



**Community Advisory Committee Meeting**

March 16, 2026

6:00 pm

**In Person:**

Board Room

Ava Community Energy  
1999 Harrison St, Ste 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  
1743 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue, San Leandro CA 94578

**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](mailto: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. (2:41) Welcome & Roll Call**

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

**C2. (4:24) 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 two 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. (4:56) Approval of Minutes from February 17, 2026**

**Vice-Chair Balkissoon motioned to approve the minutes. Member Landry seconded the motion, which was approved 10/0/1/0/0**

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

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

**No: none**

**Abstain: Member Pacheco**

**Recuse: none**

**Not Present: none**

**C4. (7:16) CAC Chair Report**

**Chair Souza** provided a verbal report on the February BOD meeting.

**C5. (16:40) 2026 California Legislative Position Recommendations (BOD Action Item)** Staff recommendation to support AB 1761 and SB 1138

**Sam Sadle, Principle Legislative Manager**, introduced the item and answered questions from the committee.

**(43:39) Public Comment – Dohee Kim**, representing the Local Clean Energy Alliance, spoke in support of Assembly Member Rogers' bill on PCIA methodology transparency, SB 1138 (Padilla) on hourly load-serving flexibility, and SB 868 (the Plug In the Sun Solar Act). Kim also spoke in support of aligning the Demand Side Grid Support (DSGS) program with Ava's virtual power plant efforts to strengthen distributed energy resources and protect vulnerable communities from outages.

**Member Weiner motioned to approve the staff recommendation. Member Pacheco seconded the motion, which was approved 11/0/0/0/0**

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

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

**No: none**

**Abstain: none**

**Recuse: none**

**Not Present: none**

**C6. (49:41) 2026 California Legislative Preview (BOD Informational Item)**

2026 California legislative preview

**Sam Sadle, Principle Legislative Manager**, introduced the item and answered questions from the committee. Sam was joined by **Dominic Faria, Senior Policy Coordinator** and **Kendall Downie, Public Policy Coordinator**.

**(1:17:07) Public Comment – Betsy Banman**, an intern with the Local Clean Energy Alliance, spoke in support of AB 577, stating that the bill addresses the harmful impacts of AI data centers on local communities. Banman said the bill would create needed accountability and public disclosure from data center owners that would protect ratepayers and affected communities.

**C7. (1:36:53) Ad Hoc Committee Update (CAC Informational Item)**

**Vice Chair Balkissoon** provided the ad hoc Energy Affordability Committee report. The committee reported on a meeting with Local Power regarding the “CCA 3.0” model, which emphasizes demand-side reductions, distributed energy resources, and community ownership to improve affordability and local economic benefits.

The presentation highlighted potential strategies such as shared ownership, local energy generation, and reduced reliance on centralized systems. The committee plans to evaluate these ideas, with next steps including further discussion and development of a more detailed analysis of the model’s feasibility, benefits, and challenges

**(1:49:52) Public Comment – Jessica Tovar** stated that Ava should return to the original vision of its local development business plan by investing in community-based clean energy projects that promote local ownership and reduce reliance on external markets.

**C8. (1:53:23) CAC Member and Staff Announcements including requests to place items on future Community Advisory Committee Meeting Agendas**

**Member Lutz** requested an update on the process of revising the RFP for the for the programs roadmap and potential policy revisions.

**Member Lutz** also suggested holding future CAC meetings in different parts of the service territory such as Stockton, Livermore or Fremont.

**Sam Sadle** stated that staff would return to the April CAC meeting to present legislative recommendations.

### **C9. Adjourn**

**The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 pm.**

The next Community Advisory Committee meeting will be held on Monday, April 13, 2026 at 6:00 pm.

# 3/16/26 – Ava Community Advisory Committee

## AI Generated Courtesy Summary - not official minutes

This summary has not been reviewed for accuracy

### C1. Welcome & Roll Call

The Chair called the Community Advisory Committee meeting to order at 6:07 PM. The meeting was held in person at Ava Community Energy headquarters, 1999 Harrison Street, Suite 2300, Oakland, California, Board Room, with remote participation available via Zoom and telephone.

Present: Member Ledger, Member Weiner, Member Stevenson, Member Swaminathan, Member Lockman, Member Hernandez, Member Pacheco, Member Harper, Member Lutz, Vice Chair, Chair Souza

A quorum was established.

### C2. Public Comment

No members of the public submitted comments on non-agenda items. No hands were raised in person or online.

### C3. Approval of Minutes from February 17, 2026

The Chair called for corrections or comments on the minutes from February 17, 2026. One member noted that the AI system had misspelled their name, and it was acknowledged that the matter would be addressed in the next set of minutes. No public comments were received.

