



Draft Minutes

Community Advisory Committee Meeting

Monday, July 17, 2023

6:00 pm

In Person:

The Lake Merritt Room
Cal State East Bay - the Oakland Center
In the Transpacific Centre
1000 Broadway, Suite 109
Oakland, CA 94607

Or from the following locations:

- 4563 Meyer Park Circle, Fremont, CA 94536
- 3602 Thornton Ave, Fremont, CA 94536
- Starbucks - 20663 Rustic Dr. Castro Valley, CA 94546

Via Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84794506189>

Or join by phone:

Dial (for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1 669 900 6833 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 929 205
6099 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or 877 853 5257 (Toll Free)

Webinar ID: 847 9450 6189

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If you have anything that you wish to be distributed to the Committee, please email it to the clerk by 5:00 pm the day prior to the meeting.

C1. Welcome & Roll Call

Present: Members Landry, Hu, Swaminathan, Lakshman, Pacheco, Lutz, Vice-Chair Hernandez and Chair Eldred.

Excused: Members Liu, Talreja and Souza

C2. Public Comment

This item is reserved for persons wishing to address the Committee on any EBCE-related matters that are not otherwise on this meeting agenda. Public comments on matters listed on the agenda shall be heard at the time the matter is called. As with all public comment, members of the public who wish to address the Committee are customarily limited to three minutes per speaker and must complete an electronic [speaker slip](#). The Committee Chair may increase or decrease the time allotted to each speaker.

(2:31) Tom Kelly expressed his deep concerns about the escalating global temperature crisis, referencing recent record highs reported worldwide. He is contemplating opting out of EBCE due to his belief that the agency contributes to the global climate crisis. Additionally, he's considering pursuing legal avenues to ensure EBCE adheres to its JPA obligations. Mr. Kelly urged the committee to explicitly communicate their actions in response to his repeated concerns, seeking clarity beyond intermittent acknowledgements from the chair. He emphasized the importance of meaningful dialogue at community meetings rather than moving on post-comments without substantial engagement.

(5:30) Barbara Stebbins addressed Item 9, “Authorizing CEO to Negotiate and Execute Leases and Consulting Services Agreement with Zevvy for EBCE Drive and Charge Research and Development Initiative” on the July 19, 2023 EBCE board agenda. This item would authorize an \$85,000 investment for a Drive and Charge Research and Development Program as a segment of a broader \$6 million plan aimed at promoting electric vehicle adoption, especially in areas with affordable multi-family housing. The initiative proposes leasing six types of electric vehicles to EBCE staff for two weeks, after which the participants would provide feedback via surveys. Stebbins expressed concerns over the program's potential effectiveness in achieving its primary goal. She proposed that instead of this approach, EBCE could channel the \$85,000 towards Zevvy to offer free short-term leases to residents of affordable multi-family housing. This, she believes, would yield more relevant feedback and be a more impactful use of the funds.

The following is a summary of a written public comment that the clerk read in to the record:

(8:14) Richard Esteves from Quality Conservation Services responded to previous comments by Member Lisa Hu about the need for innovative collaborations to serve hard-to-reach populations in the EBCE community. Esteves proposed a collaboration between EBCE, Tesla, Swell Energy, and Quality Conservation to provide free whole-house battery storage systems to

Medical Baseline families residing in high fire-threat zones or those frequently affected by PSPS shut-offs. The installation would be funded by SGIP rebates, without EBCE incurring any cost. The estimated value of these systems is about \$36,400 each. Given potential concerns over the magnitude of this offering, Esteves suggested piloting the program in one or two communities, such as Oakland which has 789 Medical Baseline customers. He highlighted the comparative advantage of their system over EBCE's existing medical baseline battery program, emphasizing its greater capacity and alignment with EBCE's energy priorities. He requested the CAC to consider this collaboration proposal and for the staff to assess and report on the offer during a subsequent CAC meeting.

C3. Approval of Minutes from June 20, 2023

(11:40) Member Lutz observed that in Item C5, "EBCE FY 2023-24 Budget" in the June 20, 2023 CAC minutes "on-time bill credit" should be changed to "one-time bill credit".

Member Landry motioned to approve the minutes, pending Member Lutz's requested correction. Member Lutz seconded the motion which passed 7/0/4

Excused: Members Hu, Liu, Talreja and Souza

C4. CAC Chair Report

Brand Identity Update:

Discussion about ongoing development of Ava Community Energy's visual identity, including logo feedback, and planning for design finalization in September and an October soft launch.

