



Draft Minutes
Community Advisory Committee Meeting
Monday, March 18, 2024
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 remote locations:
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 at 1857 11th St. Tracy, CA 95376
500 metros Este del Canopy, Calle, Montezuma-Delicias Rd, Provincia de
Puntarenas, Montezuma, 60111, Costa Rica

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

Not Present: Members Hu and Lakshman

Please note that Member Pacheco joined the meeting at

C2. Public Comment

This item is reserved for persons wishing to address the Committee on any Ava Community Energy-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.

(2:38) Public Comment – Jessica Tovar expressed optimism about a new era for Ava Community Energy. She spoke about the importance of collaboration to achieve local clean energy production, job creation, pollution reduction and energy resilience.

(4:41) Public Comment – Davis Harper, the newest member of the Community Advisory Committee representing San Joachin County, spoke about his advocacy for Stockton joining Ava, his interest in finding solutions to reduce air pollution, and his background in climate policy and community organizing.

C3. (5:48) Approval of Minutes from February 20, 2024

Member Landry motioned to approve the minutes. Member Lutz seconded the motion which was approved 6/0/0/0/4:

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

No: none

Abstain: none

Recuse: none

Not Present: Hu, Lakshman, Pacheco and Kaur

(9:09) Member Pacheco joined the meeting.

C4. (7:21) CAC Chair Report

Chair Hernandez and Vice-Chair Souza provided brief summaries selected actions taken of the February 21, 2024 BOD meeting.

C5. (12:46) Ava Resilience Hubs Definition Discussion (CAC Informational Item)

Survey results and feedback on definition, use cases and potential sites for Resilience Hubs

JP Ross presented an overview of Ava's resilience hub program, which includes community grants, technical assistance, and solar and storage incentives to support resilience hub development. JP Ross discussed definitions of resilience hubs and talked about the need for clear program boundaries to ensure eligibility for incentives. He also summarized community feedback on expected services from resilience hubs, ranging from heating and cooling to health services and disaster response, and invited further discussion on these services and any additional ones that might be considered important.

(32:32) Member Eldred asked about the operational hours of resilience hubs. **JP Ross** acknowledged the importance of considering operational hours in the context of who and how community members are served by them.

(33:53) Member Pacheco asked about the minimum capacity or size for a resilience hub and whether specific services like heating or cooling are expected at each center. **JP Ross** stated that the services and capacity depend on community needs, with technical assistance aimed at supporting various use cases, such as cell phone charging or emergency services, and system sizing for energy needs. JP further explained that their funding supports the development of clean energy backup systems, specifically solar and storage.

(38:06) Drawing on experiences from past emergencies, **Vice-Chair Souza** suggested that resilience centers should be envisioned as short-term solutions to address immediate crises, such as wildfires and heatwaves, rather than long-term community centers.

(39:41) Member Lutz suggested that, in addition to solar and storage, resilience hubs might receive assistance for applying for grants to cover other operational needs like staffing. **JP Ross** agreed and stated that their current incentive program focuses only on solar and storage, technical assistance could include help with applying for additional grants.

(41:07) Public Comment – Susan Silber, Project Director for Collective Resilience, spoke about the importance of programming in resilience hubs and advocated for funding for social and educational programs that would be critical for community cohesion and support during emergencies. Susan Silber advocated for thinking holistically beyond infrastructure to include programming for food distribution, mutual aid, and education.

(44:10) Public Comment – Ryan, representing "Green the Church," spoke about the organization's mission to raise environmental awareness within faith communities. He talked about the importance of supporting places of worship as

essential hubs for community and faith during environmental and social crises and noted recent initiatives focused on climate resilience and infrastructure within California's faith communities.

(45:31) Public Comment – Jessica Tovar spoke in support of diversifying fund allocation beyond just solar and storage to also support grassroots organizing and the operational needs of small organizations working towards community resilience. She stated that resources should be provided for the disabled and those unable to access centralized services. She also stated that \$15 million should be provided to establish a comprehensive resilience hub program.

(57:19) Member Swaminathan asked about existing examples of resilience centers and whether Fremont's fire stations, equipped with solar storage, qualify as such. **JP Ross** affirmed that the fire stations in Fremont, which serve as a model for their Municipal critical facilities program, indeed qualify as resilience hubs.

(1:00:50) Public Comment - Audrey Ichinose asked how the generation from solar and storage will be managed financially, who benefits from it, and how it supports the installation and operation of the resilience hubs. **JP Ross** responded by explaining that installing solar and storage allows for reduced energy purchases from Ava, creating energy bill savings that can help offset the high upfront cost of these systems, but emphasized the need for incentive programs to reduce these initial costs. He further clarified that the long-term savings on energy bills from these installations help pay off the investment, with the incentive program designed to alleviate the financial burden of the upfront capital required.

(1:04:00) Public Comment – Bradley Cleveland spoke in support of additional funding for resilience hubs rather than an even split between individual homeowners and resilience hubs. He also spoke about the opportunity to leverage federal tax credits through the direct pay program for nonprofits and other organizations installing solar and storage.

