



Draft Minutes

Community Advisory Committee Meeting

Monday, October 16, 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:

- GTU Student Services Center, basement lounge - 2465 Le Conte Ave, Berkeley, CA 94709 (Visitors must be buzzed in to gain entry to the building after hours)
- 4563 Meyer Park Circle, Fremont, CA 94536
- 3602 Thornton Ave, Fremont, CA 94536
- Castro Valley Starbucks - 2720 Castro Valley Blvd. Castro Valley, CA 94546
- Starbucks - 1857 11th St Tracy, CA 95376
- 10501 SE Main St., Milwaukie OR 97222

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, Liu, Swaminathan, Lakshman, Pacheco, Souza, Kaur, Lutz, Vice-Chair Hernandez and Chair Eldred

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.

Public Comment: (4:34) Jessica Tovar from the Local Clean Energy Alliance emphasized the need to evaluate the Local Development Business Plan, which is intended to provide community benefits like energy efficiency and electrification, along with creating jobs and energy assets within the community. She highlighted the importance of these developments, particularly who benefits and where they are located. Jessica Tovar called for updated metrics on the plan's investments and projects, particularly in light of the expansion to include San Joaquin County cities and advocated for the reinvestment of electricity payments into community benefits and resilience projects like microgrids.

C3. Approval of Minutes from September 18, 2023

No vote was taken on the September 18, 2023 minutes.

C4. CAC Chair Report

C5. (9:29) Update on Net Billing Tariff (CAC Informational Item)

Brief review of NBT planning and overview of status

The "Update on Net Billing Tariff" item was discussed at length, though there was no formal presentation by staff. CAC Chair Eldred led the discussion, recalling past reports and highlighting concerns about the shift from net energy metering to net billing tariff. Concerns were expressed that this change could negatively impact the economic incentives for rooftop solar and other forms of renewable energy. Members voiced the need for more information and expressed opposition to the CPUC's handling of the matter, suggesting that EBCE could explore alternatives

like supporting battery storage to mitigate reliance on the grid during peak hours. Members called for a more definitive report in the future, possibly including a presentation from experts to better understand the implications of the tariff changes.

(15:22) Jim Lutz asked several questions regarding the net billing tariff which he had hoped to discuss with staff. Member Lutz:

- Questioned the rationale behind net metering policies that limit the size of solar energy systems to the load of the building they are installed on, suggesting that EBCE should encourage as much solar and storage as possible to benefit the grid.
- Expressed skepticism about the Public Utilities Commission's (PUC) avoided cost calculation, which he believes does not account for the local benefits of solar production, such as reducing congestion and delaying the need for new transmission lines.
- Sought clarification on whether a statement about staff returning to the board no later than December 2024 was a typo, as it implied a long delay in resolving these issues.
- Argued that EBCE should establish rates and policies based on its own evaluation of what's best for the agency and its customers, rather than following PG&E's lead.
- Queried the value to EBCE if a customer installs solar and storage, and whether EBCE could use these installations as a virtual power plant, compensating customers accordingly.
- Lastly, Member Lutz challenged the inclusion of fixed and non-bypassable charges in billing, advocating that these should be based on the physical connection to the grid rather than being blended with generation charges.

(24:02) Member Pacheco, echoing Member Lutz's sentiments, sought clarification about whether the proposed CPUC's net billing tariff (NBT) serves as a minimum baseline that EBCE must adhere to, or if the agency has the flexibility to implement additional measures. Member Pacheco suggested that EBCE could pursue innovative approaches for its customers regarding this tariff. Additionally, he mentioned the significant disagreement within the community regarding the CPUC's avoided cost calculations and proposed having an expert like Loretta Lynch, or a similarly qualified advocate, present a more realistic evaluation of these costs to the Board. Member Pacheco acknowledged that if the NBT is indeed a mandated floor, it might limit the agency's ability to deviate from it, but still emphasized the value of expert insight on the matter.

(27:16) Member Landry supported Member Pacheco's request for a clearer and more detailed report on the net billing tariff changes and expressed the need to understand the full scope of community perspectives on the issue. She

emphasized the importance of renewable energy incentives, particularly for solar, and hoped for an expert presentation to inform future discussions and decisions.

