

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE

Climate Action Working Group: December 21, 2018

Muir Woods Conference Room, 175 N. Redwood Blvd., San Rafael

Present: Chairman Doug Wilson; Bill Carney, Dale Miller, Sarah Loughran, Helene Marsh, Ed Mainland, Pat Nelson, Nancy Bell, Carleen Cullen, Annika Osborn, James Bill, Belle Cole, Bob Miller, Robert Gould, Roger Roberts, Kurt Johnson, Judy Teichman, David Kunhardt, Ken Strong, Dan Segedin, Kate Powers, Norma Fragoso.

Guest Speaker: Brett Wiley, Customer Programs Manager for MCE.

Chairman Doug Wilson called the meeting to order at 9:06..

Brief Introductions

Agenda and minutes approved by consensus.

9:12 Discussion 1: MCE Electric Vehicle Programs

Chairman Doug Wilson introduced Brett Wiley, and asked Brett to complete the introduction.

Brett described his current position and background. He joined MCE on May 1st and serves as manager of customer programs. In that position, he works on pilot programs related to the ongoing energy transition, including programs promoting expansion of EV charging infrastructure, providing opportunities for low-income residents to own EVs, and educating customers about distributed energy resources.

The ten years of experience that he brings to this position includes stakeholder engagement and manuscript development for a report on the national energy transition. Prior to that, he managed energy efficiency, purchasing, and solar programs at Groundswell. He has coordinated community organizing and education at several organizations, including Sierra Club and Organizing for Action. He has worked on policy planning for the White House Council on Environmental Quality and the National Park Service.

Brett's work on climate change has three intersecting aspects:

- 1) Work on a three-year, \$1.75 million grant from the California Energy Commission, which is intended to promote local government projects that further the energy efficiency goals stated in SB 350. This program includes a building-efficiency optimization component to achieve energy efficiency and an effort to increase the use of DER (distributed energy resources), including storage and energy efficiency, on an individual-customer basis. MCE will create a toolkit and database, designed for MCE but applicable to other CCAs. The program entails significant public outreach and MCE anticipates completion in summer 2020.

- 2) An EV charging program. The MCE board has approved taking a stronger position on an EV charging program and has \$815,000 to invest in infrastructure. The goal was to have 540 ports in place by March 31. This goal will probably not be met; however, 580 ports have been funded. Both PG&E and MCE offer rebates. MCE offers rebates that are stackable with PG&E rebates. The PG&E “future build” program has a 10-port minimum. The MCE program covers installations of 2 - 20 charging ports.
- 3) A low-income EV rebate program. MCE is offering a \$3,500 rebate for low-income customers to buy or lease a new or used EV. This rebate is designed to be “stackable”; MCE can help qualifying customers combine the rebate with Federal, State, and local incentives. The program has outreach and implementation components. Implementation might include partnering with dealerships or financing institutions.

Brett stated that he would like to hear ideas and suggestions about these programs. He noted that MCE planning is impacted by PG&E rate-setting and PCIA charges.

Questions and Comments

David: What property types does the program cover? What is the cost per charger? A. Properties covered by the program are workplaces providing charging for staff and multi-family properties providing charging for tenants. The cost is \$2500 per port, with up to 100% covered by rebates. Property owners should determine which program is best for them. It would not necessarily be MCE’s program.

James: Are charging stations publicly available? A. It is not required that they be publicly available. The program is designed for MCE customers.

Carleen: For multi-family units, who initiates the request? There is a lot of work involved, and technical requirements. Are there any requirements regarding price gouging by landlords? A. The program is driven by MCE outreach. There was a 2012 MCE energy-efficiency program targeting multi-family properties that provides a basis for reengaging property managers and organizing tenants. Sometimes tenants organize and invite the property manager to participate. Barriers: The tenants use the ports; the property owner owns them. Most tenants have an assigned parking spot, which complicates the issue of where to locate the charging port. It is more successful if the port is placed in a spot available to all. MCE does not offer suggestions regarding pricing, but it should not be more than they are paying for electricity. We trust in good actors.

Robert: Who is the supplier?

