



Redwood Coast Energy Authority

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COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

March 9, 2021 - Tuesday, 6 - 7:30 p.m.

The agenda for this meeting was posted on March 5, 2021. Community Advisory Committee Chair Larry Goldberg called the meeting to order at 6:03 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	Roger Hess
Elizabeth Burks	Richard Johnson
Jerome Carman (arrived 6:38 p.m.)	Luna Latimer
Colin Fiske	Dennis Leonardi, Vice Chair
Larry Goldberg, Chair	Kit Mann
Catherine Gurin	Matty Tittmann (arrived 6:09 p.m.)
Pam Halstead	Chris Curran, Board Liaison (non-voting)

Members absent:

Amin Younes

Staff and others present:

Richard Engel, Power Resources Director
Jaclyn Harr, The Energy Authority Client Services Manager
Matthew Marshall, Executive Director
Nancy Stephenson, Community Strategies Manager
Tyler Studds, Head of Offshore Wind Business Development – West, Ocean Winds
Lori Taketa, Board Clerk

Minutes Approval

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

Motion Leonardi, Second Halstead: Approve minutes of January 12, 2021, CAC meeting.

The motion passed with a unanimous roll call vote. Ayes: Bell, Burks, Fiske, Gurin, Goldberg, Halstead, Hess, Johnson, Latimer, Leonardi, Mann. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Carman, Tittmann, Younes.

Chair Goldberg invited public comment on non-agenda items. No member of the public commented. Chair Goldberg closed the public comment period.

RePower Humboldt Energy Strategic Plan Update (information only)

The County tasks RCEA with developing a regional Comprehensive Action Plan for Energy in its General Plan. Executive Director Matthew Marshall reported on RCEA's progress on the strategic plan objectives:

- County climate action plan work continues. Reports to the different municipalities and the County Board of Supervisors and public meetings will begin soon.
- Upgrades are being made to electric vehicle (EV) charging stations. RCEA is making city and County planners aware of new EV infrastructure building code standards and encouraging implementation.
- Airport microgrid site preparation is beginning.
- RCEA is pursuing long-term renewable energy resilience solutions with PG&E for Hoopa and Willow Creek, which do not benefit from the Humboldt Bay Generating Station's islanding capability.
- The agency is exploring clean power options for Samoa Peninsula development.
- The CCE program is planning how to do its part to make up for the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant's decommissioning. It is hoped that local projects can fulfil the anticipated state new project construction requirement.
- New Demand-Side Management programs are beginning in 2021. Funding will come from CPUC programs, PG&E partnership and RCEA's CCE program.
- RCEA is in final negotiations to use customer battery storage for grid reliability. Customers whom RCEA helped to reserve over \$40 million in behind-the-meter energy storage state funding may participate in this program.
- RCEA is participating in developing a Rural Regional Energy Network (RuralREN) made up of rural, hard to reach energy efficiency agencies to pursue program funding. RCEA will be the fiscal administrator for this RuralREN.

The group discussed how:

- RCEA can make electric-powered transportation rebates more equitable by encouraging EV charging development at multi-family housing properties and by offering a second ebike rebate targeting CARE and FERA customers;
- Electrification does not make sense for Eastern Humboldt unless cleaner power generation during power outages can be established to replace diesel generators, as power outages happen in that area frequently;
- The RuralREN's request for RCEA to be the fiscal lead indicates RCEA's prominent position; and
- The CPUC is beginning to acknowledge building electrification's importance in decarbonization in its public purpose program energy efficiency funding programs. RCEA will support funding these types of projects.

CCE Program Status and Request for CAC Input on Balancing Financial Goals

Power Resources Director Richard Engel described how the Board strives to maintain the Community Choice Energy program's financial viability while balancing these goals:

- Customer rate savings compared to PG&E's power generation rates,
- Maintaining a green power portfolio compared with PG&E's power mix and state law mandates,
- Building the CCE program's financial reserves, and
- Funding customer programs.

This year will be financially challenging based on market predictions and the program will need to dip into financial reserves. The Energy Authority Client Services Manager Jaclyn Harr described how the Board adjusted the customer rate discount to 0.5% below PG&E's generation rates and temporarily reduced the RCEA energy portfolio's environmental targets in excess of state requirements as a belt-tightening measure. Ms. Harr described other factors driving the CCE program's financial forecast:

- an increase in delayed electric bill payments during the pandemic,
- PG&E's generation rate changes,
- the expected power charge indifference adjustment (PCIA or exit fee) increase which PG&E and the CPUC control, and
- the effects of summer and winter extreme weather on energy prices.

RCEA addresses these risks by building the program's financial reserves and purchasing energy price hedges. Ms. Harr reminded the committee that these risks also illustrate the need to assess the CCE program's goals in the context of the larger financial and energy picture. The CCE program is entering into state-mandated, long-term renewable power procurement contracts that will help stabilize energy prices and provide more fiscal certainty.

Due to the limited time available, Chair Goldberg asked that the report on how other CCE programs are addressing financial difficulties, gathering CAC input for the Board on how to improve the CCE program's financial situation, and the time-of-use billing report be moved to the May CAC meeting.

Offshore Wind Project Update

Ocean Winds Head of Offshore Wind Business Development – West Tyler Studds described Ocean Winds' experience with floating and fixed bottom offshore wind around the world. Ocean Winds partnered with Aker Offshore Wind and RCEA to submit an unsolicited lease to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) for development of an area 32 km off Humboldt County's coastline. BOEM since denied the lease proposal and opened an auction call area overlapping the partnership's proposed development area. Mr. Studds described the partnership's goals to provide competitively priced renewable energy, prioritize stakeholder engagement and acceptance, and maximize both local infrastructure investment and the project's economic viability. Mr. Studds described Humboldt's extremely high-quality, deep-water wind resource which rivals the best areas around the world and which approach levels needed to provide the county with baseload power to balance solar energy during non-daylight hours. The necessary harbor development, BOEM lease process, multi-year site assessment and study periods, and turbine and cable configuration were described.

The partnership's proposed offshore wind project energy capacity is comparable to that of the Humboldt Bay Generating Station. Developing additional turbines and increasing output is not currently feasible since the turbines would need to be stopped during high wind periods due to the grid's inability to export large amounts of excess electricity. The Schatz Energy Research Center worked with PG&E to analyze possible over-land and sub-sea transmission lines from Humboldt County. The infrastructure upgrade was estimated to cost at least \$1-2 billion, and investment by the state in a project of this scale is unlikely until it is demonstrated that viable offshore wind can be developed.

Upon inquiry about ocean floor feeding whales near the proposed turbine sites, Mr. Studds reported that publicly-funded studies are being conducted on offshore wind and its potential impacts on ocean life. Mooring and inter-array cables are too large to cause marine animal entanglements, however fishing net entanglement does pose potential risk to whales. Project designers will incorporate mitigation strategies based on study findings.

Member Reports

- The committee members thanked outgoing member Matty Tittmann for his service since the CAC was founded.
- Member Kit Mann reported that the presentation of the Alternative Biomass Uses Subcommittee's report to the Board has been delayed due to full agendas. Member Mann hopes to present the report in March.
- Member Fiske requested hearing about ways to lobby the CPUC on changes to the power charge indifference adjustment as part of May's CCE program status report.

Chair Goldberg adjourned the meeting at 7:34 p.m.

Lori Taketa
Board Clerk