



Draft Minutes
Executive Committee Meeting
Wednesday, March 6, 2024
9:00 am

In Person:

Conference Room 5
Ava Community Energy
(formally East Bay Community Energy)
1999 Harrison St., Suite 2300
Oakland, CA 94612

Or from the following remote location:

- Member Hu - Dublin City Hall - 100 Civic Plaza, Dublin, CA 94568

Via Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88267670367>

Or join by phone:

Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):
US: +1 669 900 6833 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 301 715 8592
or +1 312 626 6799 or 877 853 5257 (Toll Free) or 888 475 4499 (Toll Free)
Webinar ID: 882 676 70367

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

1. Welcome & Roll Call

Present: Members: Marquez (Alameda County), Hu (Dublin), Member Balch (Pleasanton) and Chair Tiedemann (Albany),
Not Present: Member Kalb (Oakland)

Member Hu joined the meeting at 9:04pm.

2. (3:45) Selection of Executive Committee Chair (Action Item)

Chair Balch motioned for Member Tiedemann to become Chair. Member Marquez seconded the motion which passed 3/0/2:

Yes: Members Marquez, Member Tiedemann and Chair Balch

Not Present: Members Hu and Kalb

Member Balch passed the gavel to Chair Tiedemann.

3. Public Comment

This item is reserved for persons wishing to address the Executive 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 Executive Committee Chair may increase or decrease the time allotted to each speaker.

(4:47) Public Comment – Jessica Tovar from the Local Clean Power Alliance (LCPA) spoke about a letter titled “Need for Community Driven Resilience Hubs for Environmental Justice Communities:”¹, submitted by LCPA to the Executive Committee in January 2024 and again in March 2024. This letter requested that Ava invest \$15 million into community resilience hubs and to prioritize environmental justice, low-income and BIPOC communities for site selection.

Member Hu joined the meeting at 9:04am.

4. (6:56) Approval of Minutes from February 7, 2024

Member Balch motioned to approve the minutes. Member Marquez seconded the motion which passed 4/0/1:

Yes: Members Hu, Marquez, Balch and Chair Tiedemann

Not Present: Member Kalb

5. (7:57) Recommendation for Timing of Customer Enrollment for Stockton and Lathrop (Informational Item)

Present recommendation to board for when we should enroll new customers in 2025

Annie Henderson presented a recommendation for the enrollment timing of Stockton and Lathrop customers into Ava Community Energy. After evaluating financial impacts, customer considerations and operational complexities, she suggested April 2025 as the start date for both commercial and residential customers.

Member Marquez asked about the number of new customers affected by the enrollment plan. **Annie Henderson** responding that the total, encompassing both commercial and residential customers, is approximately 110,000.

¹ This letter is available on the March 6, 2024 Ava Executive Committee public meetings page at <https://avaenergy.org/meetings/executive-committee-meeting-3-6-24/>,

(10:18) Member Balch asked about the initial plans for Stockton's earlier enrollment and the perceived accelerated timing for Lathrop. **Annie Henderson** stated that Stockton's delay was due to additional information requested by the CPUC, whereas Lathrop followed the standard CPUC timeline and was approved for a January 2025 start alongside Stockton. **Alex DiGiorgio** added that the issues leading to Stockton's delay had been resolved and no further delays are anticipated for either community.

(12:11) Chair Tiedemann asked about the possible negative fiscal impact of starting enrollment in January. **Howard Chang** explained that winter months typically see higher power usage and prices, which tend to result in financial losses. Howard also said that starting in April would allow for costs to be covered more effectively as the year progresses.

(12:46) Public Comment - Jessica Tovar spoke in support of enrolling Stockton and Lathrop into Ava Community Energy.

(14:45) Member Hu suggested further research into different enrollment times.

6. **(15:40) Default Rate Product Change Policy Amendments (Informational Item)**
Adjust policy to single annual deadline.

Alex DiGiorgio presented proposed amendments aiming to streamline the process for member jurisdictions to change the default rate product to Renewable 100 for their constituents. The amendments suggest reducing board approval and implementation opportunities to once a year with a proposed implementation in either January or March.

(19:23) Member Marquez asked about the scope of the policy, specifically whether it was designed for cities aiming to opt up to Renewable 100. She also asked about the number of cities already using Renewable 100 as the default. Member Marquez spoke in support of a March implementation date.