(1:06:23) Public Comment – Susan Silber stated that the proposed funding for community-based organizations working on resilience hubs is insufficient. Instead, she spoke in support of supporting a network or coalition approach that would require significantly more investment. She stated that staff should collaborate with organizations like StopWaste and BayREN.

(1:08:05) Public Comment – (name unavailable), a Climate Fellow with the City of Oakland, suggested considering local businesses, like cafes, as potential sites for resilience hubs, highlighting the Dog Cafe in Oakland as an example. She stated that these locations could effectively bring communities together and contribute to resilience efforts.

(1:09:54) Member Eldred asked if applicants for resilience center grants would be guided towards matching programs within Ava, like energy efficiency, and suggested a service to help community members identify applicable programs based on their specific situations.

(1:15:13) Public Comment – Jessica Tovar spoke about the urgency of distributing resilience hub funds promptly. She stated that preparation should be made to support vulnerable communities in future disasters, and she advocated for the inclusion of mutual aid efforts to meet current and anticipated needs.

C6. (1:18:41) CAC Appointments (CAC Action Item)

Appointment of new CAC Members and Alternates

Cait Cady presented about the appointment process for new members of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC). The process involved an open application period from late December through early March, targeting vacancies for both current and upcoming positions across various regions within Ava's service area. With a total of 21 applications received, recommendations for appointments were made by the board directors from the respective regions. Outreach was conducted through social media, newsletters, and coordination with community-based organizations (CBOs). However, it was noted that vacancies remained for the south jurisdiction and the San Joaquin county region.

(1:25:17) Member Lutz raised concerns about the selection process. He stated that the CAC had limited visibility into the full list of applicants, and he questioned the transparency of the appointment process.

(1:36:59) Member Eldred stated that the CAC should not directly recommend individual members. She argued that while the applicant names should be public to ensure a transparent selection process, the CAC should focus on the process and criteria for selection rather than endorsing specific individuals.

(1:43:39) Public Comment – Jessica Tovar stated that applicants who were not accepted this time should be placed on a waiting list for future openings.

(1:49:03) Member Pacheco motioned to recommend to the board that stipends be provided to the alternate members of the Community Advisory Committee. Member Landry seconded the motion, which was approved 8/0/0/0/2:

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

No: none

Abstain: none

Recuse: none

Not Present: Members Hu and Lakshman

C7. (1:50:02) Legislative Update (CAC Informational Item)

Informational update on the state bills Ava has been tracking this year

Alec Ward, the principal legislative manager at Ava, alongside **Feby Boediarlo**, Ava's regulatory analyst, presented an overview of various bills that Ava is tracking, categorized by topics like affordability, the Brown Act, clean energy bonds, electric vehicles (EVs), renewable energy, transmission, and utility-specific bills. The discussion touched on the potential impact of these bills on energy policies, customer bills, and regulatory requirements, with specific attention to bills related to affordability concerns, streamlining processes for EV charging infrastructure, and enhancing transparency and restrictions on utility companies' political lobbying and post-employment opportunities.

One notable bill discussed was **AB 817**, which proposes changes to the Brown Act allowing members of advisory bodies, such as the CAC, to participate remotely without disclosing their location. Another point of interest was **AB 1999**, which aims to repeal income-graduated fixed charges and cap them to previous limits. Alec Ward also provided an update on legislative bills Ava is tracking, focusing on themes such as clean energy bonds, electric vehicles (EVs), renewable energy, transmission, and utility-specific regulations.

(2:03:08) Member Landry raised concerns about a proposed utility tax from AB 205, which she said could potentially impacting millions by increasing monthly bills significantly without public discussions. Member Landry recommended that Ava should closely monitor and consider supporting legislation like AB 1999 to counteract those charges.

C8. (2:06:51) Load Management Standards (LMS) Compliance Plan (CAC Action Item)

Compliance item for the CEC's Load Management Standards

Todd Edmister, the Director of Public Policy and Deputy General Counsel at Ava Community Energy, presented a comprehensive update on Ava's compliance plan for the California Energy Commission's Load Management Standards (LMS). The LMS, revised by the CEC in 2022, mandates that load-serving entities like Ava offer at least one retail electricity rate that changes hourly, provide updated rates to the CEC's Market Informed Demand Automation Server (MIDAS), develop a standard tool for third-party service access to rate information, and integrate time-dependent rate and automation technology information into customer education and outreach programs. The compliance plan, which must be submitted to Ava's rate-approving body (the board) by April 1, 2024, outlines Ava's approach to meeting these requirements.

Todd detailed the rationale behind real-time pricing, which aims to reflect the hourly varying wholesale costs of electricity to encourage consumers to shift their energy use to less expensive hours. However, Ava's staff seeks to proceed cautiously. They propose participating in selected pilot programs to gain insights before fully committing. These programs include ones focused on vehicle-to-grid integration and battery electric vehicle charging. The board has the option to delegate authority to staff to engage in these pilots.

