



Draft Minutes

Community Advisory Committee Meeting

Monday, May 13, 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
Member Harper – 1234 W Oak St, Stockton CA, 95204
Vice-Chair Souza – 24027 Wilcox Lane, Hayward, CA 94541

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.

C1. Welcome & Roll Call

Present: Members: Landry, Balkissoon, Stephenson, Lakshman, Pacheco, Harper, Lutz, Vice-Chair Souza and Chair Hernandez

Not Present: Members: Hu, Swaminathan and Kaur

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.

(2:13) Public Comment: Jessica Tovar expressed concern that Ava has strayed from its original mission to reinvest proceeds from selling electricity into community initiatives and asked the Community Advisory Committee to steer the agency back towards its foundational goals.

C3. Approval of Minutes from April 15, 2024

(5:15) Member Balkissoon motioned to approve the minutes. Member Landry seconded the motion, which was approved 8/0/0/4:
Yes: Members: Landry, Balkissoon, Stephenson, Lakshman, Harper, Lutz, Vice-Chair Souza and Chair Hernandez
No: none
Abstain: none
Recuse: none
Not Present: Members Hu, Swaminathan, Pacheco and Kaur

C4. CAC Chair Report

(6:24) Chair Hernandez reported on the following topics from the April 17, 2024 Board of Directors meeting:

- **PG&E Nuclear Allocation** - There was a significant discussion about this item. Chair Hernandez initiated a conversation about delaying approval of the nuclear allocation and he stated the CAC's opposition to accepting the nuclear allocation.
- CEO Chaset emphasized that accepting a nuclear allocation from Diablo Canyon could help meet clean energy goals more cost effectively amid energy rising prices. However, this was met with opposition from members

who spoke in favor of a continued focus on renewable sources.

- Chair Hernandez relayed the CAC's support for multiple community-focused initiatives, such as the **solar building plan** and the **direct current fast charging initiative**. Additionally, the committee sought further information about **supplier diversity** and incentives for **rooftop solar** to counteract the impacts of net billing tariffs.
- There was a unanimous decision to use surplus funds to encourage **solar and battery installations** among Ava's customers, with \$20 million allocated to support solar and storage, and \$100,000 dedicated to promoting direct current charging.
- Chair Hernandez stated that the process for **hiring a new CEO** was ongoing, with interviews planned for June and a target to appoint a new CEO by July 15.

C5. Community Innovation Grant Agreements (Board Action Item)

Authorize CEO to negotiate and execute grant agreements with Rising Sun and AGAPE for early workforce training

(11:32) Heidy Ramirez presented on Community Innovation Grants, a program focused on providing workforce opportunities for youth aged 18 to 24 in the clean energy sector. The grants total \$300,000 over three years for each recipient. Rising Sun will expand its Climate Careers program in both East Bay and San Joaquin County. This program is focused on training and providing online resources for job placement. Agape, a collaborative initiative between Cypress Mandela Training Center and Revalue, plans to empower youth through hands-on training and professional development.

(19:26) Member Balkissoon asked about the metrics of success regarding employment outcomes for program graduates. She suggested that employment rates should be a criterion for evaluating grantees.

(22:12) Member Landry asked why the age range for the grants was specifically set to 18-24 years, and whether it could be expanded to include older individuals. **Heidy Ramirez** responded that this specific age range was chosen based on community feedback and noted that future grants would target adults of all ages..

(23:04) Vice-Chair Souza further asked if there was a certification program or another method to help ensure program graduates are suitably trained and ready for employment..

(24:22) Public Comment: Jessica Tovar stated that the Community Advisory Committee should have been given a more active role in selecting the grant recipients. She also stated that the grant amounts are too low and spoke in favor of smaller grants to support emerging organizations.

(28:06) Vice-Chair Souza motioned to approve the staff's recommendation. Member Lutz seconded the motion, which was approved 9/0/0/0/3:

Yes: Members: Landry, Balkissoon, Stephenson, Lakshman, Pacheco, Harper, Lutz, Vice-Chair Souza and Chair Hernandez

No: none

Abstain: none

Recuse: none

Not Present: Members Hu, Swaminathan and Kaur

C6. Legislative Update (Board Action Item)

Update on recommended bill positions and Ava's Legislative Program, and vote on bill positions

(29:07) Alec Ward and **Feby Boediarso** discussed 11 bills that staff is asking for the board to support, with an emphasis on issues such as affordability, equity, and reducing interconnection delays.

