



**Draft Minutes**

**Community Advisory Committee Meeting**

June 16, 2025

6:00 pm

**In Person:**

Conference Room 5  
Ava Community Energy  
1999 Harrison St  
Suite 2300  
Oakland CA 94612

**Or from the following remote locations:**

1343 Fairview Ct, Livermore CA 94550  
4563 Meyer Park Circle, Fremont CA 94536  
4664 Rousillon Ave, Fremont, CA 94555  
1234 W Oak St, Stockton CA, 95204

**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, Weiner, Balkissoon, Stephenson, Swaminathan, Pacheco, Harper, Lutz, Vice-Chair Souza and Chair Hernandez**

**Not Present: Member Lakshman**

**C2. (2:46) 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.*

**There were no speakers for public comment.**

**C3. (3:25) Approval of Minutes from May 19, 2025**

**Chair Hernandez** requested one clarification to the May 19, 2025 minutes: the minutes should specify that the CAC voted 7-2 to oppose the staff-recommended letter regarding SB 540. This action was later upheld by the Board of Directors, which voted 5-9-1-2 to reject supporting the letter.

**Member Landry motioned to approve the minutes as amended. Member Weiner seconded the motion, which was approved 8/0/2/0/2 (yes/no/abstain/recuse/not present):**

**Yes: Members: Landry, Weiner, Balkissoon, Stephenson, Harper, Lutz, Vice-Chair Souza and Chair Hernandez**

**No: none**

**Abstain: Members: Swaminathan and Pacheco**

**Recuse: none**

**Not Present: Member Lakshman**

**C4. (5:52) CAC Chair Report**

**Chair Hernandez** opened his report by thanking Vice-Chair Souza for stepping in as chair during his scheduling conflict at the previous CAC meeting. He then summarized the May 21 Board of Directors meeting, where the Board approved the consent agenda and received updates on the FY 2025–26 draft budget, prepaid transactions, and the agency’s legislative priorities. The Board also discussed the CMF agreements and authorized staff to move forward with negotiations.

He shared regional updates, including Fremont's move to Renewable 100 and steady enrollment progress in Stockton and Lathrop. Chair Hernandez raised the possibility of CAC participation in the CalCCA annual conference and asked for help drafting a justification to the Board. The Board also reviewed a projected \$187 million revenue gap due to PG&E and PCIA changes, which could affect customer rates, local program funding, and staffing. He urged CAC members to provide feedback during the evening's budget discussion and noted that his full written report would be posted online.

**C5. (15:00) FY2025-2026 Budget (BOD Action Item)**

Approve the budget for Fiscal Year 2025-2026

**CFO Russell Mills** shared Ava's draft FY 2025–2026 budget, warning that new CPUC rules for the PCIA and changes in resource adequacy pricing will cut Ava's revenues by \$187 million over two years. To respond, staff proposes using a combination of rate stabilization funds and part of this year's \$107 million surplus to cover the gap, while keeping customer discounts in place. The budget also includes reduced spending on new REC purchases, fewer new staff positions, and a lower Local Development Business Plan allocation of \$10 million, though community program spending will continue. Mills explained that Ava is carefully balancing cost control with maintaining its clean energy goals and customer rate stability. He asked the CAC to discuss whether this budget strikes the right balance and to decide whether to recommend it to the Board for approval.

**Selected topics raised by CAC members include:**

- **Member Lutz** urged Ava to take aggressive action to oppose the CPUC's proposed PCIA reform and to prepare for future phases of PCIA adjustments.
- **Member Balkissoon** suggested Ava consider doing its own independent modeling or working with experts like Dr. Richard McCann to challenge PG&E's assumptions and improve advocacy efforts.
- **Member Weiner** asked how Ava is planning for the projected increase in energy demand from AI and data centers, referencing comments from the California Energy Commission about the expected rise in per capita electricity use.
- **Member Weiner** also raised concerns about the growing distribution costs passed on by PG&E, particularly wildfire-related expenses. He asked if Ava is involved in advocacy to shift these costs from ratepayers to taxpayers to make the system more equitable.
- **Member Harper** asked for clarification on how Ava plans to use its 2024 surplus of renewable energy credits to reduce procurement costs for 2025 and 2026 while still meeting clean energy targets.

- **Vice-Chair Souza** questioned whether Ava has access to PG&E's detailed financial modeling and expressed a desire for an audit-like review of PG&E's cost justifications related to the PCIA and resource adequacy charges.

**(1:36:53) Public Comment – Ayla Paz**, speaking on behalf of the Local Clean Energy Alliance and 17 other organizations, urged Ava to actively oppose the CPUC's proposed PCIA increases, arguing that they threaten the long-term viability of CCAs. She also called for continued funding of Ava's Local Development Business Plan, support for state legislation like SB 332, and the creation of a new, independent community-based organization grant fund.

