



REDWOOD COAST Energy Authority

Arcata | Blue Lake | Blue Lake Rancheria | County of Humboldt | Eureka | Ferndale | Fortuna | Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District | Rio Dell | Trinidad | Yurok Tribe

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

**Jefferson Community Center Auditorium
1000 B Street, Eureka, CA 95501**

**April 24, 2025
Thursday, 3:30 p.m.**

Vice Chair Sheri Woo called a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Redwood Coast Energy Authority to order on the above date at 3:34 p.m. Notice of this meeting was posted on April 18, 2025.

PRESENT: Chair Scott Bauer (just cause remote participation, local agency travel), Michael Gerace (left at 4:50 p.m.), Skip Jorgensen, Alt. Dir. Cheryl Kelly, Jason Ramos (left at 4:51 p.m.), Elise Scafani, Frank Wilson, Vice Chair Sheri Woo. ABSENT: Natalie Arroyo, Carlos Diaz, Jack Tuttle, Sarah Schaefer.

STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT: Business Planning and Finance Director Lori Biondini, Infrastructure Planning and Operations Director Dana Boudreau, Executive Director Elizabeth Burks, Regulatory and Legislative Policy Manager Faith Carlson, Power Resources Director Richard Engel, Senior Program Manager Ben Mattio, Account Services Manager Marisha Ramirez-Escareño, Board Clerk Lori Taketa, Deputy Executive Director Eileen Verbeck.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- 4.1** Approve Minutes of March 27, 2025, Board Meeting.
- 4.2** Approve Disbursements Report.
- 4.3** Accept Financial Reports.
- 4.4** Approve the following amendment to extend the Professional Service Agreements for RuralREN North startup activities through May 31, 2025:
 1. Amendment No. 2 with Sierra Business Council in the amount of \$390,754.
 2. Amendment No. 1 with Lake Area Planning Council in the amount of \$88,884,
and
 3. Amendment No. 1 with Mendocino Council of Governments in the amount of \$88,436,
and authorize the Executive Director to execute all applicable documents.

- 4.5** Award professional services agreement to Energy Resources Integration to perform the NREN commercial energy assessment for a not to exceed value of \$200,000 and authorize the Executive Director to execute all applicable documents.

M/S: Ramos, Jorgensen: Approve Consent Calendar items.

The motion passed with a unanimous roll call vote. Ayes: Bauer, Gerace, Jorgensen, Kelly, Ramos, Scafani, Wilson, Woo. Noes: None. Absent: Arroyo, Diaz, Schaefer. Abstain: None.

6.1. Study Session on Electricity Affordability

Executive Director Burks introduced the study session on electricity affordability by noting how goals such as safety, reliability, clean energy and innovative programs must be balanced with electricity affordability. In Humboldt County almost 30% of households qualify for CARE or FERA low-income bill assistance programs, and in most of the County there is a concentration of households earning \$18,100/year or less that spend more than 15% of their wages on electricity bills after paying for housing, water and gas. The number of people who stopped paying their electricity bills is rising. The study session covered what is included in electricity bills and efforts to address rising costs.

When RCEA's Community Choice Energy (CCE) program began in 2017, transmission and distribution costs were roughly equal to electricity usage costs on an RCEA customer bill. RCEA's charges are limited to electricity usage. Transmission and distribution charges can now make up two-thirds of both PG&E and RCEA customers' bills. Energy supply and related costs have also risen. Every 1% of renewable energy RCEA procures above the state requirement increases power procurement costs by 4%. Staff members described aspects of electricity pricing, including the Power Charge Indifference Adjustment, policy drivers affecting rates, and RCEA's customer programs aimed at helping manage energy costs. The board also discussed solar billing, the CPUC General Rate Case which approves electricity transmission and distribution upgrades, and different utility models including municipally-owned utilities.

Staff asked Board members to direct the community to RCEA's programs, and inform people of RCEA customer benefits including lower electricity bills. Since RCEA's CCE program began, Humboldt County RCEA customers together saved roughly \$7.3 million on their electricity bills compared to if they had remained PG&E customers. Board directors were also asked to help policy makers understand the larger context of the electricity affordability issue, including grid under-investment and externalized fossil fuel costs. There were no public comments on this item.

STAFF REPORTS

10.1 Executive Director's Report (Information only)

Executive Director Burks reported that the Finance Committee will review the draft fiscal year 2025-2026 budget which will be presented at the next Board meeting. The May Community

Advisory Committee meeting will focus on committee goal setting and working groups. Staff is preparing and scheduling a community battery storage presentation in Arcata. The date and time will be announced. There were no public comments.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Directors requested a staff report on how CPUC General Rate Case dollars are spent, whether RCEA can advocate for spending those funds on infrastructure projects, and whether any of those funds are spent on Tribal lands.

Vice Chair Woo adjourned the meeting at 5:01 p.m.

Lori Taketa
Board Clerk