(2:18:17) CAC Chair Hernandez requested to motion that the board consider continuing the item to give time to discuss and review the relevant regulatory information.

(2:23:17) Member Lutz voiced concerns about the implementation of dynamic pricing based on past negative experiences in Texas. He urged caution with its implementation and suggested that more recent research and technology standards like CTA 2045 and its EcoPort product should be considered to optimize load shifting.

(2:29:04) Member Pacheco asked if Ava's approach to shaping customer usage differed from PG&E's, particularly in terms of rates. **Todd Edmister** responded that while Ava's rates closely mirror PG&E's, Ava does have unique demand-side programs, like those involving water heaters and residential EV charging, which are detailed in the Ava Community Energy Load Management Standards Compliance Plan (available on the public meetings page for this item).

(2:31:30) Public Comment – Steve Scala, a Fremont resident, spoke about the importance of addressing high costs during peak loads through load shifting. Mr. Scala advocated for time of use pricing over dynamic pricing and encouraged Ava to implement easy-to-use load shifting strategies, such as controlling major electric appliances, to provide economic incentives for consumers.

**(2:35:11) Member Lutz motioned that the board should consider continuing this item to the April meeting. Member Eldred made a friendly amendment that the CAC Chair provide the CAC with summarized comments of the discussion by the board so that the CAC can have a discussion about it. Member Lutz accepted the friendly amendment. Member Landry seconded the motion and the friendly amendment, which was approved 7/0/1/0/2: Yes: Members Landry, Swaminathan, Pacheco, Kaur, Lutz, Vice-Chair Souza and Chair Hernandez
No: none
Abstain: Member Eldred
Recuse: none
Not Present: Hu and Lakshman**

C9. (2:40:31) Default Product Change Policy Update (CAC Action Item)

Updates to the policy

Alex DiGiorgio discussed proposed changes to the Default Rate Product Change Policy used by Ava Community Energy, which has facilitated several member jurisdictions in opting up to the Renewable 100 energy option. He explained that the current policy allows jurisdictions to opt into a default rate that changes the primary energy source to 100% renewable energy. Historically, the policy provided two annual opportunities for member jurisdictions to request default rate changes, which would then be implemented within a six-month timeframe.

The proposed amendment seeks to consolidate these opportunities into a single annual request window. This change aims to streamline the process, allowing the board to approve changes by May with implementation occurring in March of the following year.

(2:51:12) Member Hernandez motioned to approve the staff's recommendation. Member Eldred seconded the motion, which was approved 8/0/0/0/2:

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

No: none

Abstain: none

Recuse:

Not Present: Members Hu and Lakshman

C10. (2:52:35) Term Assignments (CAC Action Item)

Member Eldred asked that board members actively engage in outreach within their communities to help identify members of their communities who can be asked to participate on the Community Advisory Committee. She also sought clarification about a public comment regarding Davis Harper's appointment to the CAC from Stockton. **Cait Cady** explained that Davis's appointment was the result of a separate process directed by a board decision to create and then make permanent an interim seat for Stockton.

The Term Assignments item was continued to a later meeting.

C11. (2:55:41) CAC Member and Staff Announcements including requests to place items on future CAC agendas

- In her farewell comments, **Member Eldred** expressed deep gratitude and fondness for the committee. **CAC Chair Hernandez, Member Landry, and Member Pacheco, along with Vice-Chair Souza**, acknowledged her contributions and mentorship, and wished her well.

- **Member Lutz** proposed a discussion on establishing a voluntary 100% local renewable rate.

C12. Adjourned at 9:01pm.

The next Community Advisory Committee meeting will be held on Monday, April 15, 2024 at 6:00 pm.

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1000 Broadway, Suite 109
Oakland, CA 94607

Adrian Bankhead <abankhead@avaenergy.org>

Re: Wrong email address for JP: Thank you and apologies

Adrian Bankhead <abankhead@avaenergy.org>
To: Adrian Bankhead <abankhead@avaenergy.org>

Tue, Mar 19, 2024 at 10:37 AM

On Tue, Mar 19, 2024 at 9:56 AM Susan Silber <susansilber07@gmail.com> wrote:

Thank you so much for the robust conversation about resilience hubs last night. I wanted to apologize for not mentioning that Ava Community Energy is a sponsor of our upcoming [resilience hub workshop series](#). We are very thankful to have Ava Community Energy as a sponsor and look forward to the participation of staff members.

If there is any way to add this sponsorship acknowledgment and gratitude to the meeting notes, that would be much appreciated.

I look forward to more conversations about this important topic and again my apologies.
best,
Susan Silber

Susan Silber

supporting resilience sites - hubs, spaces and neighborhoods - to evolve and flourish

Project Director: www.collectiveresiliencenow.orgConsultant: www.plantingseedsconsulting.com[Calendly appointment link](#)