

Community Renewable Energy Agency Communications Committee Special Meeting Minutes

The Community Renewable Energy Agency Communications Committee met in a special public meeting on **Wednesday, June 29, 2022**, at Millcreek City Hall, located at 3330 S. 1300 E., Millcreek, UT 84106 and participated electronically via GoToMeeting.

PRESENT:

Board Members

In person

Christopher Thomas, *Salt Lake City*

Samantha DeSeelhorst, *Cottonwood Heights*

Chris Cawley, *Alta*

Electronic

David Brems, *Emigration Canyon*

Emily Quinton, *Summit County*

Suzanne Elger, *Springdale*

Dan Dugan, *Salt Lake City*

RaeShel Hortin, *Coalville*

Holly Smith, *Holladay*

Robert Pinon, *Emigration Canyon*

Mark Marsh, *Coalville*

In Person Attendees: Kurt Hansen, *Millcreek*; Ben Dawson *Millcreek resident*; Jessica; one additional audience member

Electronic Attendees: Monica O'Malley, *Salt Lake City Staff*; Dominic Heuscher; Ken Richey, *Ogden Council member*; Edwin Stafford *Utah State marketing professor*; Rick Wixom, *Springdale*; Carmen Valdez, *HEAL Utah*; Jeanne Evenden, *Ogden resident*; Jeremy Shinoda, *Ogden resident*; Jonathan Springmeyer, *West Valley City*

Minutes by Chris Cawley, Alta Assistant Town Administrator

SPECIAL MEETING: 5:15 p.m.

TIME COMMENCED: 5:15 p.m.

1. Welcome, Introduction, and Preliminary Matters

1.1 Purpose and Overview of Meeting

Christopher Thomas explained that the Communications Committee is hosting an update on the Community Renewable Energy Program. Mr. Thomas asked meeting participants to introduce themselves. Community Renewable Energy Board Chair and Salt Lake City Councilmember Dan Dugan led the introductions by describing that the Agency's mission is important, and recommended that meeting participants plan to ask questions of Christopher Thomas and Emily Quinton during the

orientation session.

2. Business Matters

2.1 Utah 100 Communities overview and orientation session

Mr. Thomas asked participants to plan to ask questions at the end of the presentation or enter questions in the online meeting chat function.

Mr Thomas presented the agenda for the meeting, with presentation topics including the Community Renewable Energy Program vision and background, the requirements under which the Program is operating, Agency Board of Directors voting structure, costs, Agency structure and committees, and a period for questions.

Mr Thomas said the primary goal of the Program is to create a net-100% renewable electricity option that is available to all of homes and businesses in participating communities by the year 2030. Mr. Thomas described the program background including the enabling State of Utah legislation, and observed that the program is unique to Utah, and distinct from other renewable energy options. Mr. Thomas presented slides with more details on how the Program operates under Utah law, and major milestones related to Program design; Program application to the Utah Public Utilities Commission; a requirement for communities to pass an ordinance to finalize participation in the Program; initial renewable energy resource procurement; and customer opt-out noticing.

Mr. Thomas discussed the Program's governance agreement and described the difference between Agency Board of Directors voting that takes places prior to final implementation of the Program, and after Program implementation. Prior to implementation, a simple majority of communities can make decisions about the Program, with the option for two communities to call for a vote weighted by each community's Program payment obligations as well as their participating electric load. After program implementation, only a supermajority of participating communities can approve changes to Program elements, and a majority of communities, as well as a majority of participating electric load, is required for decisions regarding resource procurement. However, if a resource procurement decision will increase electricity rates by more than ten percent, a supermajority of communities and electric load must approve the decision. Mr. Thomas defined the Program's participation percentage calculation, which assesses each community's share of program costs based on its population and electric load. Certain communities committed to covering potential funding shortfalls related to changes in community participation by agreeing to become "anchor communities." After implementation, participation percentage is based on each community's share of participating customer electric load. Mr. Thomas presented additional slides with details regarding the Agency's voting structure.

Mr. Thomas described that participating communities appoint two members to the Agency Board of Directors. A community's primary board member must be an elected official and votes when they are present. Alternate board members do not

need to be elected officials and can vote on action items when their primary board member is not present in a meeting.