CAC Chair Eldred provided updates from the June 21, 2023 Board meeting:

- The Board approved renaming the agency to Ava Community Energy.
- Community Advisory Committee seats were extended for six months.
- The Emissions Overview presentation was postponed again due to new data becoming available. The CAC chair expressed concern that this delays the Board hearing about EBCE's emissions.
- The Board approved the fiscal year 2023-24 budget, substituting the CAC's recommendation to hold one-time bill credit funds in an unspecified pool rather than allocating 50% to renewable energy. The CAC chair raised equity concerns about the credit structure.
- Annie Henderson gave an update that the Ava Community Energy branding process is underway to create a new logo and visual identity assets. These will come to the Board in September.

- Alex DiGordio announced that the City of Lathrop recently voted to seek EBCE membership, which requires further analysis and Board approval in the fall.
- Vice Chair Hernandez summarized some upcoming Board agenda items, including the CEO's contract extension and Treasury Report.
- The CAC Chair highlighted an item authorizing an electric vehicle research initiative that the CAC will not be discussing.
- There was discussion about logo design options and potential acronym issues with the rebranding to Ava.

C5. EBCE FY 2023-24 Budget (CAC Action Item)

Adopt a resolution approving the FY23-24 budget

(58:25) Member Pacheco inquired if the anticipated savings of two to three million dollars per year for the initial term was for the full 30-year duration or for a shorter term. He specifically referred to a bond period of five to ten years.

(59:24) Member Swaminathan asked Howard Chang about the volumes involved in each tranche as a percentage of the entire supply requirements.

Member Swaminathan further inquired about the point at which they would be considered sufficient in terms of load percentages, querying whether it might be 20%, 30%, or 40%.

(1:03:07) Member Lutz initiated the discussion by seeking clarification on whether the mechanism in question allows EBCE to borrow money at a more favorable rate than typically available.

Member Lutz then inquired if EBCE currently owns any generation sites, to which Howard Chang responded in the negative. When asked about future plans to own generation sites, Chang explained that historically it has not been a common practice for entities to own renewable assets due to efficiency reasons.

Finally, **Member Lutz** proposed a concept about the feasibility of directing bond investments back into the EBCE territory so that the interest payments benefit EBCE members. Howard Chang expressed that, in theory, it's an interesting idea. However, in practice, they work with large institutional bond investors, like Vanguard, and he wasn't aware of any such investors being based in Alameda County or San Joaquin County. **Member Lutz** clarified that he wasn't suggesting its immediate implementation but wanted to raise awareness for future consideration.

(1:08:34) Member Hernandez stressed the importance of local infrastructure investment by EBCE. Using the example of a client limited by current infrastructure, he highlighted the need for the EBCE to collaborate with the state to enhance local energy infrastructure. This would ensure resiliency, bring direct benefits to residents, and utilize the funds recently allocated by the governor for clean energy.

(1:13:04) Member Lutz motioned to approve the motion with the addition of asking the Board to direct staff to consider ways to benefit investors within EBCE territory. Member Pacheco seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with all members present:

Yes: 7

No: 0

Excused: 4

C6. Amendment to Non-standard Rate Policy (CAC Action Item)

Revise policy to expand eligibility to beneficial electrification projects on municipal buildings

(1:21:52) Member Lutz inquired about EBCE's policy regarding matching energy rates from other companies. Alex DiGordio confirmed that EBCE could match rates within the stipulated policy guidelines, ensuring no losses and maintaining consistency with their renewable energy commitments. Member Lutz further questioned if EBCE intended to match rates for natural gas energy purchases from municipal entities. Alex DiGordio clarified that the intention is not to match natural gas rates but to incentivize municipalities, using the City of Piedmont's new pool as an example, to adopt costlier but environmentally friendly alternatives. Chair Eldred summarized that the approach allows EBCE to negotiate rates based on actual costs rather than relying on PG&E rates. Alex DiGordio agreed and emphasized that negotiations would remain within policy guidelines.

Public comment:

(1:25:30) Jessica Tovar asked how this policy would affect household rate payers. Alex DiGordio explained that the policy aims to retain large municipal, commercial, or industrial loads, which in turn supports EBCE's competitive advantages. By maintaining these advantages, EBCE can offer discounted rates to household rate payers.

(1:28:49) Member Lutz spoke in support of calculating EBCE rates independently of PG&E rates and stated that that EBCE rates should be calculated in a similar manner across the board.

Member Pacheco motioned to approve the staff recommendation. Member Landry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with all members present:

Yes: 7

No: 0

Excused: 4

C7. Coordinating EBCE Local Development Actions: City Staff Perspectives (CAC Informational Item)

CAC Member Lutz presented findings from discussions he held with city sustainability staff from most EBCE member communities.

(1:46:30) Chair Eldred stated that she hoped that, as Member Lutz reaches out to other cities, that he encourages facilitation between city sustainability staff and their respective Board and CAC members.

