHOLDERS

TIME AND DATE 9 a.m., Eastern Time, on Thursday, May 7, 2015

PLACE The Ritz-Carlton, Philadelphia

10 Avenue of the Arts

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102

ITEMS OF BUSINESS (1) To elect thirteen directors.

(2) To approve NRG's Second Amended and Restated Annual Incentive Plan for Designated

Corporate Officers.

(3) To approve, on a non-binding advisory basis, NRG's executive compensation.

(4) To ratify the appointment of KPMG LLP as NRG's independent registered public

accounting firm for the 2015 fiscal year.

(5) To transact such other business as may properly come before the Annual Meeting and any

adjournment or postponement.

RECORD DATE

You are entitled to vote if you were a stockholder of record at the close of business on

March 16, 2015.

PROXY VOTING Please submit a proxy as soon as possible so that your shares can be voted at the meeting in

accordance with your instructions. For specific instructions, please refer to the information on pages 1-6 of the Proxy Statement, the Notice of Internet Availability of Proxy Materials or the

voting instructions on the proxy card.

By Order of the Board of Directors

BRIAN E. CURCI

Corporate Secretary

2015 ANNUAL MEETING OF STOCKHOLDERS

PROXY STATEMENT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ANNUAL MEETING INFORMATION	1
What is the purpose of the Annual Meeting?	1
Who is entitled to vote at the Annual Meeting?	1
How many votes do I have?	2
What are the Board's recommendations?	2
How many votes must be present to hold the Annual Meeting?	2
What vote is required to approve each proposal?	2
What are abstentions and broker non-votes and how are they treated?	3
How do I vote?	3
May I change my vote?	4
What should I bring to the Annual Meeting if I attend in person?	4
What happens if I do not provide instructions as to how to vote?	4
Where can I obtain the list of stockholders entitled to vote?	4
Who pays the cost of solicitation of proxies?	4
Who is the Company's transfer agent?	<u>5</u>
Why did I receive a one-page notice in the mail regarding the Internet availability of proxy materials instead of a full set of proxy	
materials?	<u>5</u>
Where can I find directions to the Annual Meeting?	<u>5</u>
What is "householding"?	<u>5</u>
How can I request additional materials?	<u>5</u>
Whom should I call if I have questions about the Annual Meeting?	<u>6</u>
GOVERNANCE OF THE COMPANY	7
Corporate Governance Guidelines and Charters	7
Director Independence	7
Board Structure	<u>7</u>
Governance Practices	8
Board Leadership	8
Risk Oversight	9
Committee Membership	
Audit Committee	<u>11</u>
Compensation Committee	<u>12</u>
Governance and Nominating Committee	11 11 12 13 15
Finance and Risk Management Committee	<u>15</u>
Home and Renew Committee	<u>16</u>
Nuclear Oversight Committee	<u>17</u>
Communication with Directors	<u>17</u>
•	

Table of Contents

PROPOSALS TO BE VOTED ON	<u>18</u>
PROPOSAL NO. 1 ELECTION OF DIRECTORS	18
PROPOSAL NO. 2 APPROVAL OF THE SECOND AMENDED AND RESTATED ANNUAL INCENTIVE PLAN FOR	
DESIGNATED CORPORATE OFFICERS	<u>27</u>
PROPOSAL NO. 3 ADVISORY VOTE TO APPROVE NRG'S EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION	<u> 29</u>
PROPOSAL NO. 4 RATIFICATION OF INDEPENDENT REGISTERED PUBLIC ACCOUNTING FIRM FOR THE 2015 FISCAL	
YEAR	<u>30</u>
EXECUTIVE OFFICERS	<u>31</u>
VOTING STOCK OWNERSHIP OF DIRECTORS, NAMED EXECUTIVE OFFICERS AND CERTAIN BENEFICIAL OWNERS	<u>33</u>
CERTAIN RELATIONSHIPS AND RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS	<u>36</u>
SECTION 16(a) BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP REPORTING COMPLIANCE	<u>37</u>
COMPENSATION COMMITTEE INTERLOCKS AND INSIDER PARTICIPATION	<u>37</u>
COMPENSATION COMMITTEE REPORT ON EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION	<u>37</u>
EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION	<u>38</u>
AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT	<u>74</u>
INDEPENDENT REGISTERED PUBLIC ACCOUNTING FIRM	<u>75</u>
REQUIREMENTS FOR SUBMISSION OF STOCKHOLDER PROPOSALS FOR NEXT YEAR'S ANNUAL MEETING	<u>77</u>
APPENDIX A NRG ENERGY, INC. SECOND AMENDED AND RESTATED ANNUAL INCENTIVE PLAN FOR DESIGNATED	
<u>CORPORATE OFFICERS</u>	<u>A-1</u>
ii	