(48:10) Member Balkissoon, referring to AB 2427, asked about the checklist that Go-Biz would create for curbside charging stations and whether it aligns with local city plans. **Feby Boediarso** responded that staff is consulting with local cities to ensure alignment, and that staff is concerned about the potential burden on local agencies to provide extensive feedback to the state.

(48:57) Vice-Chair Souza, referring to AB 2329, asked about the Climate Equity Trust Fund - specifically if there were projections on how much funding could be generated from cap and trade and other sources. **Feby Boediarso** responded that several federal funding opportunities could contribute to this fund, and that the fund would directly support low-income customers.

(51:02) Member Landry asked about AB 1999 and the implementation of income-graduated fixed charges. **Alec Ward** stated that this bill aims to balance the fixed charges with volumetric rates to maintain affordability, especially for low-income customers.

(54:42) Member Harper asked about the coordination between Ava's local programs team and the legislative team, and how staff ensures that advocacy is supported by the community. **Alec Ward** responded that staff engage extensively with community members and stakeholders to align its legislative efforts with local needs. **Member Harper** then asked about Ava's top legislative priorities.

Alec responded that their main focus areas were affordability and interconnection.

(59:58) Member Pacheco asked about support for AB 1567, which seeks funding for offshore wind infrastructure. **Alec Ward** clarified that the bill was not moving forward, but that support would be provided for similar legislative opportunities.

(1:03:31) Chair Hernandez asked about SB 1095 which focuses on removing HOA restrictions that hinder residents in mobile homes from transitioning from gas to electric. **Feby** clarified that the bill is narrowly focused on removing these specific restrictions and mentioned that funding specifics might be linked to the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, though she noted a need to confirm these details.

(1:08:38) Member Landry motioned to approve the staff's recommendation. Member Balkissoon seconded the motion, which was approved 9/0/0/0/3: Yes: Members: Landry, Balkissoon, Stephenson, Lakshman, Pacheco, Harper, Lutz, Vice-Chair Souza and Chair Hernandez No: none Abstain: none Recuse: none Not Present: Members Hu, Swaminathan and Kaur

C7. Draft Budget Review (Board Informational Item)

Review the draft budget for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

(1:09:49) Howard Chang presented the 2024-2025 draft budget for Ava Community Energy. He discussed operational procedures for energy scheduling and procurement and outlined fiscal proposals. Howard noted significant budget surpluses and planned contributions to reserves, alongside adjustments in customer rates and service expansions due to the inclusion of Stockton and Lathrop in the service area.

(1:33:21) Member Balkissoon asked Howard Chang why the Renewable 100 service isn't receiving a similar discount as the Bright Choice service. **Howard** explained that the pricing between Bright Choice and Renewable 100 reflects the actual cost differential and noted that renewable energy costs are rising, making it challenging to adjust Renewable 100 rates without affecting financial stability.

(1:37:17) Member Lutz asked Howard Chang about moving to cost-of-service pricing. **Howard** explained that Ava continues to index its rates to PG&E for several reasons, including achieving target reserve levels and the fact that their current rate indexing closely reflects the cost of service similar to PG&E's. He mentioned that any considerations for rate changes would require analyzing if

Ava's cost structures differ significantly from PG&E's, and if different time-of-use structures could offer benefits without confusing customers.

(1:43:10) Member Lutz proposed the idea of creating a new rate for 100% locally sourced renewable energy, acknowledging that it might carry a high premium. **Howard** responded that introducing a new rate isn't operationally difficult, but the challenges lie in determining which customers would be affected, how to market the new rate, and the complexity it adds to energy pricing.

Member Pacheco and **Member Landry** also spoke in support of creating a new rate.

(1:50:29) Member Landry asked about plans for an in-house call center to provide local, unionized jobs. **Howard** clarified that while there was a directive to hire local union workforce, the call center would continue with SMUD, with a target to have them based in the Ava service territory.