(20:11) Member Balch asked the implications of budget constraints on member cities and the importance of aligning Ava's operations with member jurisdictions' fiscal planning and climate action goals. He spoke in support of standardizing deadlines and for taking the fiscal years of member jurisdictions into consideration.

(31:15) Chair Tiedemann focused on the strategic aspect of when and how changes are implemented to ensure that they align with member jurisdictions' goals and Ava's operational capabilities. He noted the importance of making the switch to Renewable 100, regardless of the exact timing, and said that he was comfortable with a start date in March.

7. **(36:47) Resilience Hubs and Solar + Storage Incentive Update (Informational Item)**
Update about resilience hubs and solar + storage incentives.

JP Ross, Vice President of Local Development, spoke about strategies to support community resilience hubs and the associated Solar + Storage Incentive program. He outlined a strategy comprising of community investment grants, technical assistance, and

an incentive program. A significant aspect of this strategy involves a \$300,000 grant to collaborate with local community-based organizations to define resilience hubs, identify best practices, and facilitate community engagement. He also spoke about an associated Technical Assistance program that aims to guide initial design and site considerations for resilience hubs, and the Solar + Storage Incentive program. He also explained how the Solar + Storage Incentive program has specific allocations for low-income residential customers.

(47:52) Member Marquez asked about the number of \$300,000 grants that will be awarded. She also questioned the rationale behind the 50% funding split for low-income and market rate sectors and asked about strategies to ensure the geographic equity of the Solar + Storage Incentive program. **JP Ross** responded that initially, one \$300,000 grant is planned, with flexibility to award additional grants based on the value of the proposals. He stated that geographic equity considerations have not been fully addressed. He also stated that the current focus of the program is on budget allocation flexibility between low-income and market-rate incentives.

(50:19) Member Balch expressed concerns about the minimum grant amounts and asked how small-scale grants would be managed. He spoke about the need to partner with the solar industry to implement the program effectively, and he raised concerns about potential barriers to deploying resilience hubs and solar + storage systems.

JP Ross responded that the Community Innovation Grant program aims for larger, multi-year grants. He stated that partnerships with the solar industry are essential for educating contractors about the program, and he discussed addressing potential barriers to deployment through education, technical assistance, and partnerships with equipment manufacturers and installers.

(1:07:44) Member Hu spoke about the management challenges associated with grant programs. She said that there is a need for more discussions about program management and, perhaps, additional program managers to oversee its implementation.

(1:10:35) Public Comment – Bradley Cleveland suggested reallocating additional funds towards resilience hubs. He also spoke about the opportunity provided by the Federal Direct Pay program to significantly enhance initial investments through tax credits. He stated that the Federal Direct Pay program could lower costs by taking advantage of tax credits for green energy projects.

(1:13:10) Public Comment – Jessica Tovar spoke in support of an immediate increase in grant funding. She also criticized the centralization of funds into a single organization and stressed the need for a broader reach across communities. She called for more collaborative efforts and support in the planning stages of resilience projects.

(1:16:24) Member Balch asked for staff to determine the best way to split funding to create the most significant impact. He suggested that staff should make adjustments based on program effectiveness rather than fixed amounts. Member Balch also stressed the importance of ensuring that partners, such as solar installers, are well-informed and aligned with Ava's standards.

(1:19:15) Member Marquez stated that clear communication and educational efforts are needed for new board members to understand the complex issues that are addressed in this presentation.

Member Marquez also asked for staff to revisit public comments from this meeting in order to explore opportunities to leverage federal funding opportunities.

(1:22:35) Howard Chang noted the challenges of transitioning from NEM 2.0 to NEM 3.0 and the impact of the program on the economics of solar installations. He spoke about the need for a flexible approach to the incentive program to adapt to these challenges and to ensure that the program supports Ava's goals of enhancing resilience and reliability.

8. (1:28:30) Committee Member and Staff Announcements including requests to place items on future Executive Committee Agenda

- **Member Balch** requested information on Ava's budget timeline and process to facilitate discussions on allocations.
- **Member Balch** stated that as Ava transitions into its next phase, it might be beneficial to evaluate its governance structure to ensure that it is aligned with its operational and strategic goals. He proposed considering if the current subcommittees are appropriate for Ava's current needs.
- **Member Balch** asked about the possibility of board members periodically choosing or alternating their subcommittee assignments. He suggested this might be a topic for discussion at the full Board of Directors.
- **Member Marquez** requested an updated roster with new members and committee assignments.

9. Adjourned at 10:31am.

The next Executive Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 3, 2024.