

**Community Renewable Energy Agency Board
Communications Committee
Special Meeting Minutes**

The Communications Committee of the Community Renewable Energy Agency Board met in a SPECIAL MEETING on **Thursday, March 26, 2026**, at Millcreek City Hall, located at 1330 E. Chambers Avenue, Millcreek, UT 84106 and participated electronically via Zoom.

PRESENT:

Board Members

In person

Chris Cawley, *Alta*

Electronic

Glade Sowards, *Salt Lake City*

David Brems, *Emigration Canyon*

Emily Paskett, *Salt Lake County*

Pamela Gibson, *Castle Valley*

Randy Aton, *Springdale*

Dan Dugan, *Salt Lake City*

Roger Bourke, *Alta*

Alexi Lamm, *Moab*

Holly Smith, *Holladay*

Dustin Gettel, *Midvale*

Lorenzo Long, *Ogden*

Kyla Topham, *Springdale*

Rory Swensen, *Coalville*

Melodie McCandless, *Grand County*

Brandon Brady, *Coalville*

In Person Attendees: Alex Wendt, *Millcreek*; Sean Murray, *Millcreek*

Electronic Attendees: Monica O'Malley, *Salt Lake City staff*; Sophia Nicholas, *Salt Lake City staff*; Spencer Lawson, *Penna Powers*; Ellen Birrell, *Cottonwood Heights*; Maridene Alexander; Molly Austin, *Alta staff*; Lisa Church, *Moab staff*; Brandon Garside, *Ogden staff*; Steve Burton, *Ogden staff*; Rita Lund, *Millcreek staff*; Brenda Salter, *Division of Public Utilities*; Brijette Williams, *Salt Lake City staff*; Chelsey Shuman, *Salt Lake City staff*; Jordan Carroll, *Salt Lake City staff*; Brook Dorff, *Salt Lake City staff*; Melisa Jeffers; Brianna Chavez, *Salt Lake City staff*; Lina Costa, *Holladay staff*; Jazmyne Olson; Erica Okada; Kai Hartrum, *Summit County staff*; Salvador Brown, *Salt Lake City staff*

Note: not all electronic attendees and their affiliation were recorded.

SPECIAL MEETING: 11:00 a.m.

TIME COMMENCED: 11:02 a.m.

1. Welcome, Introduction, and Preliminary Matters

1.1 Purpose and Overview of Meeting

Facilitator of the Communications Committee, Board Member Chris Cawley, called the meeting to order, and introduction of attending board members and presenters was made.

Board Member Chris Cawley reviewed the agenda, highlighting that the meeting will cover a high-level overview of Utah Renewable Communities and the Community Clean Energy Program; Communications Committee activities, resources, and assets; the impact the Utility Agreement has on program communications; and a preview of the new URC website.

2. Business Matters

2.1 Update from Communications Committee and review of communications assets

Board Member Chris Cawley explained this special meeting is being held because the Utah Public Service Commission approved the program on March 4th, and the approval started the timelines of two key decision points that communities should share with their constituents. The first being that municipal councils have 90 days to vote on adopting an ordinance to finalizing their participation in the Program. Following this timeline, constituents in communities that adopt ordinances must decide whether to stay in the Program or opt-out. Both decision points require a level of communication and outreach, so the Communications Committee held this meeting to share relevant assets and discuss how they can support participating municipalities.

Board Member Glade Sowards gave an overview of Utah Renewable Communities (URC) and the Community Clean Energy Program, explaining the Utah Community Clean Energy Act which made the initiative possible, the overall goal and function of the Program, who is involved (including 19 cities and counties, Rocky Mountain Power, and a group of key stakeholders). URC functions without a dedicated staff: URC has a board of directors, three committees, support staff, and contractors that work together to keep the program moving forward. Communities are working on this program because it is an opportunity to drive large scale renewable energy development, offer homes and businesses the choice of where their energy comes from, support jobs and the economy, and improve public health and the environment. The program will work by adding more clean energy projects to the PacifiCorp grid, so eventually the amount of electricity used by URC customers will be matched by clean energy generation. The program is a collaboration with RMP, and participants will remain RMP customers.

Board Member Sowards discussed the PSC's authority over the program, and their decision to approve the program on March 4, 2026. In the order, the Commission approved an initial program rate of \$4 per month for residential customers and a rate based on usage for commercial and other non-residential customers. The approved program directly supports the addition of new, utility-scale clean energy development to the RMP grid, and it is distinct from other clean energy offerings like Blue Sky, Subscriber Solar, and net metering. The PSC also approved provisions to help protect and support low-income customers. As such, RMP customers enrolled in HELP, an existing bill assistance program, will participate in URC for free. Importantly, all customers can

opt out of the program at any time once it kicks off in late 2026 or early 2027. Board Member Sowards also reiterated that the PSC approval set off the 90-day clock for communities to adopt ordinances to allow residents and businesses in their communities to automatically be opted into the program when it begins.

Board Member Sowards reviewed the estimated 2026 program timeline, highlighting when communications staff may be receiving questions about the program from their constituents and/or the media. Key milestones for program communications include the 90-day ordinance adoption period; the 60-day noticing period, estimated to begin in early November 2026; the commencement date, estimated to begin in early January 2027; and the following 4-month no fee opt out period. Between the noticing period and the opt-out period, customers will have a total of 6 months to opt-out of the program for free after which a termination fee will be charged.