PROXY STATEMENT

We are providing these proxy materials to you in connection with the solicitation of proxies by the Board of Directors (Board) of NRG Energy, Inc. for the 2015 Annual Meeting of Stockholders (Annual Meeting) and for any adjournment or postponement of the Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting will be held on Thursday, May 7, 2015, at 9 a.m. at The Ritz-Carlton, Philadelphia at 10 Avenue of the Arts, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102. In this Proxy Statement, "we," "us," "our," "NRG" and the "Company" refer to NRG Energy, Inc.

You are receiving this Proxy Statement because you own shares of our common stock, par value \$0.01 per share, that entitle you to vote at the Annual Meeting. By use of a proxy, you can vote whether or not you attend the Annual Meeting. This Proxy Statement describes the matters we would like you to vote on and provides information on those matters.

ANNUAL MEETING INFORMATION

What is the purpose of the Annual Meeting?

The purpose of the Annual Meeting is to:

- 1. elect thirteen directors;
- approve NRG's Second Amended and Restated Annual Incentive Plan for Designated Corporate Officers (AIP Proposal);
- 3. approve, on a non-binding advisory basis, NRG's executive compensation (Say on Pay Proposal);
- 4. ratify the appointment of KPMG LLP as our independent registered public accounting firm for the 2015 fiscal year; and
- 5. conduct such other business as may properly come before the Annual Meeting and any adjournment or postponement.

Other than these proposals, the Board is not aware of any other matters to be presented for a vote at the Annual Meeting.

Who is entitled to vote at the Annual Meeting?

All of our stockholders may attend the Annual Meeting. However, only stockholders who owned our common stock at the close of business on March 16, 2015, the record date for the Annual Meeting, or their duly appointed proxies, are entitled to vote at the Annual Meeting.

Many stockholders hold their shares through a stockbroker, bank, trustee, or other nominee rather than directly in their own name. As summarized below, there are some distinctions between shares held of record and those owned beneficially:

Stockholder of Record If your shares are registered directly in your name with our transfer agent, Computershare, you are considered the stockholder of record of those shares.

Beneficial Owner If your shares are held in a stock brokerage account, or by a bank, trustee, or other nominee, you are considered the beneficial owner of shares held in "street name." As the beneficial owner, you have the right to direct your broker, trustee or nominee on how to vote and you are also invited to attend the Annual Meeting. However, since you are not the stockholder of record, you may not vote these shares in person at the Annual Meeting unless you follow the procedures of your broker, trustee or nominee for obtaining a legal proxy. Your broker, trustee, or nominee is obligated to provide you with a voting instruction card for you to use.

Table of Contents

How many votes do I have?

You have one vote for each share of our common stock you owned as of the record date for the Annual Meeting.

What are the Board's recommendations?

The Board recommends a vote:

- 1. FOR the election of the director nominees;
- 2. FOR the AIP Proposal;
- 3. FOR the Say on Pay Proposal; and
- FOR the ratification of the appointment of KPMG LLP as our independent registered public accounting firm for the 2015 fiscal year.

If you grant a proxy and any additional matters are properly presented for a vote at the Annual Meeting, either of the persons named as proxy holders, David Crane or Brian E. Curci, will have the discretion to vote your shares.

How many votes must be present to hold the Annual Meeting?

We will have a quorum, and will be able to conduct the business of the Annual Meeting, if the holders of a majority of the outstanding shares of our common stock entitled to vote at the Annual Meeting are represented in person or by proxy at the Annual Meeting. As of the record date, 337,175,101 shares of our common stock, representing the same number of votes, were outstanding. The presence of the holders of at least 168,587,551 shares of our common stock will be required to establish a quorum. Both abstentions and broker non-votes, if any, are counted as present for determining the presence of a quorum. For more information regarding the treatment of abstentions and broker non-votes, see "What are abstentions and broker non-votes and how are they treated?"

