

CLEAN ENERGY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES: May 26, 2016
(Approved at meeting of 10/27/16)

Members present: Linda Brayton, Paul McGeary, Bob Myers, Linda Stout-Saunders, Candace Wheeler. **Staff:** Matt Coogan. **Guests:** Theo MacGregor, Principal and Jerrold Oppenheim, Principal Counsel, Democracy And Regulation. **Public:** Suzanne Altenburger, Phil Bolger & Friends Inc.; Dick Prouty, TownGreen 2025 Steering Committee; Tom Mikus, Rockport Green Community Task Force

The meeting was called to order by Wheeler at 7:35pm, Pond Road Annex Conference Room.

The meeting minutes for February 25, 2016 were unanimously approved.

CEC Member news, comments, reports on workshops: Myers attended the Mass Energy Consumer Alliance Green Power Bootcamp on May 23, 2016. The Bootcamp offered background on local green power and how one can support it through purchasing it, education and promotion. Presentations included Patrick Roche of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and Martha Grover of the City of Melrose to hear more about their experience with green municipal aggregation. Other topics included electric vehicles, renewable energy, an explanation of “additionality” under the green municipal aggregation program, subsidies, and the State policy for the renewable portfolio standard aka RPS. (Mass. Renewable Portfolio Standard requires suppliers to have 11% “Class I” renewables in 2016 plus 1% more per year.)

Staff and Member Reports/Updates/Discussions:

1. CEC welcomed new CEC member Paul McGeary
2. Discussion with Theo MacGregor and Jerry Oppenheim concerning access for low income families to energy efficiency and renewable energy programs. They have provided expert analysis on electric industry regulation, affordable rate design, energy efficiency program design, social programs in the utility sector, advocacy before regulatory and legislative bodies. Both Oppenheim and Mac Gregor commented that Massachusetts energy efficiency programs have been very effective.

Several questions/concerns were raised concerning the proposed Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) such as:

- Additionality: more information should be provided, specifically the economics and value to the State; how it will be invested
- RPS: MacGregor added up the data from her own recent utility bill and came up with approximately 21% of energy stated to be from renewable sources. So it is unclear to them why the 11% RPS plus a proposed 5% additional from Mass Class I renewable energy credits (RECS) is of any advantage. CEC will follow up with Good Energy.
- Ratepayers that are now with another competitive supplier: program needs concise process for how one can switch to CCA when their other competitive supplier contract ends
- Termination Penalties and Automatic Renewal: requires further detail.

Coogan suggested that they submit a list of their questions/concerns and that these could then be addressed in further detail by Good Energy and that we may have Good Energy attend our next CEC Meeting.

Solar opportunities were discussed and whether solar farms could be placed on municipal property as a program to benefit low income residents. Coogan suggested this could be recommended to the Mayor and perhaps obtain support from Sen. Bruce Tarr; and investigate

what precedent has been set by other states. Wheeler suggested that we look into some potential sites such as Magnolia Woods.

3. CEC Strategic Plan: To be completed by Kiely; discussed that the Plan should be limited to one fiscal year, July 2016-17.

4. Community Choice Aggregation (CCA): MAPC, Good Energy and Mass Energy made presentations to the Planning and Development Committee, May 4, 2016. Per Coogan, a contract with Good Energy has been signed by the Mayor. A public hearing to be scheduled.

5. City/TownGreen 2025 project to promote Mass Save energy efficiency opportunities in Gloucester:

Letter was sent to the Mayor recommending that the City explore using its communication channels to assist TownGreen 2025 and other organizations to increase the percentage of residents and small businesses taking advantage of the free service offered by Mass Save. The percentage of Cape Ann residents taking advantage of these programs is well below the State average. Ratepayers already pay a surcharge to subsidize energy efficiency programs. We want to keep/spend those dollars locally. More energy efficiency results in a reduction of our carbon footprint and threats of climate change to our coastal community.

Prouty pointed out that 40% of completed energy audits through the Mass Save program result in completed projects. He suggests we obtain more detailed utility data by income sector and further detail as to the effect on carbon footprint. (See www.masssavedate.com. --- Reports providing detailed data and information on the year-to-date performance of energy efficiency in Massachusetts, including total energy savings, budgetary investments and benefits, greenhouse gas reduction and demographic profiles.

6. Update on Street Light Project: Coogan reported 1700 lights have been completed. McGeary pointed out that Veterans School still need to be completed.

7. Other Business:

- Gas Leak Program: Coogan is working with the Dept. of Public Works. MAPC is managing a regional program to map natural gas leaks and analyze the results to facilitate replacement of aging, leak-prone pipeline infrastructure.
- Massachusetts Economic Development Council: Conference to be held June 17 at The Gloucester House. Topics include municipal aggregation, tax credits for renewables and net metering. The Mayor, Senator Bruce Tarr and Good Energy are among the speakers.
- Solar Challenge: Prouty reported the deadline for signup is June 30. TownGreen 2025 is intending to do a few more “lunch & learn” workshops until then. Goal is 100 homes; 60-70 have been signed up.
- Community Outreach:

Lanesville Community Center – Dick Prouty will give a talk on renewable alternatives, including neighborhood solar farms, and how they could be structured as a cooperative. Valerie Nelson is the organizer.

Farmers Market: suggested that a table be made available to promote the Mass Save energy audit program and other energy efficiency information.

Rockport Green Community Task Force: reported that they have approved the Stretch Code under their Green Communities application. They are looking at the municipal electric aggregation program; looking at the possibility of developing some solar farms, believe they may have approx. 40 acres available.

Ongoing and New Items:

Finalize Strategic Plan – Kiely

Gas Leak Follow-up with DPW – Coogan/Brayton

Research Social Media Outreach by other Municipalities: follow up at end of year – Myers

Continue to explore options for Solar Siting – Moskal with Dick Prouty

Zoning By-laws for ground-mounted solar projects –Coogan

Develop City Inventory of owned/rented properties – Coogan’s Intern

CCA Program – ongoing; public hearing

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 30, 2016, 7:30pm, Pond Rd. Annex Conference Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Stout-Saunders