(2:03:13) Public Comment: Aya Peters Paz, representing the Local Clean Energy Alliance, urged the CAC and the board to allocate \$15 million into a Community Resilience Hub program. She emphasized that the current proposal for microgrids and solar and storage at critical municipal facilities is insufficient for meeting broader community needs for climate resilience and daily resources during crises.

(2:06:23) Public Comment: Jessica Tovar spoke in support of allocating \$15 million towards community-based organizations in Ava's service territory. She also asked the CAC to recommend increasing the community grant line item and to add additional smaller grants to support grassroots organizations.

C8. DERMS + Battery Program Administration (Board Action Item)

Action Item authorizing CEO to negotiate contract for Distributed Energy Resource Management System (DERMS) + Battery Program Administration Support

(2:26:28) Feliz Ventura provided an in-depth explanation of the DERMS (Distributed Energy Resource Management Systems) and its necessity for managing a variety of distributed energy resources within Ava's service area. She discussed the benefits of implementing DERMS, such as optimizing the use of renewable energy, reducing grid strain, and aiding customers in managing their energy devices effectively. Feliz also outlined the selection process for the DERMS provider, detailing the criteria and recommendation to select Lunar Energy.

(2:27:30) Member Pacheco spoke about the importance of service providers being locally based and suggested the need for a neutrality agreement if Lunar is

non-union.

(2:42:54) Member Balkissoon asked if the DERMS platform could support future technologies like bi-directional charging using data from smart meters. **Feliz** confirmed that the platform could manage bi-directional charging and incorporate smart meter data.

(2:44:10) Vice-Chair Souza asked about privacy issues related to data monitoring. **Feliz** responded by referencing PG&E's Power Lords program as a proof of concept for DERMS functionality.

(2:46:50) Member Lutz asked about the potential for the DERMS platform to integrate with new construction technologies like smart water heaters, and whether Lunar Energy's response to the RFP included capabilities for managing devices beyond solar and batteries. **Feliz Ventura** explained that pool pumps were not included in the RFP due to their relative scarcity in their service area, but future integration could be considered.

(2:49:02) Member Lutz also asked how Ava would interact with the virtual power plant system in real-time to manage energy needs. **Feliz** responded that the learning process for managing these interactions is ongoing.

(2:55:29) Member Pacheco motioned to approve the staff recommendation with the proviso that Lunar Energy announce a neutrality agreement position should its employees decide to organize. Member Landry seconded the motion, which was approved 9/0/0/0/3:
Yes: Members: Landry, Balkissoon, Stephenson, Lakshman, Pacheco, Harper, Lutz, Vice-Chair Souza and Chair Hernandez
No: none
Abstain: none
Recuse: none
Not Present: Members Hu, Swaminathan and Kaur

C9. PG&E Nuclear Allocation (Board Action Item)

Action item on 2025-2030 PG&E Nuclear allocation

(2:57:02) Howard Chang discussed the extended operational timeline of the Diablo Canyon nuclear plant until 2029-2030, prompted by concern over capacity shortfall. He reviewed past board decisions regarding nuclear energy, stating that while the Board has rejected the nuclear allocations, it also has approved a measure to accept nuclear allocations for resell. Howard also spoke about upcoming potential changes in emissions counting methodologies and the increase in renewable energy credit prices. He attributed these changes to various market pressures including extreme weather, increased demand, and accelerated renewable portfolio standards by community choice aggregators.

(3:23:34) Member Landry asked about the benefit of accepting a nuclear allocation given that Ava is projected to achieve zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 regardless of the nuclear decision. **Howard** responded that the staff is not recommending a specific action but presenting scenarios ranging from not accepting to fully accepting and procuring additional nuclear energy. Howard added that primary benefits of accepting the nuclear allocation could be reductions in GHG emissions and potential cost savings due to reduced need for procuring expensive large hydro in a high-energy-price market environment.

(3:30:19) Member Harper asked two questions: one about the reasons for the CPUC requiring PG&E to offer nuclear allocation to all load-serving entities, and the other about whether Ava has pursued allocations from PG&E's legacy solar and wind contracts or renegotiated to reduce costs. **Howard** explained that the extension of Diablo Canyon's operation was mandated by state and federal authorities due to reliability concerns and insufficient capacity on the grid. He also confirmed that Ava has actively participated in negotiations regarding the allocation of renewable energy attributes covered by the PCIA charges, which are part of a structured process for PG&E to offer these in the market. Further, Howard clarified that PG&E must offer a nuclear allocation to all load-serving entities in California as part of the regulatory framework.