What vote is required to approve each proposal?

- 1.

 Election of Directors The nominees for election as directors at the Annual Meeting will be elected by a majority of the votes cast at the Annual Meeting. A majority of the votes cast means that the number of shares voted "FOR" the director nominee must exceed the number of votes cast "AGAINST" that director nominee. In a contested election, each director nominee will be elected by the vote of a plurality of the shares represented in person or by proxy at the Annual Meeting and entitled to vote on the election of directors. This means that the director nominees who receive the most votes will be elected to fill the available seats on the Board.
- 2. *AIP Proposal* This proposal requires the affirmative vote of a majority of shares present in person or represented by proxy at the Annual Meeting and entitled to vote on the proposal.
- 3. Say on Pay Proposal This proposal requires the affirmative vote of a majority of shares present in person or represented by proxy at the Annual Meeting and entitled to vote on the proposal. While this is an advisory vote, the Board and the Compensation Committee value the opinions of stockholders and if there are a significant number of votes against this proposal, the Board and the Compensation Committee will consider stockholders' concerns and evaluate actions necessary to address those concerns.
- 4. Ratification of KPMG LLP's Appointment This proposal requires the affirmative vote of a majority of shares present in person or represented by proxy at the Annual Meeting and

Table of Contents

entitled to vote on the proposal. If the selection of KPMG LLP as our independent registered public accounting firm is not ratified, the Audit Committee will reconsider its selection.

What are abstentions and broker non-votes and how are they treated?

An abstention occurs when a stockholder abstains from voting or does not vote on a proposal. A "broker non-vote" occurs when a broker has not received voting instructions from the beneficial owner and the broker does not have discretionary authority to vote the shares because the proposal is non-routine. Brokers who do not receive instructions from the beneficial owner are entitled to vote on the ratification of KPMG LLP's appointment for the 2015 fiscal year, but not on the election of directors, the approval of the AIP Proposal, or the Say on Pay Proposal. Broker non-votes and abstentions, if any, will be treated as follows with respect to votes on each of the proposals:

Propo	sal	Treatment of Abstentions	Treatment of Broker Non-Votes		
1.	Election of Directors	Not considered votes properly cast and therefore will have no effect on this proposal.	No effect on this proposal.		
2.	AIP Proposal	Counted toward the tabulation of votes on this proposal and will have the same effect as a vote AGAINST this proposal.	No effect on this proposal.		
3.	Say on Pay Proposal	Counted toward the tabulation of votes on this proposal and will have the same effect as a vote AGAINST this proposal.	No effect on this proposal.		
4.	Ratification of KPMG LLP's Appointment	Counted toward the tabulation of votes on this proposal and will have the same effect as a vote AGAINST this proposal.	Not applicable since brokers have discretionary authority to vote on this proposal.		

How do I vote?

If you hold shares directly as the stockholder of record, you may vote by granting a proxy or, if you hold shares in street name, by submitting voting instructions to your broker, trustee, or nominee. You may vote over the Internet, by telephone or, if you have a paper copy of the proxy materials, by mail. Please refer to the summary instructions below and those included on your proxy card or, for shares held in street name, the voting instruction card included by your broker, trustee, or nominee.

Vote By Internet: If you have Internet access, you may submit your proxy from any location in the world 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, up until 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time on May 6, 2015 by visiting the website provided on the Notice of Internet Availability of Proxy Materials (Notice) or voting instruction card. If you vote by using the Internet, you do not need to return your proxy card or voting instruction card.

Vote By Telephone: If you live in the United States, you may use any touch-tone telephone to vote your proxy toll-free 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, up until 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time on May 6, 2015. The telephone number is printed on your proxy card or voting instruction card. If you vote by telephone, you do not need to return your proxy card or voting instruction card.

Table of Contents

Vote By Mail: If you received or requested a paper copy of the materials, you may submit your proxy by signing your proxy card or, for shares held in street name, the voting instruction card included by your broker, trustee, or nominee, and mailing it in the enclosed, postage-paid, addressed envelope. If you provide specific voting instructions, your shares will be voted as you instruct. If you sign, but do not provide instructions, your shares will be voted as the Board recommends. Mark, sign and date your proxy card and return it in the postage-paid envelope provided as soon as possible so that it is received by the Company prior to May 7, 2015, the Annual Meeting date.