**Member Lutz moved that the CAC support staff's recommended FY 2025–2026 budget, with the added condition that Ava aggressively pursue all available options to oppose the CPUC's proposed PCIA reform and any future phases of PCIA changes. This includes advocacy at the CPUC, legislative action, and any other strategies to protect Ava's financial position and mission.**

**Member Pacheco proposed a friendly amendment stating that if Ava and CalCCA are successful in reducing the financial impact of the PCIA reform (i.e., if the “upside budget” scenario materializes), then the CAC recommends prioritizing restored funding to the Local Development Business Plan, ideally returning to the \$25 million funding level from prior years.**

**Member Lutz accepted the friendly amendment.**

**Member Landry seconded the motion and amendment, which was approved 10/0/0/0/1 (yes/no/abstain/recuse/not present):**

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

**No: none**

**Abstain: none**

**Recuse: none**

**Not Present: Member Lakshman**

## **C6. Understanding the Drivers of PG&E Rate and Cost Growth (CAC Informational Item)**

A presentation on the Policy team's analysis of the drivers of increasing PG&E rates/costs, in the context of the affordability crisis

**Michael Quiroz** and **Claire Huang** explained that PG&E's rates have increased significantly due to rising distribution and wildfire mitigation costs. Their analysis showed that between 2020 and 2023, PG&E's approved distribution spending

rose by nearly 50%, mainly because of vegetation management and undergrounding projects. They pointed out that these investments, while aimed at reducing wildfire risk, may not be the most cost-effective solutions and are making electricity bills less affordable. Much of PG&E's spending goes unchallenged in CPUC proceedings, making it difficult for the public to track or contest rising costs. Ava staff said they will use this information to support legislative advocacy and transparency efforts. CAC members and staff discussed working with other CCAs, community groups, and advocacy partners like CalCCA and LCEA to promote oversight of PG&E's costs and push for greater transparency and accountability.

**Selected topics raised by CAC members include:**

- **Member Lutz and Member Balkissoon** questioned whether there is independent verification of PG&E's wildfire mitigation spending, including vegetation management and undergrounding, and whether PG&E is actually completing the work they charge for.
- **Member Weiner** raised concerns about wildfire mitigation costs being passed to ratepayers through regressive rate increases. He argued that some of these costs, like vegetation management, should be treated as public safety expenses paid through taxes, not utility rates.
- **Vice-Chair Souza, Member Balkissoon, and Member Swaminathan** suggested building coalitions with other CCAs and community organizations to increase oversight of PG&E's cost recovery practices and advocate for fairer rates.
- **Member Swaminathan** asked whether CalCCA could expand its role in intervening in PG&E's General Rate Cases to create a statewide, coordinated effort among CCAs to push back on cost increases.

**C7. Ad Hoc Committee Update (CAC Informational Item)**

**Member Balkissoon**, reporting on behalf of the **Energy Affordability Ad Hoc Committee**, shared that the committee recently met with economist Dr. Richard McCann of M.Cubed to better understand the drivers behind PG&E's rising rates. Dr. McCann recommended that Ava explore a buyout of the PCIA, noting that many of PG&E's energy contracts have expired. He also urged Ava to pursue a more aggressive public relations strategy to counter misinformation from utilities and educate the public about rising rates and the role of CCAs. The Energy Affordability Ad Hoc Committee plans to meet with TURN (The Utility Reform Network) to continue these discussions and may recommend inviting Dr. McCann to speak with the CAC in the future.

**Member Lutz**, reporting on behalf of the **Local Development Business Plan (LDBP) Ad Hoc Committee**, raised concerns about the lack of public access to historical LDBP materials. These include draft documents, webinars, and letters

of support that were previously available on EBCE's website but were not migrated to Ava's current site. Member Lutz spoke about the need to restore these materials to promote transparency and help the public and stakeholders better understand Ava's local development initiatives. Member Lutz also highlighted the importance of Ava building internal capabilities, owning local assets, and developing revenue streams beyond customer rates.

**Member Lutz motioned to migrate the Local Development Business Plan historical documents and related materials, previously hosted on the EBCE website, to the current Ava Community Energy website. Member Pacheco seconded the motion, which was approved 7/0/0/0/4**

**(yes/no/abstain/recuse/not present)**

**Yes: Members: Landry, Stephenson, Swaminathan, Pacheco, Lutz, Vice-Chair Souza and Chair Hernandez**

**No: none**

**Abstain: none**

**Recuse: none**

**Not Present: Members: Weiner, Balkissoon, Lakshman, Harper**

#### **C8. CAC Member and Staff Announcements including requests to place items on future Community Advisory Committee Meeting Agendas**

- **Member Landry** requested that staff provide updates on SB 332 (Golden State Energy Act) in future legislative reports. She noted the bill has passed out of the Appropriations Committee and asked for continued tracking as it progresses through the legislature.
- **Cait Cady and Adrian Bankhead** announced that the July and September CAC meetings will be held at the Rotunda Building in downtown Oakland while tenant improvements are made to Ava's current office space. Ava's staff will work remotely during this period, but the agency will remain fully operational. Board meetings will also be moved to the Rotunda Building temporarily.

#### **C9. Adjourned at 8:59pm**

The next Community Advisory Committee meeting will be held on Monday, July 14, 2025 at 6:00 pm.

*Please note the temporary location:*

*Rotunda Building  
Large Conference Room  
300 Frank Ogawa Plaza  
Oakland, CA 94612*