(3:40:45) Public Comment: Timothy Smith spoke in favor the accepting the nuclear allocation to reduce Ava Energy's carbon emissions as swiftly as possible. He referenced PG&E's reported zero carbon emissions for 2023 and spoke about the urgency of accelerating toward a zero-carbon emissions generation portfolio. Timothy also stated that any surplus energy might be sold to other entities lagging behind in their emissions goals.

(3:42:50) Public Comment: Guido Nunes Munica spoke in favor of accepting PG&E's nuclear allocation (either option one or two). Guido Nunes-Munica argued that despite potential conflicts with values and principles, the existential threat of climate change necessitates using all available means to lower emissions.

(3:44:43) Public Comment: Brendan Pittman expressed his appreciation for the objective reporting on the carbon free allocation and mentioned the potential financial savings for residents like himself in Berkeley who contribute to the carbon free allocation through the Public Indifference Charge (PCIA). He asked for an open-minded approach to nuclear energy.

(3:46:56) Public Comment: Jessica Tovar strongly opposed Ava Community Energy's use of nuclear power. Jessica Tovar argued that supporting nuclear energy indirectly supports PG&E, which she criticized for its role in environmental and public safety disasters.

(3:49:16) Member Pacheco argued that by rejecting nuclear energy, Ava could continue to serve as a beacon for renewable energy advancement globally, and he expressed his readiness to support a motion against accepting the nuclear allocation to uphold the agency's foundational values and commitment to renewable energy.

(3:55:21) Member Balkissoon discussed the gradual phase-out of nuclear energy as outlined in the International Energy Agency's Net Zero by 2050 roadmap and noted California's significant investments in solar power as an alternative. She expressed concerns about the environmental and safety risks associated with older nuclear facilities like Diablo Canyon and advocating for a cautious approach towards future nuclear technology.

(3:57:49) Member Pacheco motioned to approve Option Zero. Member Landry seconded the motion.

Member Stephenson made a substitute motion to support option scenario two. There was no second for the substitute motion.

Member Stephenson made a substitute motion to support option scenario one. There was no second for the substitute motion.

Member Pacheco's original motion to approve option zero was approved 5/12/04:

Yes: Members: Landry, Balkissoon, Pacheco, Harper, Lutz,

No: Member Stephenson

Abstain: Vice-Chair Souza and Chair Hernandez

Recuse: none

Not Present: Members Hu, Swaminathan, Lakshman and Kaur

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

(4:06:16) Member Pacheco requested to add an item regarding the Burr letter to the California Energy Commission, which advocates for a billion dollars in funding for offshore wind port development. Member Pacheco expressed interest in exploring how Ava and CalCCA might support this initiative due to financing issues that have affected similar projects on the East Coast, and he offered to provide additional information and possibly draft a supporting letter.

(4:07:39) Vice-Chair Souza requested to add a discussion item to explore the challenges consumers face when transitioning to electrification, particularly concerning the impacts on their utility bills.

(4:08:55) Member Harper asked to discuss the role of the CAC in shaping the Community Innovation Grants Program. Member Harper stated that the discussion should include the CAC's involvement in advising on RFP development, screening criteria, and metrics for success. He requested that staff provide an overview of the program's annual budget, grant selection metrics, key challenges, feedback from beneficiaries, efforts to secure public funding, and the program's future direction in relation to other local development grant programs.

(4:10:04) Member Balkissoon requested to discuss the potential of using existing electric vehicles (EVs) as bi-directional chargers. She stated that she is interested in exploring opportunities for these vehicles to support the grid, particularly in balancing solar power supply during peak and off-peak periods. She asked the CAC to consider whether there are grants available that could facilitate the implementation of this technology, and if this topic should be approached through legislative advocacy to promote relevant policies or support.

C11. Adjourned at 10:11 pm.

The next Community Advisory Committee meeting will be held on Monday, June 10, 2024 at 6:00 pm.

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