Vote In Person: If you are a record holder or beneficial owner of shares held in street name who has received a legal proxy and you are planning to attend the Annual Meeting and you wish to vote your shares in person, we will give you a ballot at the meeting.

May I change my vote?

You may change your proxy instructions or revoke your proxy at any time prior to the vote at the Annual Meeting. For shares held directly in your name, you may accomplish this by: (a) delivering a written notice of revocation bearing a later date than the proxy being revoked, (b) signing and delivering a later dated written proxy relating to the same shares, or (c) attending the Annual Meeting and voting in person (although attendance at the Annual Meeting will not in and of itself constitute a revocation of a proxy). For shares held in street name, you may change your vote by submitting new voting instructions to your broker, trustee, or nominee, or by obtaining a legal proxy from your broker and voting your shares by ballot at the meeting.

What should I bring to the Annual Meeting if I attend in person?

Proof of ownership of our common stock, along with personal identification (such as a driver's license or passport), must be presented in order to be admitted to the Annual Meeting. If your shares are held in street name and you plan to attend the Annual Meeting in person, you must bring a brokerage statement, the voting instruction card mailed to you by your bank or broker or other proof of ownership (or the equivalent proof of ownership as of the close of business on the record date of the stockholder who granted you the proxy) with you to the Annual Meeting. Registration will begin at 8 a.m., Eastern Time. Please allow ample time for check-in. No cameras, recording equipment, electronic devices, large bags, briefcases or packages will be permitted in the Annual Meeting.

What happens if I do not provide instructions as to how to vote?

If you sign your proxy card or voting instruction card with no further instructions, your shares will be voted in accordance with the recommendations of the Board.

Where can I obtain the list of stockholders entitled to vote?

The names of stockholders of record entitled to vote at the Annual Meeting will be available at the Annual Meeting and for ten days prior to the meeting for any purpose germane to the Annual Meeting, between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Eastern Time, at our principal executive offices at 211 Carnegie Center, Princeton, New Jersey 08540. Please contact our Corporate Secretary if you wish to review the list of stockholders at our principal executive offices.

Who pays the cost of solicitation of proxies?

We will pay for the cost of preparing, assembling, printing, mailing and distributing these proxy materials. Our directors, officers and employees may solicit proxies or votes in person, by telephone, or by electronic communication. Such individuals will not receive any additional compensation for these solicitation activities. We have retained MacKenzie Partners, Inc. to assist us in soliciting your proxy for

Table of Contents

an estimated fee of \$20,000, plus reasonable out-of-pocket expenses. We will also reimburse brokerage houses and other custodians, nominees, and fiduciaries for their reasonable out-of-pocket expenses for forwarding proxy and other solicitation materials to beneficial owners of our common stock.

Who is the Company's transfer agent?

Our transfer agent is Computershare. All communications concerning stockholder inquiries can be handled by contacting NRG Energy, Inc. c/o Computershare, Computershare Investor Services, P.O. Box 30170, College Station, TX 77842-3170, or by telephone at 1-877-498-8861, or 1-781-575-2725 (outside the U.S. and Canada), or 1-800-952-9245 (Hearing Impaired-TTY). Their website is: http://www.computershare.com. Certificates for transfer and address changes should be sent to: Computershare, P.O. Box 30170, College Station, TX 77842-3170.

Why did I receive a one-page notice in the mail regarding the Internet availability of proxy materials instead of a full set of proxy materials?

Pursuant to rules adopted by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), we are using the Internet as the primary means of furnishing proxy materials to stockholders. Accordingly, we are sending a Notice of Internet Availability of Proxy Materials to our stockholders. All stockholders will have the ability to access the proxy materials on the website referred to in the Notice or request a printed set of the proxy materials. Instructions on how to access the proxy materials over the Internet or to request a printed copy may be found in the Notice. In addition, stockholders may request to receive proxy materials in printed form by mail or electronically by email on an ongoing basis. We encourage stockholders to take advantage of the availability of the proxy materials on the Internet to help reduce the environmental impact of our annual meetings.

