



Draft Minutes

Community Advisory Committee Meeting

Monday, April 15, 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:

Member Stephenson – 1343 Fairview Ct, Livermore CA 94550
Member Swaminathan – 4563 Meyer Park Circle, Fremont, CA 94536
Member Lakshman – 3602 Thornton Ave. Fremont, CA 94536
Member Kaur – Starbucks at 1857 11th St. Tracy, CA 95376
Vice-Chair Souza – Starbucks at 2720 Castro Valley Blvd. 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

Meetings are accessible to people with disabilities. Individuals who need special assistance or a disability-related modification or accommodation to participate in this meeting, or who have a disability and wish to request an alternative format for the meeting materials, should contact the Clerk of the Board at least 2 working days before the meeting at (510) 906-0491 or cob@avaenergy.org.

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.

The following CAC members were sworn in prior to Roll Call:

Member Indira Balkissoon (North)

Alternate Member Peter Wiener (North)
Member Pete Stephenson (East)
Member Davis Harper (San Joaquin County)

C1. Welcome & Roll Call

Present: Members: Landry, Balkissoon, Weiner, Stephenson, Lakshman, Kaur and Vice-Chair Souza

Not Present: Members: Hu, Swaminathan, Pacheco, Lutz and Chair Hernandez

Member Weiner served as alternate for Member Hu (North).

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.

(5:28) Public Comment: Jessica Tovar from the Local Clean Energy Alliance requested \$15 million for resilience hubs in Ava's service territory. Jessica Tovar spoke about the importance of these hubs in providing essential services for vulnerable communities during crises such as climate disasters and pandemics.

(8:41) Public Comment: Audrey Ichinose expressed concern that Ava Community Energy might reconsider accepting a nuclear energy allocation. She spoke in opposition to reopening this discussion until significant issues such as nuclear waste management and the impact of uranium mining on Native American communities are addressed.

(11:18) Member Landry requested future agenda consideration of nuclear issues and an update on funding for resilience hubs. **Alex DiGiorgio** clarified that the nuclear topic resurfaced due to Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant's extended license, and that discussions about the issue are scheduled for both the upcoming board and CAC meetings,

C3. Approval of Minutes from March 18, 2024

(17:25) Member Landry motioned to approve the minutes. Member Balkissoon seconded the motion which was approved 8/0/0/0/5: Yes: Members Landry, Balkissoon, Weiner, Stephenson, Lakshman, Kaur, Harper and Vice-Chair Souza

No: none

Abstain: none

Recuse: none

Not Present: Members Hu, Swaminathan, Pacheco, Lutz and Chair Hernandez

C4. CAC Chair Report

(20:32) Chair Souza encouraged committee members to attend the May 17 Board of Directors meeting, where a discussion about the Income Graduated Fixed Charge will be held.

C5. Ava Solar Billing Plan (Board Action Item)

Vote on Ava's Solar Billing Plan proposal

(26:19) Kelly Brezovec, Senior Director of Account Services at Ava Community Energy, presented the Ava Solar Billing Plan proposal, which aims to adopt a new tariff policy for solar energy billing. The proposal includes a new rate structure, additional incentives for customers with paired solar and storage systems, and is intended to align closely with similar initiatives by PG&E.

(44:41) Public Comment: Jim Lutz asked if Ava Solar Billing Plan aligns with Ava's and the state's renewable energy goals. He also asked about the decision to adopt a net billing structure rather than rewarding customers who produce surplus solar energy.

In response, **Kelly Brezovec** explained that the plan is designed to more accurately compensate solar energy exports based on market value, which tends to be lower during peak solar production times. She stated that the plan is also meant to encourage customers to invest in battery storage to improve grid stability.

(54:30) Member Weiner asked for the rationale behind promoting individual battery systems over more cost-effective utility-scale solar and storage solutions that could benefit everyone equally. **JP Ross** responded that Ava Community Energy's strategy includes investing in both individual and utility-scale storage solutions.

(57:04) Public Comment: Audrey Ichinose spoke in favor of delaying action on the solar billing plan until the outcomes of PG&E's similar initiatives are seen in the next few months. She also proposed subsidizing the acquisition of solar and storage systems for low-income rate-payers.

(1:00:36) Public Comment: Richard Esteves addressed concerns regarding the benefits of rooftop versus distant solar installations. He explained that

customers still face substantial charges for using PG&E's transmission and distribution system, regardless of how close the solar source is. He also critiqued the structure of NEM 3.0, suggesting it diminishes the incentives for energy efficiency and conservation by shifting more costs into the basic rate. Richard stated that this structure would penalize those who invest in reducing their energy usage.

(1:03:09) Public Comment: Jessica Tovar stated that the \$8.4 million allocated for low-income adders in Ava's solar billing plan would be more effectively used as direct investments in solar and battery installations for low-income households. She said that such direct support would facilitate local clean energy production and address environmental injustice, rather than maintaining an inaccessible incentive program.

(1:18:27) Member Harper asked whether the analysis of Ava's new solar billing plan included the Stockton and Lathrop territories and whether these areas would be factored into future evaluations. **Kelly Brezovec** confirmed that Stockton and Lathrop were not included in the current analysis but would be considered in future evaluations as the service expands.