Motion to approve the minutes from February 17, 2026 was made by the Chair and seconded by the Clerk. The motion carried unanimously.

### C4. CAC Chair Report

Chair Souza reported on the Ava Community Energy Board of Directors meeting held on February 19, 2026, covering the following key items:

**Budget Update:** CEO Howard Chang presented on the volatility of energy prices. A revised budgetary projection showed an improvement from the December 2025 forecast of a -\$133.7 million deficit to a more optimistic -\$94.2 million deficit for the January–June period. The change was attributed primarily to higher-than-projected PG&E rates. A separate projection for the July–December period showed further improvement. Some board members expressed interest in waiting approximately six months before making additional financial decisions, in order to further strengthen the agency's financial position.

**CARE/FERA Customer Credits:** Member Hernandez inquired whether the improved budget outlook would lead to a revisitation of the CARE/FERA customer credits that were previously removed. Chair Souza indicated that while some board members expressed interest, no decision was made, and the matter would likely be revisited following the next six-month projection cycle. Staff noted that Ava had held a community workshop in late January to explore a grant program, and that the matter remains actively in progress, with further updates to the CAC expected soon.

No Harm Policy: The CAC's request for the board to consider a "no harm policy" update in its decision-making was noted as having been presented to the board.

Large Load/AI Presentation: Staff member Ariel presented on large load growth driven by AI and data centers. The presentation was well-received. Questions from the board focused on best practices, potential tariffs, zoning for data centers, rate setting, and customer rate protection. Significant interest was expressed in DERMS (Distributed Energy Resource Management Systems) and the solar battery program. It was clarified that the Virtual Power Plant (VPP) grid is not intended for emergency backup power, but rather for load adjustment during grid stress events.

Ava Communications: The Chair noted the positive reception of a recent Ava Community Energy email to customers, which emphasized the agency's nonprofit status, its role in offsetting PG&E rate increases, and its commitment to transparency.

No public comments were received on the Chair Report.

## C5. 2026 California Legislative Position Recommendations (BOD Action Item)

Sam Seadle, Ava Community Energy's Legislative Director, presented two bills sponsored by CalCCA for which staff was seeking the Committee's support.

### AB 1761 – PCIA Transparency

Mr. Seadle provided background on the Power Charge Indifference Adjustment (PCIA). In February 2025, CPUC staff asserted that the Resource Adequacy (RA) Market Price Benchmarks feeding into the PCIA were flawed and required a speedy remedy. By June 2025, the CPUC adopted new RA market price benchmarks. Ava submitted a Public Records Act request for the underlying data in February 2025; however, the CPUC has delayed its response 17 times over more than 400 days, and the information has not been produced. Without this data, the agency cannot adequately forecast PCIA changes or plan for ratepayer impacts.

AB 1761, authored by Assembly Member Rogers, would require the release of data underlying any PCIA-related proposal or analysis submitted by an IOU, the PUC, its staff, or another party. Market-sensitive data would not be shared directly with load-serving entities (LSEs), but would instead be filtered through a third party to avoid competitive impacts. Supporters include CalCCA, the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), the League of California Cities, and the California Association of Counties. Southern California Edison and San Diego Gas and Electric are opposed, offering contradictory rationales — Edison asserting the data is already available, while SDG&E claimed compliance would be too burdensome.

Members raised questions about the CPUC's unusual pattern of delay, the process for selecting the third-party reviewer, whether the governor's office had been consulted (staff confirmed that preliminary contact had occurred), and whether the bill would apply retroactively (it would not; it would take effect January 1 of next year if signed).

### SB 1138 – RA Transactability

Mr. Seadle explained that in 2025, the CPUC completed a multi-year transition from monthly to hourly Resource Adequacy (RA) compliance obligations. However, LSEs are still only permitted to transact RA on a monthly basis, creating a compliance mismatch that forces LSEs to overcomply and purchase more RA than is needed, at an estimated statewide cost of approximately \$180 million per year. The CPUC acknowledged earlier in 2026 that allowing transactability would save customers money, but declined to act. CalCCA previously attempted to address this as an amendment to other legislation without success.

SB 1138 would require the CPUC to allow LSEs to transact RA obligations in units and time increments that match the compliance obligation (currently hourly). Transacted obligations would be capped at no more than 25 percent of an LSE's RA portfolio. The bill currently has no opposition.

Members asked clarifying questions about which entities could participate in transactions (all LSEs, not just CCAs), whether the bill addressed load obligations or resource adequacy as a product (both elements were acknowledged), and the proportion of Ava's procurement budget dedicated to RA (described as less than one-third of total procurement).

Public Comment: Do He Kim, Campaign Organizer with the Local Clean Energy Alliance, expressed support for both bills, noting that PCIA transparency would help protect ratepayers from cuts to programs such as CARE/FERA. Kim also expressed support for SB 868 (balcony solar) and the DSGS demand-side grid support program, noting their alignment with Ava's VPP planning.

