



Redwood Coast Energy Authority

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COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

DRAFT MINUTES

July 14, 2020 - Tuesday, 6 - 7:30 p.m.

The agenda for this meeting was posted on July 10, 2020. Community Advisory Committee Chair Larry Goldberg called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m., stating that the meeting was being conducted by teleconference pursuant to Brown Act waivers included in Governor Newsom's COVID-19 State of Emergency Executive Orders and in response to local efforts to reduce the spread of the virus. Chair Goldberg stated that the posted agenda outlined instructions for the public on listening to the meeting and providing comment.

Members present:

Norman Bell

Elizabeth Burks

Jerome Carman

Colin Fiske

Larry Goldberg, Chair

Richard Johnson

Luna Latimer

Dennis Leonardi, Vice Chair

Kit Mann

Matty Tittman

Amin Younes

Members absent:

Pam Halstead

Tom Hofweber

Kathy Srabian

Stephen Avis, Board Liaison (non-voting)

Staff present:

Stephen Kullmann, DSM Director

Matthew Marshall, Executive Director

Nancy Stephenson, Community Strategies

Lori Taketa, Board Clerk

Chair Goldberg welcomed new members Amin Younes and Elizabeth Burks to the Community Advisory Committee.

Minutes Approval

Chair Goldberg invited comment. There were no comments from committee members or members of the public. Chair Goldberg closed the public comment period.

Motion Mann, Second Johnson: Approve minutes of April 14, 2020, CAC meeting.

The motion passed with a roll call vote. Ayes: Bell, Carman, Fiske, Goldberg, Johnson, Latimer, Leonardi, Mann, Younes. Noes: None. Abstain: Burks. Absent: Halstead, Hofweber, Srabian, Tittman.

Alternative Biomass Use Presentation

Member Tittman arrived at 6:09 p.m.

Executive Director Marshall reported that the Humboldt State University students who participated in the Environmental Resources Engineering capstone class on biomass alternative uses were not available to make a presentation at the meeting. Power Resources Director Engel worked with the students during the spring semester to assess alternative, non-combustion uses for forest industry waste. The committee members determined that Tuesday, August 11 at 6 p.m. was when most members were available to hear the presentation. The group requested access to the students' written reports prior to the presentation.

RePower Humboldt Energy Strategic Plan Update (Q2)

Executive Director Marshall presented a progress report on the RePower Humboldt plan that the Board approved in December 2019. A progress report will be given twice a year to the Board and CAC. Mr. Marshall reviewed the agency budget and RePower strategies from the different agency program areas.

The budgets for previously approved customer programs funded through RCEA's community choice energy (CCE) program are being carried forward, and in some cases increased, for the 2020-21 fiscal year. Future customer program budgets may be constrained due to financial uncertainties caused by COVID-19 and anticipated increases to the power charge indifference adjustment or exit fee. The CAC's customer program subcommittee will be engaged to help plan future steps for CCE-funded customer programs.

The status of transportation programs were reviewed. Funds for the citizen-sourced e-bike rebate program were quickly disbursed and the Board approved additional program funding. Rebate recipients will be surveyed on e-bike usage and mileage to calculate the program's greenhouse gas emissions impact and inform the design of future programs. Mr. Marshall reported on the RCEA EV charging network hardware upgrades and expansion and the upcoming EV charging station rebate program, which could potentially include demand-response features to leverage more funds. Local EV rebates for cars will mirror the state EV rebates (at smaller dollar amounts).

Both the long-running Energy Watch efficiency program partnership with PG&E and the Proposition 39 program are ending. Program accomplishments were reviewed, including annual customer, public agency and school district savings. The CCE-funded residential energy efficiency programs replaced some of the Energy Watch residential programs when PG&E discontinued program funding. Staff performed over 250 energy efficiency consultations with residents and mailed out over 100 efficiency kits to customers. The CCE-funded Public Agency Solar Program focused first on energy efficiency measures then assisted in securing zero- to 1-percent interest solar project

loans and providing technical assistance with project planning and management. The program will be expanded to include battery storage to add emergency resilience. The new RCEA-administered energy efficiency program funding and new PG&E energy efficiency technical assistance partnership were described.