(1:20:37) Member Balkissoon inquired about the number of customers transitioning to Ava's new solar billing plan and its financial implications, particularly comparing the potential impacts for Ava versus PG&E. **Kelly Brezovec** clarified that about 11% of Ava's customers currently have solar, and detailed the transition process, explaining that by 2042, all current NEM customers would switch to the new plan.

C6. Health-e Communities Contract (Board Action Item)

New contract over \$100k for direct installation of induction stoves for first 200 homes in pilot

(1:31:43) JP Ross presented a proposal to authorize the CEO to contract with Franklin Energy Services for the Healthy Communities initiative. This initiative aims to install 200 induction stove retrofits in low-income households to assess air quality improvements. The \$1.5 million contract with Franklin Energy Services includes managing the pilot project and installing air quality monitoring systems to compare conditions before and after the stove replacements.

(1:38:40) Public Comment – Jessica Tovar praised the improvements in the Healthy Communities initiative compared to its initial plans, and she advocated for the program to replace other gas appliances in addition to stoves.

(1:41:31) Public Comment – Jim Lutz asked how potential participants are being identified and recruited, and if renters are included.

(1:42:34) Public Comment – Richard Esteves recommended approving the Heath-e Communities contract but urged that it include upgrades to electrical panels to support the new appliances and to ensure that homes have the capacity for future electrification projects beyond the stove replacement.

(1:45:39) Member Landry expressed concern about the adequacy of existing electrical panels in homes targeted for the induction stove installations, questioning whether panels should be upgraded to 200 amps to support future electrification. In response, **JP Ross** explained that the pilot would explore how to install induction stoves without upgrading service panels, utilizing technologies that allow for the management of electrical loads without requiring immediate panel upgrades.

(1:56:48) Member Weiner motioned to approve the staff recommendation. Member Landry seconded the motion, which was approved 8/0/0/0/5: Yes: Members Landry, Balkissoon, Weiner, Stephenson, Lakshman, Kaur, Harper and Vice-Chair Souza
No: none
Abstain: none
Recuse: none
Not Present: Members Hu, Swaminathan, Pacheco, Lutz and Chair Hernandez

C7. Direct Current Fast Charging Marketing Partner Contract (Board Action Item)

New contract over \$100k for development and execution of DCFC Awareness and Demand Generating Campaigns

(1:58:03) Theresa McDermit, the head of marketing at Ava, presented a request for board approval of a marketing execution partner contract for Ava's Direct Current Fast Charging program. The program aims to develop a network of DC fast chargers to support the transition to electric vehicles, particularly for residents in multifamily housing and underserved areas. The initial station is planned for Oakland City Center in the fall.

(2:05:32) Davis Harper asked about the geographic scope of the marketing strategy for the Direct Current Fast Charging program, specifically whether it only included Ava's current service territory. **Theresa McDermit** confirmed that while the main focus is on residents within their territory, she acknowledged that some users might commute into the area, though these individuals would not be a primary target of the outreach efforts.

(2:10:09) Public Comment – Jim Lutz asked if staff plans on collecting commuting data for people who use the chargers - to get a sense of how many

people are driving in from Tracy, for example. **JP Ross** provided several options for how commute data could be collected – via an app, for example, but that the data collection would depend on how customers interact with the system.

(2:13:35) Member Landry asked about the customer demand and location selection process for the Direct Current Fast Charging stations. **Theresa McDermit** explained that the locations are determined in conjunction with partner cities and municipalities, utilizing municipally owned lots and garages. **JP Ross** elaborated that they work with cities to identify suitable sites and then overlay these sites with high-density residential areas, retail amenities, and transit locations to prioritize development.

(2:15:56) Member Balkissoon motioned to approve the staff recommendation. Member Harper seconded the motion, which was approved 7/0/1/0/5:

Yes: Members Landry, Balkissoon, Weiner, Stephenson, Kaur, Harper and Vice-Chair Souza

No: none

Abstain: Member Lakshman

Recuse: none

Not Present: Members Hu, Swaminathan, Pacheco, Lutz and Chair Hernandez

C8. 2023 Supplier Diversity Report Overview (Board Informational Item)

Overview of 2023 Supplier Diversity Report to the CPUC

(2:17:46) Stephanie LaShawn presented the 2023 Supplier Diversity Report for Ava Community Energy, detailing efforts to engage diverse suppliers under the General Order 156 utility supplier diversity program.

(2:27:48) Public Comment – Jessica Tovar stated that staff should target small, local and emerging businesses to receive contracts. She also advocated for staff to work with community-based organizations and Ava’s rate-payers in vulnerable communities within the agency’s service territory.

(2:29:26) Public Comment – Jim Lutz asked if staff could provide a supplier diversity report of Ava’s procurement of energy.

(2:33:40) Member Weiner asked how the \$225,000 reported for diversity contracts compared proportionally to the overall budget. He suggested that future reports should provide a clearer picture of how budget allocations reflect the company's commitment to diversity.

C9. (2:36:24) CAC Member and Staff Announcements including requests to place items on future CAC agendas

- **Member Landry** requested future agenda consideration of nuclear issues and an update on funding for resilience hubs.
- **Member Balkissoon** asked to discuss the direct funding of the solar tariff for low-income households.

C10. Adjourn at 8:47.

The next Community Advisory Committee meeting will be held on Monday, May 13, 2024 at 6:00 pm.

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