



Draft Minutes

Executive Committee Meeting

Wednesday, May 1, 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 Marquez – 24301 Southland Drive, Suite 101 Hayward, CA 94545
 - 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), Kalb (Oakland) and Chair Tiedemann (Albany),

Not Present: Member Balch (Pleasanton)

Member Kalb joined the meeting at 9:15am.

2. 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.

(0:48) Public Comment – Aya Peters Paz from the Local Clean Energy Alliance urged Ava to allocate \$15 million from the 2023-2024 budget surplus towards community resilience hubs.

(3:41) Public Comment – Jenifer Lomeli from Emerald Cities Collaborative expressed appreciation for Ava’s inclusion of community-based microgrids in the budget for resilience hubs and urged the allocation of at least \$15 million from the 2023-2024 surplus for comprehensive community resilience efforts.

(5:13) Public Comment – Susan Silber, the Project Director for Collective Resilience based in Berkeley, expressed gratitude for Ava Energy's support and highlighted the need for a holistic approach to resilience hubs beyond just microgrids. She urged Ava to invest \$15 million from the budget surplus into resilience hubs and suggested separate funding for smaller projects.

(8:04) Public Comment – Jessica Tovar echoed support for resilience hubs and stated that accepting PG&E’s nuclear allocation contradicts Ava’s commitment to investing in renewable resources.

3. Approval of Minutes from March 6, 2024

(11:14) Member Marquez motioned to approve the minutes. Chair Tiedemann seconded the motion which was approved 3/0/0/2:

Yes: Members Hu, Member Marquez and Chair Tiedemann

No: none

Abstain: none

Recuse: none

Not Present: Member Kalb and Member Balch

4. Draft Budget Review (Informational Item)

Review the draft budget for the 2024/25 fiscal year

(11:59) Howard Chang, joined by **CEO Chaset** and **Jason Bartlett**, presented Ava Community Energy's draft budget for the upcoming fiscal year. He detailed the budget process, historical trends in rate setting, and the proposed budget specifics, including a 7% discount to PG&E rates and increased carbon-free energy procurement. The presentation also covered operational enhancements, such as the addition of 15 full-time staff members and budget allocations for local development and resilience projects.

Member Kalb's questions:

(42:10) Member Kalb asked if critical municipal facilities program include school facilities or just city agencies? **Annie Henderson** responded that the current focus is on municipal facilities, with a potential future expansion to include schools in later phases. Currently, the program covers about 60 municipal buildings.

(42:44) Member Kalb then asked if non-public agency institutions are included in the critical municipal facilities programs. **Annie Henderson** and **Howard Chang** answered that the current programs primarily target government facilities. Non-public agencies are not included in this phase.

(44:48) Member Kalb asked about the specifics of the \$7 million budget allocation. **CEO Chaset** and **Howard Chang** stated that the \$7 million covers grid services costs for the critical municipal facilities and is intended to be largely cost-neutral.

(45:50) Finally, **Member Kalb** asked about the efforts that are being made to recruit more CARE/FERA customers. **Annie Henderson** responded that Ava is using targeted direct mail and email campaigns to reach likely eligible customers.

Member Marquez's questions:

(52:50) Member Marquez asked about the number of positions added in the last year's budget and how many of those have been filled. **Howard Chang** stated that 13 positions have been filled out of 15 added last year, with the remaining positions currently open and expected to be filled in the coming months.

(52:40) Member Marquez asked about the cost for the additional 15 positions being proposed for the new fiscal year. **Howard Chang** responded that the cost for these new positions is approximately \$3 million, based on an assumption of four years of salary per position.

(53:05) Member Marquez asked if there was a plan to increase the purchase of carbon-free energy by up to 5% in the upcoming budget. **Howard Chang** stated that for the 2024 fiscal year, there is an increase of 10% to reach an 81% target, and for 2025, a 5% increase is proposed.

(53:43) Member Marquez asked about the phased approach to community resilience hubs and the potential for expansion based on the outcomes of the RFP and technical assistance work. **Annie Henderson** responded that the current work aims to develop a pipeline for potential resilience hubs with allocated incentive funding. Expansion depends on how quickly the current funds are utilized, and further funds could be added if necessary.

(54:55) Member Marquez asked if there are barriers preventing the community from accessing funds for resilience hubs. **Annie Henderson** and **Howard Chang** stated that the primary barrier is the high cost of solar and storage installations. The program is still in the operational phase, and further barriers may become apparent as it progresses.