Where can I find directions to the Annual Meeting?

Directions to the Annual Meeting can be found on The Ritz-Carlton's website at http://www.ritzcarlton.com/en/Properties/Philadelphia/Information/Directions/Default.htm.

What is "householding"?

We have adopted a procedure approved by the SEC called "householding." Under this procedure, multiple stockholders who share the same last name and address and do not participate in electronic delivery will receive only one copy of the proxy materials or the Notice. We have undertaken householding to reduce our printing costs and postage fees. Stockholders may elect to receive individual copies of the proxy materials or Notice at the same address by contacting Broadridge Financial Solutions, Inc. by telephone at 1-800-542-1061, by mail at Broadridge Financial Solutions Inc., Householding Department, 51 Mercedes Way, Edgewood, NY 11717, or by e-mail at sendmaterial@proxyvote.com. Stockholders who are receiving individual copies of such materials and who would like to receive single copies at a shared address may contact Broadridge Financial Solutions, Inc. with this request by using the contact information provided above.

How can I request additional materials?

Stockholders may request additional copies of the proxy materials or Notice by contacting Broadridge Financial Solutions, Inc. by telephone at 1-800-579-1639 or by e-mail at *sendmaterial@proxyvote.com*.

Table of Contents

Whom should I call if I have questions about the Annual Meeting?

If you have any questions or need any assistance in voting your shares, please contact our proxy solicitor:

MacKenzie Partners, Inc. 105 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016

Toll Free: (800) 322-2885 Collect: (212) 929-5500 Fax: (212) 929-0308

Email: proxy@mackenziepartners.com

* * *

Important Notice Regarding the Availability of Proxy Materials for the Annual Meeting of Stockholders to be held on Thursday, May 7, 2015

Each of the Notice of Annual Meeting, this Proxy Statement and our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2014 is available at www.envisionreports.com/nrg. If you would like to receive, without charge, a paper copy of our Annual Report on Form 10-K, including the financial statements and the financial statement schedules, please send your request to Investor Relations, 211 Carnegie Center, Princeton, New Jersey 08540.

GOVERNANCE OF THE COMPANY

Corporate Governance Guidelines and Charters

The Board has adopted Corporate Governance Guidelines (Guidelines) that, along with the Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation, the Second Amended and Restated Bylaws (Bylaws) and the charters of the committees of the Board (Committees), provide the framework for the governance of the Company. The Board's Governance and Nominating Committee is responsible for periodically reviewing the Guidelines and recommending any proposed changes to the Board for approval. The Guidelines are available on the Governance section of the Company's investor relations website at http://investors.nrg.com, along with the charters of all the Committees of the Board and the Code of Conduct. The Guidelines, the charters of all of the Committees and the Code of Conduct are available in print to any stockholder who requests them.

Director Independence

Under the Guidelines, a majority of the Board must be composed of independent directors. The Board determines the independence of our directors by applying the independence principles and standards established by the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE). These provide that a director is independent only if the Board affirmatively determines that such director does not have a direct or indirect material relationship with the Company, which may include commercial, industrial, consulting, legal, accounting, charitable, familial and other business, professional and personal relationships.

The Board conducts a review of the independence of the Company's directors on an annual basis. In its most recent review, the Board considered, among other things, any employment relationships between the Company and its directors (other than David Crane) or their immediate family members, any affiliations of the Company's directors or their immediate family members with the Company's independent registered public accounting firm, compensation consultants, legal counsel and other consultants and advisors, any transactions that would require disclosure as a related party transaction or that qualify for review under our related party transactions policy, any transactions made in the ordinary course of business with a company in which a director serves on the board or as a member of the executive management team of such other company, and any transactions involving payments made by the Company to educational institutions. In addition, because the Company provides retail electricity services through certain of its subsidiaries, the Board also considered instances where certain of our directors are directors of businesses that received electricity services from the Company.

The Board has determined that all of the Company's directors are independent under the Guidelines and the listing standards of the NYSE, with the exception of David Crane, our President and Chief Executive Officer, and Paul Hobby, whose sister-in-law is a current partner at the Company's independent registered public accounting firm. Mr. Hobby's sister-in-law is not involved in any Company matters.