Board Member Pamela Gibson asked what happens to people who already have rooftop solar and/or are participating in Blue Sky. Board Member Sowards explained that customers with rooftop solar that are on rate schedule 135 will not be allowed to participate in the program. Such customers may remove themselves from schedule 135 to participate in the program, however, it may not be financially favorable to them. Customers with rooftop solar that are not on rate schedule 135 may participate in the program. Blue Sky customers can participate in the program or stay on Blue Sky, depending on which option they prefer.

Board Member Dustin Gettel mentioned there has been discussion around the possibility that the rate to participate in the program may decrease or be eliminated over time, and he asked whether we have talking points prepared for this subject. Board Member Sowards responded that residential and non-residential rates approved by the Public Service Commission are initial rates, and the decision on how program resources will be valued, which will determine future program rate adjustments, is still pending. RMP has stated that they anticipate the highest program rates will come in the first 1-4 years of the program, as resource reserves are being built up. The Commission order explains that they approved the program with the initial rates, so resource procurement can occur in time for URC to take advantage of production tax credits, and they will revisit rates over time. Like RMP, the Commission also projects rates will likely decrease after the first few years of the program. Talking points have not been developed on this complicated subject yet, but the Communications Committee and staff will work on developing some.

Board Member Gettel also asked whether nuclear power will be included in the program in the future. Board Member Sowards explained that while nuclear is an eligible program resource, URC is primarily focused on renewable energy. Nuclear became an eligible resource in 2024 when the program statute was expanded to include additional resources beyond what are considered renewables. Still, the coalition is branded Utah Renewable Communities, and 18 of the 19 communities have signed resolutions to achieve net-100% renewable electricity by 2030 and are still working towards that goal. As such, URC's initial request for proposal was only seeking renewable resources for the program, including solar, wind, geothermal, and hydropower. Sophia Nicholas added that nuclear and other non-renewable, clean energy resources tend to be more expensive and probably

would not have fared well in our request for proposal process anyway. Sophia also added, regarding Board Member Gettel's first question, that all utility rates undergo annual adjustments, and this program is not unique in that respect.

Board Member Chris Cawley gave an overview of the URC Communications Committee. The committee meets twice a month, produce and review content for the Agency's Facebook and Instagram channels, manage the URC website, provide updates to staff and the public via an e-newsletter, and hired a communications firm, Penna Powers, to assist with asset development and PR. Board Member Cawley highlighted key messages, the URC's draft communications plan, program explainer graphics, the social media toolkit, and other resources and assets that will be shared with board members and staff to help them with their communications and outreach.

Board Member Cawley reviewed section 13.6 of the Utility Agreement. The agreement was signed by all 19 participating communities, the URC Agency, and RMP. He explained that the agreement obligates URC and participating communities to send promotional materials to RMP for review and approval before distribution and vice versa. All parties has 5 business days to respond, after which the materials are deemed approved. This does not affect the ability of any party from discussing the program during open meetings or in response to inquiries by constituents or the media. The Communications Committee is learning how to navigate this agreement, and until they have established an understanding with RMP for reviewing content, they are asking communities to refrain from issuing their own promotional materials about the program. In the meantime, participating communities can discuss the program with their municipal councils, share URC's press releases, promote URC's newsletter, re-share URC social content, network with advocacy groups, and reach out to program staff for help. The Communications Committee anticipates URC assets will be available in 4-6 weeks. Sophia Nicholas clarified that communities can create content about the program, whether it be for their social media channels, newsletter, website, etc., but they must send it to Rocky Mountain Power first.

Board Member Emily Paskett mentioned that she was asked to put together a one-page flyer on the program to distribute to the Salt Lake County Council, and she is wondering how available something like that can be under section 13.6 of the Utility Agreement. Board Member Sowards explained that participating communities may publicly communicate with their councils without RMP's review. Advocacy groups and residents are allowed to re-share such council transmitted materials, since they are not included in the Utility Agreement, but participating communities can't distribute such flyers directly to the public without sending them RMP first. Sophia Nicholas added that the Agency is working on an internal fact sheet for board members, council members, and staff, and the Communications Committee is working with Penna Powers on developing a public facing flyer. Ellen Birrell, a Cottonwood Heights Council Member, asked when the internal fact sheet will be made available, and Sophia Nicholas responded that it may be a couple of weeks.


Brandon Garside, the Communications Director with Ogden City Council, mentioned that the Ogden City Council tentatively scheduled a work session on April 7th, and they want

to invite the public to the work session and conduct a flash vote survey for residents to weigh in on the ordinance adoption decision. Brandon Garside asked how they should approach this and who the best point person would be for sending the survey and other materials to RMP, if necessary. Sophia Nicholas explained that she does not think materials used to communicate with constituents about the public process would need to be sent to RMP for review. If communities have promotional materials that do need RMP's review, they can be sent to Sophia Nicholas, Chris Cawley, and Glade Sowards to start the approval process with the utility. In the meantime, the Communications Committee will share approved content with communities' staff to re-share as desired. While the review process is not ideal, Ms. Nicholas emphasized that it is important for the Agency and RMP to collaborate more on communications, as the program is jointly owned by the two entities.

Spencer Lawson with Penna Powers presented the new website. The layout and messaging were designed to be more accessible and public-focused as opposed to the current website, which is geared more towards elected officials and municipal staff members. The new website will need to be approved by Rocky Mountain Power before it goes live, and the website URL will remain the same.

3. Adjournment

With no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 12:04 p.m.

APPROVED:  _____ Date 4/13/26
Dan Dugan, Chair

ATTEST:

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Emily Quinton, Secretary