(56:05) Finally, **Member Marquez** sought clarification on how Ava is handling uncollectibles. **Howard Chang** and **Jason Bartlett** responded that Ava has amended its collections policy and is in the process of issuing an RFP for recovery agents to manage uncollectibles more effectively.

Member Hu's questions:

(56:53) **Member Hu** asked about the rationale behind using a percentage discount for the Bright Choice plan and a volumetric premium for the Renewable 100 plan. She asked why not use a consistent pricing metric for both? **Howard Chang** explained that the initial pricing strategy was based on the market price of renewable energy credits at launch. A fixed penny amount was chosen for easier customer understanding and marketing. He acknowledged the logic in reassessing this approach to ensure consistency and clarity in pricing metrics.

(58:19) Also, **Member Hu** asked for details on the transportation electrification program, specifically the e-bike incentive program and the electric vehicle (EV) managed charging program, including how community members can apply. **Annie Henderson** described ongoing efforts to structure these programs to distribute incentives effectively. The e-bike program, not yet launched, aims to offer incentives for e-bike purchases by the end of the year. The EV managed charging program, also in development, will facilitate managed charging for residential customers through partnerships.

Chair Tiedemann's questions:

(1:02:20) **Chair Tiedemann** asked why Ava is continuing to decrease rates relative to PG&E rather than not pegging rates to PG&E at all. **Howard Chang** explained that Ava's rates are generally set on a cost-of-service basis similar to PG&E. He stated that Ava is maintaining a cost-of-service approach by indexing to PG&E's rates. He also mentioned the challenges and potential customer confusion that could arise from changing the rate structure significantly from PG&E's.

(1:06:50) **Chair Tiedemann** asked whether an RFP had been launched to find a service provider to help design and administer the resilience hub program. **Annie Henderson** clarified that the RFP process was not about designing the program but about assisting in administering it, particularly for incentives related to solar plus storage for resilience hubs. **JP Ross** added that they plan to bring the contract for the administration of the incentive program to the board soon, which would allow for the launch of the program later in the year.

(1:09:20) **Member Marquez** requested that the board receive quarterly updates on the progress of the incentive and programming roll outs to ensure close monitoring of their implementation.

(1:09:57) **Public Comment – Jessica Tovar** stated that there is need for continuous (rather than one-off) funding for community-based organizations to assist in CARE/FERA and AMP enrollment. She also noted that language access is a significant barrier to access for these programs. As well, Jessica Tovar asked for greater funding for

community innovation grants, and for the adoption of smaller, multi-year grants to support small community organizations.

(1:13:10) Member Marquez asked about the utilization of the \$1.2 million in community grants, specifically whether the funds are fully used each year or carry over. **JP Ross** responded that the funds are intended for multi-year programming with the goal of disbursing about \$1.2 million annually, dependent on the volume of grant applications received.

(1:13:57) Member Marquez then asked about potentially lowering the grant thresholds to increase accessibility. **JP Ross** responded that the thresholds have not been adjusted from the board's original multi-year, \$100,000 per year guideline.

5. **Power Source Disclosure Program Annual Report (PSDR) Attestation vs. Audit Overview (Informational Item)**

Overview of the attestation and audit options for the PSDR filing.

(1:16:13) Izzy Carson, from the Power Resources team, discussed the Power Source Disclosure Report (PSDR) and Power Content Label. Izzy detailed the preparation and verification processes for the PSDR and asked for guidance about the two verification options available to public agencies – self-attestation or auditing.

(1:25:15) Member Marquez expressed a preference for an audit to ensure transparency and thoroughness. **Chair Tiedemann** agreed that staff should proceed with an audit and said that there is no need to bring the matter to the full Board.

6. **Committee Member and Staff Announcements including requests to place items on future Executive Committee Agenda**

- **(1:09:20) Member Marquez** requested that the board receive quarterly updates on the progress of the incentive and programming roll outs to ensure close monitoring of their implementation.
- **(1:29:49) Annie Henderson** noted that Ava issued a press release¹ about two significant milestones:
 - Ava has surpassed \$100 million in savings for rate-payers and customers; and has reached one gigawatt of contracted new renewable energy.

7. **Adjourned** at 10:30 am.

The next Executive Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 5, 2024.

¹ “Ava Community Energy Surpasses \$100 Million in Customer Savings and 1 Gigawatt of Contracted Renewable Energy Projects” available at <https://avaenergy.org/news-and-events/ava-surpasses-usd100-million-in-customer-savings-and-1-gigawatt-of-contracted/>