

Community Advisory Committee
Meeting minutes for April 13th, 2026

During the public comment portion initiating the meeting, Jessica Tovar spoke of:

1. Her support of the board's resolution that would bar contractors from working with ICE, but she is concerned that this policy has an expiration date of 12-1-2028.
2. She also expressed distress over the loss of more than half of the committee, noting that this undermines the value of staggered terms.

Chair Souza penned a letter—signed by other CAC members and to be read to the board—echoing regret over the loss of CAC members, but clarified that the letter was commentary rather than a motion, and that The Board has the ultimate decision. Please note that due to technical issues and lack of time, the signatures for members Swaminathan and Landry were signed with their authorization.

C3. The meeting minutes from March 16 were approved unanimously.

C5. Regarding our legislative outreach efforts, Jim recommends that we expand our engagement beyond paid lobbyists and direct staff contacts. We should actively include local and statewide nongovernmental organizations and labor unions where appropriate. Collaborating with these entities could significantly increase the reach and potency of the agency's advocacy efforts. Staff member Sadie directed us to a slide listing the nongovernmental agencies involved in shaping of AVA's legislative agenda.

C6. Concerns

AB 1975 - Katherine Beers, a member of the public, voiced concern over raising limits on the grid in light of wildfires and grid stress. Chair Souza noted that PG&E does have a monitoring system for grid stress and raising the percentages of grid usage is a concern that needs careful analysis.

SB 222. Chair Souza advised that AVA should review current Title 24 building codes which include duct testing of HVAC systems, proper airflow and refrigerant charge, and system sizing to keep these parts of consumer installation verification intact for the protection of consumers, energy efficiency, and potential problems associated with a fairly new HVAC technology. It is noted that heat pumps can be far more effective than the best gas appliance when installed correctly, and the CAC highly supports this technology.

SB 868: Member Lutz discussed supporting this bill even without amendment because adding the cost of batteries may be cost-prohibitive for low-income households. He also made a second recommendation for AVA to support battery deployment for customers. Staff pointed out that because solar operates during the day when most people are out of the house, batteries would be a significant improvement for residents. Supporting batteries that are not connected to the grid, would be complex and may not be under the purview of AVA. Member Lutz later withdrew the proposed change.

SB 913 - Member Hernandez asked for clarification around the surcharge and whether it would include fossil fuel-emitting fuels being used as DERS (Distributed Energy Resources.) Staff emphasized that the initiative discouraged fossil fuel as a means for electricity generation. The CAC agrees that any effort to curb the use of fossil fuels for electric generation, directly or indirectly, should be prohibited, and strongly opposed.

Item C7: Health-e Communities

The CAC and public lamented the lack of households participating in the program because the data proves the beneficial impact it made in households moving from gas to electric cooking. The data showed how impactful moving away from gas cooking was on unhealthy levels of nitrogen dioxide, which has proven detrimental health effects, especially to children, and on carbon monoxide levels, which are also linked to sickness and are the leading cause of accidental poisoning deaths in the United States. The program reduced both of these toxins from unsafe to safe levels when electric induction ranges were deployed.

Even so, the study was a soaring success in the data collected and learnings gathered from implementation by Franklin Energy. Learnings include that outreach to local community organizations could have greatly increased participation, and remote assessments of homes for electrical viability and currently installed appliances can help greatly in reducing program cost.

Further suggestions include sharing the data with governments and health organizations for use in determining priorities in further effort in removing gas cookware and other gas appliances for the health of our local communities.

C8. Ad Hoc committee update. The CAC will combine the current Ad Hocs into the Energy Affordability Ad Hoc and refrain at this time from moving to a CCA 3.0 Ad Hoc. Jim Lutz, on his own dime, is going to the CALCCA and we await his findings from this important event.

C9. The CAC and staff appreciate the members who have served for so many years, volunteering their time, institutional knowledge, commitment, and dedication to advancing what they and the greater CAC believe is one of the most important organizations that is worthy of support during this time of community stress and climate change.

Regarding the Loss of Over Half of The Community Advisory Committee Members

To: The AVA Board of Directors

By: The Remaining Members of the 2026-2027 AVA Community Advisory Committee

Dated: April 12, 2026


The (CAC) Community Advisory Committee and its members are both honored and pleased to serve AVA Community Energy, and the community it serves. Being the voice of a community is both rewarding and at times difficult, especially when serving a community in need may go opposite to the logic of commercial budgetary constraints and financial prudence. This complexity runs into not just budgetary risks, but differing demographic needs such as weather, climate change stressors, available technologies, and the prioritization of financial and human resources.


The CAC provides over a decade of institutional knowledge dating back to the inception of Community Choice Aggregation. Our members maintain vital connections to labor, energy technology sectors, community leaders, and governing institutions throughout the Bay Area.


We are concerned that the current proposal to turnover six of our eleven members—more than half of the committee—may compromise our efficacy. While we welcome new perspectives, the loss of several founding members, some of whom have a longer tenure than senior staff, represents a significant loss of institutional history.

We respectfully request that the Board reconsider the non-renewal of members who wish to continue their service. In particular, we advocate for the retention of Jim Lutz and Ernest Pacheco. Neither has reached their term limit, and both offer invaluable expertise and established relationships with energy technology and labor institutions within AVA territory.


Signed,


Lorraine "Mickey" Souza


Davis Harper Zapata (Apr 12, 2026 16:15:05 PDT)
Davis Harper Zapata


Indira Balkissoon (Apr 13, 2026 14:49:39 MDT)
Indira Balkissoon

Shiva Swaminathan
Shiva Swaminathan


Ed Hernandez

Cynthia Landry