Member Lutz spoke in favor of the motion, expressing strong support while encouraging Ava and CalCCA to pursue an even more ambitious legislative agenda on behalf of CCA viability and lower consumer electricity prices.

Motion to support AB 1761 and SB 1138 was made by Member Pacheco (Ernie) and seconded by Member Weiner (Peter). The motion carried unanimously.

## C6. 2026 California Legislative Preview (BOD Informational Item)

Mr. Seadle, joined by legislative team members Kendall Downey and Dominic Faria, presented an informational overview of the 2026 California legislative landscape as it pertains to Ava Community Energy. Staff noted that formal position recommendations will be brought to the April board meeting.

**Legislative Timeline:** The bill introduction deadline passed on February 20. Key upcoming milestones include the house-of-origin deadline at the end of May, the budget deadline on June 15, and the governor's action deadline at the end of September. The schedule is slightly accelerated due to the November election.

**Bill Universe:** Approximately 1,800 bills were introduced this session — the lowest number in 20 years — of which roughly 600 are spot or intent-of-legislature bills still awaiting substantive language. Staff identified approximately 80 bills relevant to Ava's Joint Powers Agreement, and has narrowed these to 33 bills currently undergoing cross-functional analysis. Staff's review is guided by five program priorities: affordability, protecting customer choice, decarbonization, local development, and budget transparency.

**Affordability:** California has the second-highest electricity costs in the nation. Several bills address rate affordability through changes to PUC processes and cost considerations, including AB 2463 (study of utility rate of return on equity), AB 2266 (single RA value for generation contracts), AB 1975 (maintenance cost considerations in infrastructure approvals), AB 2611, and SB 924. Staff noted they evaluate each bill by whether it applies to CCAs and whether it preserves rate-setting and procurement autonomy.

**Transmission and Distribution:** Dominic Faria highlighted bills aimed at reducing costs and delays in grid infrastructure development, including AB 2493 (independent third-party audits of IOU transmission submissions), AB 2239 (expedited development in infrastructure-constrained areas with utility penalties for missed timelines), and AB 2516, the California Grid Manufacturing Initiative, which would aggregate state demand for critical energy components and incentivize in-state manufacturing.

**Managing Data Center Growth:** Kendall Downey presented a cluster of bills addressing the rapid growth of AI data centers and their impact on the grid and ratepayers. The bills vary in approach and threshold definitions, and span four thematic concerns: preventing cost shifts to non-benefiting ratepayers (AB 2383, SB 886, SB 978); protecting grid reliability and climate goals (SB 887, which would remove the CEQA exemption for data centers and require energy storage capacity); improving transparency around large load development (AB 1577); and preserving customer choice and CCA participation in any new large-load tariff frameworks.

**Industrial Large Load Decarbonization:** Two bills approach industrial electrification from different directions — SB 943 (making electrification more affordable for industrial customers such as cement and steel plants) and SB 1168 (imposing a surcharge on gas generation consumed by data centers, with proceeds supporting CARE and FERA programs).

**Utility-Scale Decarbonization:** Bills include AB 1156 (facilitating solar and storage siting on water-constrained agricultural land), SB 1295 (mandatory procurement of 40 gigawatts of additional energy storage by 2040), and AB 2464 (PUC study of clean firm resources such as geothermal in pursuit of California's 2045 carbon-free goal).

**Distributed Energy Resources and Customer-Side Resources:** Bills include SB 868 (exempting qualifying plug-in/balcony solar systems from interconnection requirements), AB 2612 (building code standards for plug-in solar readiness), SB 222 (streamlining permitting and capping fees for heat pump water heaters and HVAC

systems — substantially similar to SB 282 from the prior session, which Ava's board had supported), and a budget trailer bill adding approximately \$20 million to the DSGS demand-side grid support program.

**Transportation Electrification:** Staff noted that EV demand growth dwarfs data center load growth in projections. Bills include AB 1942 (DMV registration and plating requirements for Class 2 and 3 e-bikes), SB 1167 (clarifying the legal definition of e-bikes), SB 1215 (requiring IOUs to triple their multifamily EV plug installations), and SB 1282 (requiring the Energy Commission to study vehicle-to-grid regulations). Staff noted that approximately 60 percent of bicycles purchased through Ava's Bike Electric program are Class 2 or 3, meaning they would be affected by the e-bike bills.

**Build Transparency / Dynamic Rates:** AB 1787 would require IOUs to offer dynamic rates once smart meter infrastructure is in place; AB 710 would require dynamic rates immediately, with a plan to install metering. Staff noted AB 710 is expected to be heavily amended.