Each of the Audit, Compensation, and Governance and Nominating Committees is made up solely of independent directors. In accordance with the Guidelines and NYSE listing standards, all members of the Audit and Compensation Committees meet additional independence standards applicable to audit and compensation committee members, respectively.

Board Structure

At the 2012 Annual Meeting of Stockholders, the stockholders approved, as recommended by the Board, an amendment to NRG's Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation to eliminate the Board's classified structure over time. The transition period for the declassification of the Board will be complete as of the Annual Meeting and thus all directors will stand for election annually beginning

Table of Contents

with the Annual Meeting. Each director will hold office until his or her successor has been elected and qualified or until the director's earlier death, resignation or removal.

As of the 2014 Annual Meeting of Stockholders, there were 13 members of the Board of Directors. During the 2014 fiscal year, the Board held five regularly scheduled meetings and one special meeting. During the 2014 fiscal year, no director attended less than 75% of the total of the Board meetings and the meetings of the Committees on which he or she served.

The Guidelines provide that non-executive directors meet in executive session regularly following Board meetings. The Company's Non-Executive Chairman, Mr. Cosgrove, presides at these sessions. Also, pursuant to the Company's Bylaws, Mr. Cosgrove has been designated as an "alternate member" of all Committees to replace any absent or disqualified members of a Committee.

Directors are encouraged to attend the Annual Meetings of Stockholders. All of the directors attended the 2014 Annual Meeting of Stockholders.

Governance Practices

The Board takes a proactive approach in applying leading governance practices, which is evidenced by the Board's recommendation, and our stockholders' subsequent approval, of the majority voting standard for the election of directors at the 2009 Annual Meeting of Stockholders and the declassification of our Board at the 2012 Annual Meeting of Stockholders. Furthermore, as described in the Guidelines, the Board follows a series of governance practices that it believes foster effective Board oversight and accountability to the Company's stockholders. These practices include:

executive and director stock ownership guidelines to align interests with our stockholders;

ongoing succession planning for the Chief Executive Officer and other senior management;

annual performance evaluations of the Board and each of its standing Committees, as well as periodic peer review for individual directors;

robust director orientation and continuing education program, including Company site visits and information sessions with Company management; and

access to and engagement of outside advisors and consultants to assist in their performance of their duties, as appropriate.

Board Leadership

Since the Company's emergence from bankruptcy in December 2003, NRG's governance structure has been led by a separate Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Board. Irrespective of the Company's current practice, the Board believes that an effective board leadership structure is highly dependent on the experience, skills and personal interaction between persons in leadership roles. As stated in the Guidelines, the Board believes that it is in the best interest of the Company for the Board to make a determination regarding whether or not to separate the roles of Chairman and Chief Executive Officer based upon the present circumstances.

Currently, the Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Crane, and the Chairman, Mr. Cosgrove, work closely together in complementary roles. Mr. Crane focuses on the day-to-day developments of the Company and establishes the Company's various growth initiatives and strategic plan. Mr. Cosgrove leads the Board's responsibilities to review, approve and monitor fundamental financial and business strategies and major corporate actions, assess major risks facing the Company and management, oversee succession planning, most notably at the Chief Executive Officer level, and preside over the Board and its Committees as they perform their broad and varied oversight functions. The Board believes that these complementary roles provide the appropriate governance structure for the Company at this time.

Table of Contents

Risk Oversight

While the Company's management is responsible for the day-to-day management of the risks that the Company faces, the Board, as a whole and through its Committees, has responsibility for overall risk oversight of the Company. A fundamental aspect of risk oversight includes not only understanding the material risks to the business and what steps management is taking or should be taking to manage those risks, but also understanding and determining the appropriate risk appetite for the Company. The Board's role in reviewing and approving matters such as the Company's annual business plan, budget and long-term plan, strategic initiatives, individual development projects, acquisitions and divestitures, and capital allocation plan, represents the primary means by which the Board defines for management what constitutes an appropriate level of risk for the Company.