Mr. Thomas discussed Program implementation costs, which are expected to total about \$700,000, not including the cost to provide notice to all Rocky Mountain Power customers in participating communities prior to implementation. State law requires participating communities to bear all program design costs without shifting any costs to non-participating customers. If communities decline to keep participating in the program, anchor communities have agreed to cover any resulting program development cost shortfall.

Mr. Thomas described the structure of the Agency and its board of directors. The Agency is administered by staff and elected official from participating communities, and the Agency can hire consultants. The Agency Board of Directors includes two board members from each of 18 participating communities. The board elects members to the roles of Board Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary, and three committees convene monthly to contribute to the work of the Agency. These committees include the Program Design Committee, the Low-Income Plan Committee, and the Communications Committee.

Chris Cawley, alternate board member from the Town of Alta, described the Communications Committee's monthly meeting schedule, listed the communities that participate on the committee, and described key roles including coordinating press releases and media engagement, maintaining social media platforms and www.utah100communities.org, and helping the Agency satisfy the requirement to provide notice to RMP customers in participating communities. Samantha DeSeelhorst, alternate board member from Cottonwood Heights, described the Low-Income Plan Committee's work to satisfy the requirement for participating communities to adopt a plan to mitigate impacts to low income RMP customers. Christopher Thomas, alternate board member from Salt Lake City, described the Program Design Committee, which works with Rocky Mountain Power and state agencies, and directs technical and legal consultants, on the development of the Community Renewable Energy Program.

Mr. Thomas described that at a basic level, the Program will meet its goals by developing new renewable energy resources and connecting them to the existing RMP grid. These resources will compliment renewable resources available in the RMP "standard offer mix," leading participating communities to reach their "net 100% renewable energy by 2030" goals.

Mr. Thomas acknowledged concerns regarding potential impacts to electricity customer bills and described that while developing additional renewable energy resources will necessarily entail significant costs, the Program will seek to offset those costs by avoiding expenses associated with fossil fuel market volatility or future carbon emissions penalties, and by avoiding the need to purchase consumable fuels. If resource and system costs outweigh these Program benefits, there would be a net cost that could increase utility bills.


Mr. Thomas concluded the presentation and invited members of the audience to ask questions. A Millcreek resident who attended the meeting in person asked how the Program would affect homeowners who have installed solar panels on their homes or who are considering doing so. Mr. Thomas described that there are unique benefits associated with having home solar panels; they provide energy resiliency and a faster pathway to using renewable energy, for instance. Homeowners with solar panels will have to choose whether to remain in the Program or opt out when the Program launches. Another Millcreek resident asked whether the Program could subsidize home-solar installations as a resource procurement. Mr. Thomas said this would be difficult but supposed the Agency could potentially purchase excess solar energy from home solar owners as a procurement toward the net 100%-renewable goal.

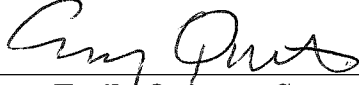
Ed Stafford, Utah State University, pointed out that renewable energy is price-stable, and asked whether, if Program rates are higher than standard rates, Program customers could be provided some guarantee that rates would stay the same. Mr. Thomas described that the price-stability of renewable resources and other Program benefits should provide Program customers some assurance their rates will not increase significantly over time. Mr. Stafford described that as a marketing expert he thinks about what consumers want and offered to work with Mr. Thomas in the future to articulate program benefits.

A member of the audience attending in person thanked Mr. Thomas and the Agency for its work toward implementing net 100% renewable energy for participating communities. Chris Cawley asked Mr. Thomas to provide an update on the Program timeline, and Mr. Thomas described that currently, the Agency is working with RMP on a program application to the Utah Public Service Commission. Mr. Thomas said that designing the rate, and working to satisfy numerous requirements under Utah law, are time consuming tasks.

Agency Board Chair Dan Dugan thanked Mr. Thomas for the presentation, and Mr. Thomas closed the meeting.

3. Adjournment

APPROVED:  Date 1 Aug 2022
Dan Dugan, Chair

ATTEST: 
Emily Quinton, Secretary