Public Comment:

(1:47:34) Audrey Ichinose from East Bay Clean Power Alliance expressed her appreciation to Jim for his efforts to bridge understanding between municipalities and EBCE staff. She suggested that EBCE staff could expand the scope of board retreats to include more than just board members, citing the value of recent retreats on Analytics and Public Policy. These retreats allowed the public to gain deeper insights into EBCE's operational processes. Audrey Ichinose emphasized the benefits of broader engagement and commended Member Lutz for his proactive approach, noting the evident goodwill from all involved parties.

(1:49:47) Jessica Tovar highlighted that many cities have committed to renewable energy initiatives with the promise of more local investment and stressed the need for EBCE and cities to work in conjunction with communities to understand their desires for development and investment. Specifically, she noted a preference for focusing on building decarbonization over vehicle electrification, arguing that not everyone has access to electric vehicles. As a representative of Local Clean Energy Alliance, Tovar emphasized the importance of prioritizing community interests and ensuring that sustainability departments best represent their cities.

(1:52:30) Member Landry inquired about what kind of municipal program designs were being referenced when discussing the cities' desire for more collaboration and lead time. Member Lutz responded by using the example of EBCE's electric vehicle charging program. He explained that while EBCE had certain parameters in mind for placing chargers in large city lots, not all cities had spaces that could accommodate this. Thus, while the program design might

work for some cities, it wouldn't be suitable for others. Member Lutz emphasized the importance of early collaboration and seeking input from cities during the program design phase to ensure the initiatives cater to each city's unique needs.

(1:54:29) Member Landry expressed her support for 100 percent renewable energy, referencing frequent comments made by Tom Kelly on the topic. She questioned if, given the previously approved policy on non-standard pricing rates for municipalities, EBCE staff could foster increased collaboration with cities, particularly in relation to their climate action plans and understanding their specific needs and program objectives.

(1:56:13) Member Pacheco shared his long-standing advocacy for the CAC and how he initially championed the initiative due to cities partnering for local innovations and renewable energy programs. He noted the challenge faced in getting the Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) included in Hayward's financial plan. He observed that many city councils view joining EBCE as a significant carbon reduction step, often treating it as a completed task without further coordination or innovation. Member Pacheco expressed interest in the detailed feedback from state building managers and appreciated the monthly meetings held by Alex DiGordio. He emphasized the potential for greater collaboration between EBCE staff, sustainability managers, and city councils to foster more innovation and a cohesive dialogue.

(1:58:26) Member Swaminathan requested that, once Member Lutz's findings are finalized, that EBCE staff review them and share their perspective. Additionally, he asked for a presentation detailing the various ways in which EBCE staff currently engage with city staff and their future plans for such engagements, covering all the different forums and avenues of their collaborations.

(2:00:04) Vice-Chair Hernandez emphasized the importance of collaboration in designing and building programs that effectively serve entities partnering with EBCE. He underscored the necessity of involving community organizations that promote clean jobs and local workers in these processes, ensuring that such programs result in quality job opportunities. By referencing infrastructure as an example, Vice-Chair Hernandez highlighted the need for a strategic roadmap detailing local development plans for the next 5-10 years. He compared the planning process to home building, stating that without initial collaboration, the project could face numerous inefficiencies and changes. Vice-Chair Hernandez concluded by emphasizing EBCE's mission: to provide a more sustainable, inclusive, and affordable energy alternative to PG&E.

(2:02:12) Chair Eldred expressed enthusiasm over the evident eagerness of participating cities to align their budget cycles to better enroll in EBCE's programs and actively coordinate to fully utilize what the agency offers. She commended the staff for their impressive work, particularly praising JP Ross's contributions to the Local Development Business Plan. Chair Eldred was pleased to hear positive feedback about staff collaborations with city and county representatives. Chair Eldred acknowledged Member Lutz's initiative in this effort and stressed the value of such proactive involvement by CAC members. The Chair emphasized her desire to strengthen the engagement between CAC members and their respective jurisdictions, citing her personal involvement in Oakland's climate action planning as an example of productive collaboration.

C8. CAC Member and Staff Announcements including requests to place items on future CAC agendas

- **(2:05:44) Chair Eldred** recommended the creation of CAC Awards to recognize community members who are advocating in the green, clean and affordable energy space. Awards would be similar to former EBCE Chair Scott Haggarty's Chair Awards. Chair Eldred requested that Members recommend potential nominations to her.
- **(2:07:16) Vice-Chair Hernandez** requested to understand how EBCE might collaborate with the state to enhance the energy grid, using the development of local battery energy storage systems as an example. He expressed interest in understanding how EBCE can utilize its resources to invest in infrastructure and inquired about other potential initiatives EBCE might undertake.
- **(2:08:34) Member Landry** requested that Richard Esteves' July 17, 2023 public comment letter be forwarded to the board for follow-up, in particular the offer from Quality Conservation Services to set up a pilot to provide free whole-house battery storage systems to EBCE's Medical Baseline families.

C9. Adjournment to Monday, September 18, 2023 at 6:00 pm