The Board performs its risk oversight function in several ways. The Board monitors, reviews and reacts to strategic and corporate risks through reports by management, including the Enterprise Risk Management team, and through the Committees of the Board. This oversight function, which has traditionally been retained by the Board, is now conducted primarily through the Finance and Risk Management (FARM) Committee. The FARM Committee was formed in 2014 by a combination of the Finance Committee and Commercial Operations Oversight Committee. The FARM Committee was delegated the powers previously held by the Finance and Commercial Operations Oversight Committees and its powers were expanded to include responsibility for company-wide enterprise risk management. The FARM Committee continues to provide risk oversight with respect to the Company's trading of fuel, transportation, energy and related products and services, regulatory compliance, and its management of the risks associated with such activities previously performed by the Commercial Operations Oversight Committee.

The Company's Financial Risk Management Committee, a committee comprised of senior management and key personnel in and around the commercial operations function, reports to the FARM Committee on a regular basis.

The Chairs of each of the Committees regularly report to the Board on all matters reviewed by their respective Committees, thereby providing the full Board with the opportunity to identify and discuss any risk-related issues or request additional information from management or the Committees that may assist the Board in its risk oversight role. To this end, risk-related issues presented to the Committees and the Nuclear Oversight Subcommittee are routinely presented to the full Board to ensure proper oversight.

The Audit and Compensation Committees have a more specific risk oversight role for matters that fall under their purview. The Audit Committee focuses on financial risks, including reviewing the effectiveness of our internal controls, conducting a detailed review of the financial portions of the Company's SEC reports, approving the independent auditor and the annual audit plan, and receiving periodic reports from the Company's independent auditor, the Company's internal auditor and the Company's corporate compliance officer.

The Compensation Committee monitors the risks related to our compensation policies and practices, with input from management and the Compensation Committee's independent outside compensation consultant, Pay Governance LLC (Pay Governance). The Compensation Committee has reviewed the Company's compensation policies and practices to determine whether they subject the Company to unnecessary risk or could potentially motivate employees to take excessive risk. To assist the Compensation Committee in its assessment, the Company's Enterprise Risk Management team conducted a review of the Company's compensation policies and practices and reported to the Compensation Committee its findings as follows:

base salaries are a sufficient component of total compensation to discourage risk taking;

Table of Contents

earnings goals under the Company's Amended and Restated Annual Incentive Plan for Designated Corporate Officers (AIP) are based upon its audited financial statements and the Company believes that the goals are attainable without the need to take inappropriate risks or make material changes to the Company's business or strategy;

named executive officers who receive payment under the AIP and Long-Term Incentive Plan (LTIP) may be required to reimburse the Company for all or a portion of the payment (commonly referred to as a clawback) if the Company must prepare an accounting restatement because it is in material noncompliance with any financial reporting requirements or in the case of fraud, embezzlement or other serious misconduct, which discourages risk taking;

Market Stock Unit (MSU) awards under the LTIP are typically based upon total shareholder return over three-year periods, which mitigates risks associated with taking short-term risks;

because incentive compensation has a large stock component to it, the value is best realized through long-term appreciation of stockholder value, especially when coupled with the stock ownership guidelines, which expose the Company's named executive officers to the loss of the value of the retained equity if stock appreciation is jeopardized; and

the use of incentive compensation components that are paid or vest over an extended period also mitigates against unnecessary or excessive risk taking.

Furthermore, the Enterprise Risk Management team has continued to evaluate and review new or amended compensation policies or practices and has reported its findings to the Compensation Committee, which are consistent with the principles identified above.

As a result of the review, management and the Compensation Committee have concluded that the Company's compensation policies and practices are not reasonably likely to have a material adverse effect on the Company.

Table of Contents

Committee Membership

The Board has the following six standing Committees: Audit, Compensation, Governance and Nominating, Finance and Risk Management, Home and Renew, and Nuclear Oversight, which includes the Nuclear Oversight Subcommittee. The membership and the functions of each Committee are described below.

Name of Director	Audit	Compensation	Governance and Nominating	Finance and Risk Management	Home and Renew	Nuclear Oversight
Howard E. Cosgrove ⁽¹⁾						$X^{(3)}$
Edward R. Muller ⁽²⁾						X
E. Spencer Abraham		X				$X^{(4)}$
Kirbyjon H. Caldwell			X	X		X
Lawrence S. Coben					$X^{(3)}$	X
David Crane						X
Terry G. Dallas	X					$X^{(4)}$
William E. Hantke	$X^{(3)}$	X				X
Paul W. Hobby					X	$X^{(5)}$
Anne C. Schaumburg	X					