(29:13) Member Souza expressed disappointment with the Public Utilities Commission's (PUC) acceptance of the new net metering proposal, suggesting that EBCE could explore alternative solutions such as battery storage to reduce reliance on the grid in the evenings. She criticized the PUC's direction, particularly in the context of climate change and recent heatwaves, urging that decisive action be taken to address these challenges.

C6. (31:37) Emissions Overview (CAC Informational Item)

Informational overview on emissions

- Izzy Carson discussed EBCE's power content label and emissions reporting. Izzy Carson's presentation included data on the energy mix and emissions for EBCE's two products - Renewable 100 and Bright Choice.
- An overview was presented of the different categories for renewable energy credits (RECs) - PCC1, PCC2, and PCC3. PCC2 RECs are from out-of-state renewable sources but the energy is used locally in California.
- In 2020, a change in California law (AB 1110) required a shift from using a global emissions accounting methodology (Climate Registry) to a California-specific methodology. This resulted in higher reported emissions for EBCE in 2020 and 2021 compared to previous years.
- EBCE has set a goal to reach zero net emissions by 2030. They presented data showing they are ahead of the emissions reduction targets set in their previous plan from 2022.
- There was comparison data shown between EBCE and other Community Choice Aggregators in California. EBCE has lower renewable percentage but also lower rates compared to some others.
- There was discussion around reasons for EBCE's emissions being higher than some other CCAs. Nuclear allocation was one factor but seems not to be the biggest driver based on the data.
- Overall EBCE's projections for reducing emissions in the coming years look positive. There was acknowledgment of progress being made while also recognizing community concerns about current emissions levels.

Public Comment: (56:16) Audrey Ichinose asked three questions: First, she inquired about resource adequacy (RA) requirements and if they specify the need for clean energy or just RA in general. Secondly, she also sought clarity on the connection between the offer of nuclear power and the Power Charge Indifference Adjustment (PCIA), suggesting that there is an important context to be noted. Her third question related to large hydro resources being potentially less clean than other renewable energy sources.

In response, Izzy Carson clarified that the RA requirements discussed in the session were separate from the presentation's topic, and she wasn't the best person to provide detailed answers on RA. Regarding the nuclear allocation and its relation to PCIA, Izzy Carson explained that accepting nuclear or large hydro allocations does not incur additional costs for Community Choice Aggregators (CCAs), as PCIA is a non-bypassable charge paid by all customers. Jim Dorrance added that new RA requirements are emerging which do include specifications for cleaner and more dynamic energy sources, changing the previous RA paradigm. He also confirmed that there are no extra charges for accepting nuclear and large hydro allocations, as customers are already paying for these through PCIA. Jim Dorrance explained that by paying into PCIA, customers have the right to a proportionate share of the nuclear and carbon-free energy from PG&E's portfolio.

Public Comment: (1:02:35) Jessica Tovar criticized EBCE for suggesting that the choice not to utilize nuclear energy made the community less clean, asserting that nuclear power is not a clean energy option. She challenged the notion that accepting nuclear energy would be cost-free or beneficial, arguing that it perpetuates environmental racism by potentially extending the life of hazardous power plants. Tovar emphasized the core goal of Community Choice should be to provide truly renewable energy without compromising on environmental justice principles.

C7. (1:42:49) Community Innovation Grants (CAC Informational Item) Overview of Community Innovation Grants

- JP Ross presented four potential grant concepts focused on education, electric vehicle charging access, resilience hubs, and clean energy jobs training. These would be larger, multi-year grants compared to previous smaller grants.
- There was feedback from CAC members and the public requesting EBCE also make smaller, more accessible grants available to smaller community organizations. This could allow more creative, innovative, and grassroots ideas to be funded.
- Multiple CAC members emphasized the need to ensure grants reach historically underserved and disadvantaged communities, not just larger established organizations.
- There were suggestions to simplify the grant application process to increase accessibility for smaller organizations without grant writing expertise.
- Some CAC members preferred the grant concepts to be more open-ended or focused on problems rather than prescribed solutions.

- There was support for providing technical assistance to help small organizations apply for grants.
- CAC members appreciated the previous grant review process with a mix of Board, CAC, and staff reviewing applications and want to see that continue.
- Overall the CAC provided feedback on balancing larger and smaller grants, ensuring community targeting, simplifying applications, and maintaining an innovative open process.

