

## **CLEAN ENERGY ADVISORY BOARD**

### **DRAFT MEETING MINUTES**

**October 17, 2022 (Monday)**

**1:00PM – 2:30PM**

**\*\*Meeting was open to the Public \*\***

#### **Virtual Informational Gathering Meeting**

CEAB website hosted at [energy.virginia.gov](http://energy.virginia.gov), direct link [here](#)

Recording available [here](#) using the password: VAenergy1

#### **Call to Order**

H. Coman called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm.

#### **Roll Call**

Present: Katharine Bond, Will Cleveland, , Hannah Coman, KC Bleile, Janaka Casper, Susan Kruse, Carmen Bingham, John Warren, Will Cleveland, Kendyl Crawley Crawford, Taylor Brown, Toni Ostrowski

Not present:

Sam Brumberg, Bill Greenleaf, Kirk Johnson, Sarah Nerette

*Virginia Energy Staff:* Carrie Hearne, Devyn Keller, Austin Counts, Bettina Bergoo, Ryan Dorland, Aaron Berryhill

#### **Committee Reports**

##### Stakeholder Engagement and Marketing Committee-

The Stakeholder Engagement and Marketing Committee met virtually on October 14<sup>th</sup> from 9-11:30am. Members first discussed utility consultations and what is required in the Code of Virginia. After robust discussion, it was determined that two of the three investor-owned utilities (IOUs) are currently undergoing work with their respective consultants to develop effective marketing and engagement plans for their low-income customers to increase participation in the utility's programs. The Committee decided to develop a work plan to gather more information about the current processes and inquire with the third IOU to assess their plans for further engagement. The Committee will develop recommendations for each IOU for the Board to consider at their next meeting.

The second half of the meeting was a discussion about community engagement in southwest Virginia with Virginia Energy staff Brook Vernon, and invited guests, Kajsa Foskey and Amber Poron, outreach staff for VPLC, to learn about lessons they have learned about engagement with communities. After a robust discussion, the recommendation was made to look into the development of a Virginia Energy Navigator that would provide individuals guidance through the process of finding and applying for energy assistance programs. More information about

available funding sources needs to be gathered before a full recommendation can be provided to the Board.

Program Development Committee- The Committee has not met recently, but now that they have recommendations they will schedule a meeting soon. Members have been working with Virginia Energy staff on the RFP analysis.

Policy and Regulatory Committee-

The Policy and Regulatory Committee has not met since the last full Board meeting, so there are no updates at this time.

### **Program Status Update: Virginia Low and Moderate Income Solar Pilot Program Post RFP Analysis**

Background: The RFP was open for over a month and a half and received no applications. This initiated the development of the RFP improvement plan to revise it and resubmit it to have more success in the future. This program was focused on Wise County and Norton City.

Virginia Energy staff members and a few members of the Program Development Committee have conducted interviews with potential service providers using a set list of questions to uncover why they may have decided not to apply. Team members have been going through interview results and will be creating a report to summarize those results soon.

The perceived barriers that most service providers noted included the following:

1. Market size and customer acquisition
2. Geography
3. Third party ownership availability
4. Program approach
5. Understanding of Solar Renewable Energy Credits market (SRECs)

Main goals of the improvement plan:

1. Improve the competitiveness of the RFP;
2. Document program concerns and suggestions from potential respondents; and
3. Re-structure and publish a revised version of the RFP.

The team has identified a few next steps to address the barriers expressed in the interviews including:

1. To provide clarification on solar leases and PPAs and
2. To expand the program statewide with allowance for service providers to select ideal localities for their proposal (still focused on LMI households and disadvantaged communities)
3. Include information on Virginia REC markets
4. Increase information and transparency on income eligibility and verification

## **Discussion and Next Steps**

Members discussed potentially having a joint meeting of the Stakeholder Engagement and Marketing and Program Development Committees to see how they can work together to better plan for the development of the revised RFP. There were some concerns that the statewide program could leave those who most need these developments out of the program. Virginia Energy staff and Board members clarified that the state-wide recommendation would not necessarily mean that the program is statewide, but that applicants could choose a location that would also need to meet requirements of LMI and disadvantaged communities. This option seemed especially important because location and the market size were such issues for potential applicants.

A potential to overlap with Dominion's Income and Age Qualifying program was brought up.

The Board is still waiting on the response from the Attorney General's office on the solar leasing question. That decision, hopefully coming within the next few weeks, will likely influence the revised RFP.

## **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

## **Conclusion**

The Board members were reminded to fill out a Doodle poll for a meeting with Dominion. The next Board meeting on Dec. 12<sup>th</sup> needs to be in person. The annual report will also be due and ready to report by that meeting. Drafts will need to be prepared by around Thanksgiving to allow time for review. Committees should plan to meet before the December 12<sup>th</sup> meeting as well.

There was a reminder of a few upcoming events in Richmond: the Virginia Clean Energy Summit on October 20-21 and the Virginia Energy Efficiency Council's Forum on October 31-November 1<sup>st</sup>.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:26pm.