**Other Bills of Interest:** Staff flagged a Brown Act update bill building on SB 707 from last year, two PUC reform bills addressing diversity in commissioner appointments, and SB 327 (IOU spending restrictions), which is a re-run of SB 24 from last year, vetoed due to a drafting error that is now being corrected.

**Member Discussion:** Member Pacheco asked substantive questions about data center legislation, noting his ongoing interest in bills modeled after Oregon HB 3546. Ms. Downey indicated that SB 886 bears the closest resemblance to the Oregon bill. Member Weiner encouraged the agency to focus legislative attention on facilitating transmission and generation supply, and on streamlining siting and permitting without diminishing environmental protections. Member Swaminathan raised the connection between data center water usage and environmental justice, and asked whether SB 887's CEQA provisions address neighborhood-level impacts; staff committed to reviewing the amended bill language. Chair Souza noted that Ariel's recent large load presentation had emphasized that EV and building electrification load growth significantly exceeds data center load growth in the East Bay, providing context for how the agency approaches this issue.

**Public Comment:** Betsy Baumann, intern with the Local Clean Energy Alliance, expressed support for AB 1577, emphasizing the importance of transparency and accountability from data center owners to protect communities and ratepayers from environmental and cost impacts.

Member Cynthia expressed concern about water usage by data centers, potential cost shifts to ratepayers during data center construction, and the proliferation of fossil and nuclear energy use to power data centers in other states. She urged the Committee to support strong legislative scrutiny of data center expansion.

Staff confirmed they will return at the April CAC meeting with formal bill position recommendations.

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

Member Swaminathan reported on behalf of the Energy Affordability Ad Hoc Committee, which recently met with Henry Hernandez and Paul of Local Power to discuss the "CCA 3.0" model. She noted this presentation was offered as background for potential future discussions through the lens of energy affordability.

Local Power's framework focuses on demand-side reductions, distributed energy resource ownership, and creating a local energy ecosystem in which residents hold dividend-paying shares in distributed energy resources. Their position was that while CCAs have been highly successful in developing centralized renewable generation, the model has left energy users in a passive role and has not sufficiently addressed demand-side reductions necessary for deeper climate action. The CCA 3.0 model emphasizes customer ownership, on-site generation and energy storage, smart appliances, thermal loops, nanogrids, structured financing such as green bonds, and the facilitation of co-investment among neighbors and local institutions. Examples of implementation were cited in Ithaca, New York and Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Member Swaminathan noted the meeting raised more questions than it answered, particularly around barriers to implementation, revenue and cost structures, governance, and the legality of electron sharing between neighbors. The Committee plans to meet again to flesh out the ideas further and develop a presentation on rationale, benefits, costs, and opportunities to overcome current barriers.

Member Weiner raised the specific issue of the "over the fence" prohibition in California utilities code Section 218, which prevents developers from creating all-solar microgrids for residential developments, and questioned why CCAs have not taken more action to address it legislatively. Mr. Seadle acknowledged the issue and noted there is no community microgrid bill in the current legislative session, though a community solar bill was

attempted unsuccessfully last session. He pointed to SB 870, a municipalization advancement bill, as a related measure. Staff explained the legislature's current focus on affordability as the dominant driver of the session's energy agenda.

Public Comment: Jessica with the Local Clean Energy Alliance spoke in support of the CCA 3.0 direction, referencing the Local Development Business Plan advanced through the Alameda County Board of Supervisors in 2016 as a foundational road map for this type of local investment model. She urged the agency to pursue actual community investments rather than replicating investor-owned utility patterns, and emphasized that local ownership is ultimately what will provide lasting price control. She cited a past instance in which the City of Hayward approached the agency to purchase locally generated solar power and was declined, resulting in the power being sold to PG&E instead. Member Swaminathan requested a follow-up on why that transaction did not proceed, and Chair Souza committed to following up.

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

Member Lutz requested an update on the status of the RFP for the programs roadmap process, which had previously been delayed, and asked whether any progress had been made on revising Ava's policies. He also formally requested that the Committee consider holding a future meeting in Stockton, Livermore, or Fremont, to extend the Committee's outreach to underserved and more distant parts of Ava's service territory.

Member Hernandez (Ed) echoed the value of in-person outreach to Stockton, describing a recent conversation with a Stockton planning commissioner who was unaware of Ava's activities, and encouraging staff and advisory members to participate in community events in those areas.

Member Harper, noting his position as the Committee's Stockton representative, expressed support for holding a meeting in Stockton and offered to assist with logistics, including venue selection and local dinner recommendations.

Mr. Seadle announced that the legislative team will return to the April CAC meeting with formal bill position recommendations on the bills previewed under item C6.

## C9. Adjourn

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:02–8:03 PM. The next Community Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 13, 2026 at 6:00 PM.