



Local Solar Advisory Committee
Thursday, July 26 from 6:30-9:30 PM
Austin Energy, Town Lake Center Assembly Room 130
721 Barton Springs Rd., Austin, Texas

Regular Meeting Minutes

Call to Order – Steve Wiese called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM.

Committee Members in Attendance: Steve Wiese, Varun Rai, BJ Stanberry, Stan Pipkin, Christine Herbert, Michael Kuhn, Colin Meehan, John Sutton, Monica de la Rosa, Gabe Flores, Sal Valdez, Mark Begert, Ron Van Dell, Roger Wood, Tom “Smitty” Smith, Tuan Q. Pham, Jose Beceiro, Gary “Bernie” Bernfeld

1. Approval of Minutes

Approval of minutes from the June 12th, 2012 meeting of the Local Solar Advisory Committee. Ron Van Dell proposed to correct the record of attendance to remove his name. Christine Herbert noted that an additional citizen communication from Robert Hoskins should be added. Christine Herbert made a motion to approve minutes with these changes. Second by Colin Meehan and approved by acclaim.

2. Progress Report from Pecan Street Inc.

Scott Grantham from Pecan Street gave a presentation on progress on the Best Practices Review. He showed the list of articles collected and talked about topics for the final report.

3. Citizen Communication: General

Steve Wiese requested that this agenda item be moved earlier so that the public would have a chance to speak at a reasonable time.

- a. Scott Burton, solar installer commented that there is a lack of predictability about rebates going forward and this makes it difficult both for installers and potential businesses / consumers who are thinking about committing. The committee asked Scott some clarifying questions and there was some discussion.
- b. Tod Wickersham made comments about uncertainty in the budget, and the high rate of demand that currently exists.
- c. Mike Weinnig commented that there should be tiers of rebates such that a certain quantity of panels would be sold at rebate 1. Once those were sold out, the going rebate would drop to a lower rate. He recommended that the committee come up with some of these thresholds.
- d. David Dixon commented that we should continue to expand the allocations for residential and commercial rebates, pointing to the amount already consumed in July
- e. Tim Harvey from Austin Energy clarified that if an LOI is issued in one year, the rebate may be fulfilled from the next fiscal year’s budget.
- f. There was discussion and Q&A between the committee members and the citizens gathered. In general, committee members sought to understand the perspectives of the local solar installation industry.

4. Discussion/Vote on Recommendation to Council for FY2013 Program Budget

- a. Steve Wiese asked that the discussion be initiated by a period in which committee members could state their own principles and recommendations, followed by a period in which a motion could be made regarding the budget recommendation, followed by discussion of the motion.
- b. Committee members supported Steve's procedure, but there were many clarification questions on what the committee is being asked for in this case, the existing budget numbers, effects of the rate change, and other topics.
- c. Committee members posed clarification questions to Michael Osborne of Austin Energy as well as to the group at large. There was discussion surrounding these questions
- d. Steve initiated the principles / recommendations phase in which each committee member had a chance to state their personal principles and recommendations regarding the budget.
- e. Steve began the next phase and asked whether anyone had a motion.
- f. Michael Kuhn distributed a handout with a proposal regarding the budget. He explained the proposal, his methodology, and rationale for his recommendation.
- g. Smitty moved to consider the proposal. Michael Kuhn seconded. The committee discussed the proposal. Some members expressed that they felt unprepared to finalize a budget recommendation. Steve recommended that the Committee schedule an additional meeting in one week to complete the budget recommendation if Committee members felt they were insufficiently prepared to recommend a budget at this meeting, Steve proposed a working group prepare a budget recommendation for distribution by Tuesday July 31, prior to the next meeting. The following people agreed to serve on the working group: John Sutton, Michael Kuhn, Stan Pipkin, Tuan Pham, Gabe Flores, Sal Valdez, Smitty. Smitty agreed to table the motion.

5. Future Agenda Items

For next meeting, August 2, 2012

Discussion/Vote on Recommendation to Council for FY2013 Program Budget

6. Adjournment – 9:45 PM.

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