

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING CITY OF ALAMEDA PUBLIC UTILITIES BOARD

February 27, 2017

1. ROLL CALL

Commissioner Giuntini called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m. On roll call, the following commissioners were present: Deaton, Giuntini, McCormick and Serventi. City Manager Keimach joined the meeting at 3:07 p.m.

2. SPECIAL PRESENTATION

There was no special presentation.

3. CONSENT CALENDAR

There was no consent calendar.

4. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – NON AGENDA (Public Comment)

There were no non-agenda oral communications.

5. COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS

There were no council communications.

6. AGENDA ITEMS

A. Workshop: Annual Strategic Planning Workshop

A1. Customer Satisfaction Survey Presentation

Amy Curran from RKS Research presented the residential survey results to the Board.

Following the presentation, Alameda resident Irene Dieter said that AMP could provide the Alameda Planning Board and the City Council with data on how much it would cost developers to install rooftop solar at new development at Alameda Point.

Alameda resident William Morrison asked Curran whether she left voicemails when calling residents for the survey. Curran confirmed, saying that she's finding it more difficult to reach people on the phone.

Commissioner Jerry Serventi asked if survey participants could make comments.

Staff responded that there were one or two open-ended comments at the end of the survey.

Commissioner Serventi asked if AMP understands why residential customers like the utility, saying that AMP should have this understanding during the rollout of smart meters so that the utility can maintain the residential customer satisfaction that was demonstrated in the survey.

Staff noted that AMP's smart-technology program needs to be implemented smoothly in order to maintain customer satisfaction. In addition, a new payment portal for customers will roll out with the implementation of AMP's smart-technology program, staff added. Staff expects the new portal to improve residential customers' satisfaction with AMP's website.

Commissioner Ann McCormick noted that the survey showed that 63 percent of respondents know the benefits of community-owned utilities. She encouraged staff to continue efforts to communicate about these benefits to customers. She pointed out that it was great news that the survey respondents who are renters are pleased with AMP's service.

Commissioner Deaton commented on the survey results about the price of electricity, saying that AMP needs to be aware of the impact on recent rate increases on customer satisfaction. She also noted that cost savings was one of the top three reasons survey respondents cited for being interested in a community solar program. She praised staff, saying that AMP has made great strides even though it was already good.

Assistant City Manager Liz Warmerdam raised the topic of collecting customer data during the smart-technology program's rollout.

Commissioner Serventi asked whether AMP has developed a way to communicate to customers on how it will collect customer data once smart meters are implemented.

Staff responded that AMP has data-privacy policies regarding customers. There are also regulatory requirements that require AMP to provide data to state agencies, staff said. AMP is trying to find a balance between the regulatory requirements and customer privacy.

City Manager Keimach said that AMP could emphasize that the data is aggregated.

A2. Microgrid Presentation by Navigant Consulting, Inc.

Representatives from Navigant presented their findings on the feasibility study for a microgrid at Site A at Alameda Point.

Following the presentation, Commissioner McCormick said that the proposed microgrid project at Site A would come with annual operating costs on top of the project costs.

Alameda resident and AMP employee Bill Garvine asked whether all of Alameda's schools or city buildings could be included in a single microgrid. The consultant responded that most people define the term "microgrid" as a collection of loads that are geographically contiguous.

Alameda resident Irene Dieter asked whether the consultant's listed criteria for a successful microgrid should be included in other new developments. The consultant responded that he would not want to indicate that all developments "ought" to have the criteria.

Alameda resident William Morrison said that Alameda is leaning in the direction of wanting community solar. He said the consultant may want to look at these considerations in conjunction with community solar. Community solar is another solution looking for a problem, he said.

Alameda resident Richard Bangert suggested that the Alameda Point property owned by the federal Veteran's Affairs department could be a good location for distributed energy and a microgrid. There will be a medical facility at the site, Bangert said, which would make the location ideal for a microgrid.

General Manager Nicolas Procos said that microgrids tend to be very expensive. AMP is rolling out its smart-technology program this year, he also said, and it needs to be set up before a "smart city" can be achieved.

Commissioner Deaton said that, in the past, AMP has been a second adopter. Moving right into the project would have resulted in a change in culture for AMP, she said.

In addition, Commissioner Deaton said, many changes would need to have been made to AMP's business structure, in order to make the transition to the smart grid work. The transition would involve AMP's relationships with Alameda companies, she said. AMP would need certainty that the commercial-development arm of the city was engaged in moving to the smart grid at the same pace as the utility.

Navigant has pointed out many things that AMP needs to consider, Commissioner Deaton said, adding that she appreciated the consultant's suggestion to think out the vision for the future.

Commissioner McCormick said that Site A is AMP's problem at hand. She asked the Navigant representatives for any advice they may have for future-proofing Site A.

Commissioner Serventi said that Navigant laid out a good process for AMP as it takes steps to become a utility of the future.

City Manager Keimach said AMP would need to decide early on if there are other sites in Alameda that would be appropriate for a microgrid. She also said that the city should focus on development of a smart city in the context of economic development.

Commissioner Giuntini thanked the Navigant consultants.

A3. Future of Electric Vehicles

Following a presentation on AMP's approach to electric vehicles, Commissioner McCormick raised the idea of AMP charging AC Transit vehicles in Alameda.

The commissioners said they wanted to pursue and promote programs to prepare for the anticipated increase in EVs. In response to the staff presentation, the commissioners said that AMP's programs for electric vehicles do not need to focus on fuel-cell EVs.

AMP has a monthly discount for EV owners. Commissioner Serventi said a monthly credit on a customer's fuel bill would be better – if the customer was looking to buy a car – than getting a \$500 check up front.

In addition, the commissioners explored the topic of the resale of electricity. City Manager Keimach said the sub-metering issue has come up several times with some developers at Alameda Point that had maker space. Sale and resale has the potential to bring up Prop. 26 issues, General Manager Procos said.

Alameda resident William Morrison said the existing discounts are not enough to promote EVs.

A4. Use of Future Renewable Energy Credits (REC) Funds

For timing reasons, the Board decided to postpone a discussion on future REC funds.

7. BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

There were no board communications.

8. ORAL REPORTS

There were no oral reports.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.