

CLEAN ENERGY ADVISORY BOARD
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

July 21st, 2021 (Wednesday)
11:00AM – 1:00PM

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

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

Chair Hannah Coman called meeting to order at 11:05AM

Roll Call:

KC Bleile – present, Sam Towell – present, Janaka Casper – present (electronic), Bill Greenleaf – (joined after roll call), Hannah Coman – present, Will Reisinger – present, Susan Kruse – present, Toni Ostrowski – present, Katharine Bond – absent, Will Cleveland – present, Taylor Brown – present, Sam Brumberg – present, Kirk Johnson – present, John Warren – present.

Quorum was met with the above present

DMME Staff present: Carrie Hearne, Bettina Bergoo, Jordan Burns, Erik Olson, Larry Corkey, Al Christopher

Office of Attorney General: Grant Kronenberg

The meeting was held in person with a hybrid system via WebEx.

John Warren moved to approve electronic participation of board member Janica Casper after having notified the chair of his inability to participate physically due to a personal matter.

Seconded by Susan Kruse. A voice vote was conducted with all board members voting in the affirmative.

Meeting minutes from previous meeting (March 24th , 2021) were reviewed.

Corrections were submitted

- Correcting spelling of names
- COVID instead of Covid

Motion to approve meeting minutes as edited above was made by John Warren, seconded by Susan Kruse. A vote was conducted with the majority of votes in the affirmative.

Will Cleveland abstains. The motion carried; minutes approved.

Clean Energy States Alliance Presentation by Nate Hausman and Wafa May Elamin

Presentation link found [here](#)

CESA research report found [here](#)

Presentation team included Nate Hausman, Project Director, CESA
Wafa May Elamin, Project Manager, CESA

Recording of presentation can be found [here](#)

Key takeaways from CESA and NC analysis (Presentation from Nate):

1. Initial negative cashflow from taking out a loan to finance a solar system on top of Virginia's relatively low costs of electricity makes it difficult to pencil out residential solar projects for LMI households.
2. A 25-year lease offers a preferable financing terms for LMI homeowners in Virginia.
3. Solar property tax exemption has a substantial impact on the amount of subsidy needed to achieve cash-flow positive solar transactions for Virginians.
4. Based on NCCETC's analysis, we estimate that about \$6,500 in public subsidy per solar project will be necessary to ensure participating LMI households benefit from their solar transactions.
5. Assuming an initial pilot program financing budget of \$200,000 and approximately \$6,500 in direct public subsidy per project, about 30 solar installations could be completed under the pilot.

Recommendations for Pilot Program from CESA:

1. Focus on LMI single family homes already qualified for or having gone through WAP within past 5 years.
2. Competitively select solar companies and provide outreach assistance to reach underserved markets
3. Use focused community based marketing campaigns to reach 2-3 VA communities
4. Guarantee that solar projects are structure with cashflow positive contracts for participating households

Next Steps from CESA:

1. Approve core program design recommendations.
2. Work with CEAB committee to outreach to orgs in the pilot areas to get input on program design
3. Develop timeline for pilot devevelopment.
4. Draft solicitation for solar providers.

Questions/Comments from Board:

- Question on how the pilot projects would be split up in the three communities, importance and benefit of getting the balance correct
- Question of if the analysis considered homeownership rates in the localities and within LMI households.
- Hannah Coman comments that the pilot program is eligible to all qualifying households across the state, just the pilot marketing outreach will be focused towards the three communities being considered
- Questions regarding whether the subsidies would be first come first served and how the analysis arrived at the \$6,500 number. Discussion from CESA on how they arrived at the number.
- Question regarding if the lessor should be able to monetize the ITC.

- Question regarding if roofs for eligible customers would be able to handle 25 year lease and if analysis team looked at the data. Extensive discussion on various sources of public funding, program coordination, and revolving funding. Clarified that RGGI funding is not source for this program.
- Questions on timeline and nature of the pilot program and how funding supports.
- Questions on legality of solar leasing and if eligible for net metering. Informally legal, question is how the SCC will treat leasing companies. Follow up if that is a precondition for the RFP and if clarity will be sought.
- Discussion on options for getting clarity – included a company or RFP manager to get an opinion/declaratory letter or a clarity letter from the AG
- Discussion on SIR requirement of 12% and if that target can be easily met. Getting effective data is a challenge and can create a burden. May need to pursue changes but can work on parallel tracks in the meantime.
- Discussion on staying within time limits and decision to put a pin in these discussions until a later time. DMME and CESA can work and incorporate some of these questions/concerns/suggestions as they work. Draft RFP will give a more concrete way to give feedback at a later time.

MOTION:

John Warren moved to propose that CESA works with DMME to continue developing a draft RFP. Second by Susan Kruse. A voice vote was conducted with all board members present voting in the affirmative. Motion is unanimously approved.

Policy Discussion:

Carrie Hearne recognized that several areas of code could create challenges with rolling out program. Asks for input from board members and public related to amending code while preserving spirit of laws. Recognizes Larry Corkey and his work in this area.

Public Comment:

Will Geise, SEIA. New Southeast regional director from Solar Energy Industries Association. Will be participating in these meetings. Happy to be a part of it.

Lauren Gonzales, Clean Virginia. Including homes that rent would be useful to study.

Kate Debrant. Asked what whether 22 or 26 percent was assumed for the ITC in modeling.

Fatime (full name not captured), supported Laura's point.

Al Christopher, DMME. My comment was addressed in discussion

Kate Debrant. Not clear if DMME will seek funding in 2022

Beth Galante, PosiGen. Pleasure hearing presentations. Introduces PosiGen which is a low income solar lease provider with activities around the country. Expresses that PosiGen would be happy to compete for the RFP when developed.

Announcements and Committee Updates:

New members have been appointed to the CEAB. Describes subcommittees (Program Design and Stakeholder Engagement and Marketing). A new subcommittee focused on policy and regulatory affairs is suggested. Membership of various subcommittees is discussed and board members proposed moves. New members assigned to committees.

Will Cleveland moves to create new Policy and Regulatory subcommittee and make Sam Brumberg chair. Will Reisinger seconds. Motion passes will all board members present voting in the affirmative. Unanimously approved.

Hannah Coman Moves to approve membership as previously stated. Sam Brumberg seconds. Motion passes will all board members present voting in the affirmative. Unanimously approved.

VCEA requires the IOUs to consult with the Clean Energy Advisory Board about solar programs that would reduce bills of low-income customers. This consultation happened with Dominion in the Fall of 2020. Haven't yet had this with APCo and ODP but they have submitted paper consultation statements. Hoping to invite them in-person soon.

CESA and DMME will continue to work on Pilot program structure.

DMME is changing name to Virginia Department of Energy (Virginia Energy) to reflect new changes in focus of agency.

Brief discussion on future schedule.

1:00PM meeting adjourned.

All presenters were thanked for the informative discussion.