Public Comment: (1:56:34) Jessica Tovar expressed concerns about the current approach to community innovation grants within EBCE, stating that they appear prescriptive rather than open to genuine community-led innovation. She highlighted difficulties faced by small community organizations in accessing these grants, particularly citing a complex application process for induction cooktop grants that favored larger entities. Tovar suggested that EBCE should offer smaller, more accessible \$50,000 grants with a three-year commitment to allow for creativity and sustained support. She also recommended that the grant selection process involve a mix of board members and community advisory committee members, as done in the past. Lastly, Tovar criticized the focus on marketing within the grant discussion and urged for a distinct marketing budget, advocating for grants to truly support community innovation. She concluded by indicating a willingness to discuss further, and recommended EBCE collaborate with organizations like People's Climate Innovation for disseminating funds.

Public Comment: (2:00:38) Audrey Ichinose questioned the broad definition of community-based organizations used by EBCE, which she felt did not adequately represent organizations in impacted communities of color. She echoed Jessica Tovar's concerns about the difficulty in reaching these communities and urged EBCE to be more selective and intentional in their engagement efforts. Audrey Ichinose encouraged EBCE not to rely solely on larger organizations to bridge the gap with smaller groups or underrepresented communities but to make a more concerted effort to connect directly with areas of great need, particularly communities of color affected by various issues.

C8. (2:31:05) Sunzia Project Agreement (CAC Action Item)

Requesting approval of long-term agreement for 150 MW of Wind online by 9/30/26

Jim Dorrance presenting a request for the Board to adopt a resolution to execute a contract with Sunzia for a wind project in New Mexico. This project is directly interconnected to the California grid and is expected to produce a total of 3,515 megawatts, with EBCE seeking to secure 150

megawatts over a 15-year term. Jim Dorrance detailed the rigorous evaluation process through EBCE's Request for Offers, which assesses projects using both qualitative and quantitative measures, including a Net Present Value (NPV) calculation and alignment with EBCE's mission towards local development. CAC Members discussed the project's merits, with some expressing concerns about the lack of local development and seeking more information on environmental and job impacts..

Public Comment: (2:43:00) Jessica Tovar expressed concern about long-term energy contracts made with out-of-state entities, which she views as outsourcing. She questioned the nature of the jobs that would be created by such contracts, specifically asking if the jobs in New Mexico are unionized. She noted the absence of questions regarding the types of jobs during discussions and emphasized the importance of local energy production for job creation and economic stability within the territory of EBCE/Ava.

Member Swaminathan motioned to approve the staff recommendation.

Member Souza seconded the motion which passed 5/0/2/4

Yes: Members Landry, Swaminathan, Souza, Kaur and Vice-Chair Hernandez

Excused: Members Liu and Lakshman

Abstain: Members Hu, Pacheco, Lutz and Eldred

C9. (2:59:36) Joint Powers Authority Amendment (CAC Action Item)

Adopt an amendment to change name to Ava Community Energy

Vice Chair Hernandez motioned to approve the staff recommendation.

Member Pacheco seconded the motion, which passed 8/0/2/1

Yes: Members Landry, Swaminathan, Pacheco, Souza, Kaur, Lutz, Vice-Chair Hernandez and Chair Eldred

Excused: Members Liu and Lakshman

Abstain: Member Hu

C10. CAC Member and Staff Announcements including requests to place items on future CAC agendas

- **Member Landy** requested an update on the status of the in-house call center.
- **Chair Eldred** requested to discuss the potential uses for the money earmarked in the budget which could be allocated for one-time bill credits or other purposes.
- **Chair Eldred** also requested an update of how the approved \$5 million (out of the total \$15 million) allocation for the Healthy Home Grant is being spent.

- **Member Landry** requested to know how many jobs created within EBCE's service territory.
- **Vice-Chair Hernandez** requested an update on the status of EBCE's real estate asset and to explore its potential use as a resilience hub.

C11. Adjourned at 9:12pm

The next Community Advisory Committee meeting will be held on Monday, November 13, 2023 at 6:00 pm.