Mr. Marshall introduced new Demand-Side Management Department Director Stephen Kullmann. Director Kullmann previously worked on microgrids, water infrastructure, transportation programs and capacity-building programs for the Blue Lake Rancheria. He reminded the committee of energy efficiency's importance, and shared that he is eager to launch the CCE-funded heat pump rebate program in the fall and the Green Your Grow and grocery refrigerant program in early 2021.

The behind-the-meter storage program, a joint effort of the Power Resources and Demand-Side Management Departments, was described. The program will help meet the state-mandated resource adequacy requirements by helping local customers, both facilities and residents, build energy resilience by installing energy storage for existing solar systems. The batteries will help the customers save money and reduce carbon emissions while improving grid reliability. RCEA would pay local customers for this resource adequacy rather than paying for RA from other parts of the state. These payments and the CPUC's Self-Generation Incentive Program rebate will create a one-time opportunity for local public agencies and certain community members to obtain no- or low-cost battery storage systems. Qualifying low-income and tribal community customers will be encouraged to participate in this program to maximize the incentive program's local benefits.

Mr. Marshall described the status of Power Resources projects: the airport microgrid, the potential for renewable energy microgrids in Willow Creek and Hoopa, offshore wind development and the solar feed-in-tariff program. A consultant will be contracted to provide technical expertise in several RePower Humboldt work areas, including assessing the feasibility of small, local, run-of-river hydropower projects.

The Integrated Resource Plan (IRP), a long-term electricity portfolio plan for meeting customer loads was presented.

Committee member Mann left at 7:14 p.m. Member Latimer left at 7:19 p.m.

Chair Goldberg invited public comment. No member of the public made comment. Chair Goldberg closed the public comment period.

County Energy Resilience Bond Subcommittee

Executive Director Marshall explained that in the wake of the Terra-Gen onshore wind project's rejection, the County is seeking ways to promote energy resilience. The COVID pandemic made a general obligation, tax-based municipal bond unfeasible, but a revenue bond which would use project revenues to repay the financing remains a possibility. The County has asked RCEA to evaluate potential energy projects for financing. Mr. Marshall proposed the creation of an ad hoc CAC subcommittee to assess the feasibility of energy revenue bond projects and work with staff on evaluating options and developing recommendations for the County. The subcommittee would likely perform the work over the next six months.

Members Elizabeth Burks, Colin Fiske, Larry Goldberg, Richard Johnson, and Amin Younes volunteered to serve on the subcommittee.

Committee member Carman left at 7:38 p.m.

There was no public comment for this agenda item. The committee members agreed to establish an ad hoc subcommittee to work with staff to evaluate potential options for a County revenue bond to fund local energy independence and resilience.

PSPS Update

Executive Director Marshall shared a PG&E map of areas around Humboldt Bay that can remain energized during a public safety power shutoff event if no fire risk exists in Humboldt County. The energized areas coincide with electricity grid substation locations. PG&E proposed to power the Willow Creek and Hoopa substations, which services customers to Weitchpec, Orleans and Soames Bar, with temporary diesel generators this fire season if there is no local fire risk. RCEA staff is following up with PG&E to find out if any customers remain outside of the energized areas and will be developing targeted solutions for them. Mr. Marshall described the opportunity to evaluate the potential to develop renewable energy microgrids to replace the diesel generators in Willow Creek and Hoopa.

Chair Goldberg invited public comment. No member of the public made comment. Chair Goldberg closed the public comment period.

Member Reports

Chair Goldberg reported that he located a copy of "Project Independence," a document on energy needs and solutions for Humboldt County written 47 years ago. The report did not anticipate the current high level of solar energy adoption in the County, and the only named solution that was not implemented was cogeneration. RCEA staff will scan the document and keep a copy in RCEA's archives.

Chair Goldberg adjourned the meeting at 7:52 p.m.

Lori Taketa
Board Clerk