

CLEAN ENERGY ADVISORY BOARD
FINAL MEETING MINUTES
November 15th, 2021 (Monday)
3:00PM – 5:00PM

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

Meeting Recording Found [here](#)
CEAB website hosted at energy.virginia.gov, direct link [here](#)

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 3:03 pm

Roll Call

KC Bleile - present, Taylor Brown - present, Sam Brumberg - present, Janka Casper - present, Will Cleveland - present, Hannah Coman - present, Susan Kruse - present, Kendyl Crawley Crawford - present, Kirk Johnson - present, Toni Ostrowski - present, Will Reisiniger-present, Katharine Bond - present

Hannah Coman mentioned that Sam Towell has resigned from the Board.

Quorum was met with the above present. All board members participated electronically. The meeting was held with the electronic system via Webex. Pursuant to Enactment 17 of Chapter 1 of the 2021 Special Session II Acts of Assembly, the meeting was held by electronic communication means without a quorum of the Board physically assembled at one location for purposes of receiving presentations, updates, public comment, or conducting other forms of information gathering.

Virginia Energy Staff: Carrie Hearne, Aaron Berryhill, Bettina Bergoo
Office of Attorney General: Grant Kronenberg

The purpose of the meeting was to do an update on the stakeholder outreach and update of RFP from CESA for the LMI Solar Program.

General Business of the Board

The chair provided a brief overview of recent business of the Board. This includes the IOU Consultation, Green Bank Market assessment presentation, stakeholder outreach for the LMI Solar Program, and the Policy and Regulatory Committee meeting.

Sam Brumberg added that the Policy and Regulatory Committee agreed to send a letter to the Governor's office regarding the work of the Board related to LMI solar and in support of a Green Bank program. The letter will be circulated to the full Board and considered for the annual report.

Summary of Stakeholder Outreach Performed by the Board

A summary was given of the outreach completed to all weatherization service providers active in the top five communities being considered for the LMI Solar Pilot Program. Since 2016, the following communities have had the following number of single family households served by a weatherization service provider:

- Augusta County: 133 households
- Wise County: 44 households
- Shenandoah County: 36 households
- City of Waynesboro: 26 households
- City of Franklin: 7 households (Provided by Project Homes, data goes back only to 2019)

These numbers reported from each weatherization provider indicate the single family households that have already received weatherization services and therefore are in the pipeline for solar installations if they have suitable roofs. When including the waitlist contacts, this information indicates the level of activity in the service area and the number of potential contacts for the LMI solar program.

Next, a summary of the outreach conducted with community housing officials was given by Toni Ostrowski of Virginia Housing:

The executive director of the Wise County Housing Authority mentioned that community members are just beginning to grasp the benefits of solar. Wise County already has programs that exist in the schools that help to promote and explain the benefits of solar. Public information in Wise County is primarily shared online and through social media since newspapers are mostly nonexistent in the community. The director also mentioned that they are aware of several great local solar installers active in the local area.

The executive director of the Blue Ridge Housing Network (Shenandoah County) agreed that a LMI Solar Program would be beneficial in their community. This organization already does extensive educational outreach about home ownership and therefore has an extensive contact list to inform people about the solar program. The organization also has experience working with electric utilities on helping households with paying for electric bills.

A representative from Habitat for Humanity Virginia mentioned that the Central Valley Habitat (Augusta County and City of Waynesboro) is currently building new homes with solar panels on the roofs. They mentioned that Habitat could assist with further outreach to households.

During the Board's consultation with electric-owned utilities, each utility was asked how they reached out to their customers about various programs. ODP responded that their outreach is done entirely online but would be open to other means of outreach in the future if the Board advised them. Appalachian Power similarly does most outreach online but believes they maintain strong community relations

Next, a summary of the outreach to County/City Administrators of the five localities considered for the LMI Solar Pilot Program was given.

The Director of Community Development for the City of Waynesboro said the local government would be very supportive of the program and could help do outreach to residents through a variety of means. The director also said the City could anticipate passing local solar incentives to support the program

Email outreach to the other four communities did not receive a response.

Outreach to solar installers included AltEnergy. AltEnergy provided feedback on potential parameters of the RFP. AltEnergy encouraged the Board to think about vertical integration to be supportive of local solar installers, consider the number roofing installs expected each year, and roofing materials of houses in the program, AltEnergy said they would be interested in responding to the RFP and said their operations cover most of the areas being considered for the program.

There has not been any contact with the City of Franklin's municipal utility or Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative to understand how each utility supports and interacts with solar installations. Members of the Board will work to contact these organizations.

There was no successful outreach to residents in the five communities. The Board will reach out to Appalachian Voices to identify contact information for residents. The Board will continue to strategize how to best reach out to local residents.

LMI Solar Program RFP Progress and Status

Carrie Hearne of Virginia Energy introduced Nate Hausman and Wafa May Elamin from the Clean Energy States Alliance (CESA) to discuss the current progress on drafting the RFP. Carrie Hearne mentioned that internal discussions within the agency's procurement staff revealed additional questions about the logistics of sharing a RFP and contract in a public forum. As a result the full Board will not have access to the full text of the RFP in a public forum. Nevertheless, the expectation is that Virginia Energy will continue to get advice from the Board in helping to launch the LMI solar program. Virginia Energy will be working to get additional advice from the Office of the Attorney General and procurement staff in the coming weeks.

Nate Hausman of CESA discussed some of the elements and intentions of the RFP. Currently there is \$500,000 that has been allocated for use for this program that will be used by Virginia

Energy. Generally, the program will be open-ended in terms of solicitation and solar financing that respondents can propose. One the main topics that has been considered in the RFP is how companies can ensure saving guarantees for LMI customers on an ongoing basis. One potential resolution would be a loan loss reserve built into the program administered by Virginia Energy. Virginia Energy has administered similar loan loss reserve funds in the past.

Public Comment

There were no public comments provided.

Conclusion

The next meeting of the Board will be December 15, 2021 at 3pm in-person in the Richmond area.

The meeting adjourned at 4:02PM