Doug: Is it a one-stop shop? Do you get people started? A. Yes. MCE has a guide to programs and rebates. There are concierge programs. We could do more. The MCE website will have a landing page for EVs in the future. Doug: There is lots of confusion, which is a barrier. A simpler, more comprehensive program would be a huge help from the customer’s point of view. A. In six weeks, we fielded 100 calls; we check back with the customer if desired. There is not a program for single-family homes.

Roger: Are there permitting barriers? How can we help? A. Yes, there are barriers. The process needs streamlining. Some property owners own multiple sites in multiple jurisdictions. Sometimes, the governing authority is not clear or appropriate. For example, in a San Rafael office parking lot, the City of San Rafael has no code for installing charging ports. It defaults to the code for installing a gas station, which is too restrictive. It results in inappropriate permitting standards and construction delays. Also, there are different jurisdictional standards re ADA compliance and providing sufficient parking. There is not an issue re the permitting fee.

Sarah: Who has a good permitting code? A. There is a statewide best practices code. In many jurisdictions, there is not a lot of accountability from planners. The goal is a service-area-wide convening with accountability. There is a planned meeting with PG&E in 2019, involving engagement and outreach with 16 cities investing in clean transportation. Only one of the cities, San Ramon, is in the MCE service area.

Ken: Is there a rooftop solar program? A. MCE has a net energy metering (NEM) program and a low-income program, in which we partner with GRID Alternatives.

Robert: Are there make-ready elements? Are there complicated requirements for construction rebates? Do PG&E incentives cover everything? A. Yes, the incentives cover everything, but it is tied to a CPUC cost-effectiveness analysis. They try to right-size the investment.

Doug: How does the CPUC cost-effectiveness analysis work? A. It's opaque. The transportation electrification program is funded by ratepayers. The three IOUs are the only ones that can access funding. Proceedings related to the program are docketed, and the public can comment on how the program is going, how to invest the funding, and suggest that it be open to CCAs.

Bob: You have \$815,000 to invest. Over what period? A. This fiscal year. Bob: If you had twice as much, would that make a big difference? How are you constrained? A. We are fairly constrained. We could do more. There was an EPA-funded gap-analysis which found a gap of 1500 charging stations. The goal is to close that gap in three years. MCE could develop a platform on the website, become an EV-sharing program with paired infrastructure. But such plans are affected by the PCIA. There is public support for streamlining the permitting process. The EV program could drive the Deep Green program. There are 4000 EV drivers and only 400 are on Deep Green. EVs are only as clean as the energy they use. Time of use matters. Energy is cleanest during the day. The goal is to reduce electricity rates during the day.

Dan: Are rebates on charging stations for EV buyers doing anything to incentivize dealers? A. Looking at studies, incentives for dealers are more effective than consumer rebates. In the Sonoma Clean Power program, problems arose because they are not pulling together the dealers and negotiations. It's a large service area with many dealers. The third year of the Sonoma Clean Power program is not going well. They are shifting investments.

James: In solar, the problem is the steepness of duck curve imbalance between peak demand and renewable energy production. Providing incentives for batteries is important. A. Our procurement team is investing in batteries. We issued a request for offers and now have three finalists. The CPUC requires resource adequacy, but there is no longer a resource adequacy requirement for batteries. PG&E is building the largest battery. The price is going down for battery storage, but not enough for some. For those users, we need incentives paired with DER.

James: How is this charged; how do they get paid? A. CAISO grid benefits result from storage. They don't take climate change into account.

Dale: Do you document calls from the public, so that they can be made available and provide an opportunity to address gaps in knowledge? A. They are not stored in a database currently.

Dale: The problem is that people continue to buy gas-powered cars. The biggest fix is to give cash for charging stations and promote the purchase of new EVs. Low-income people don't buy new cars. [Several concurrences.]

Bill: TAM has money for promotion. How do we ramp up demand for electrification? A. There is paralysis by analysis. The user has to go to several sites to get all of the information. It's not a good user experience. The motivation for potential buyers is reduced fuel cost, comfort and quietness. Bill: How do we get them to your website? A. MCE has never done a service-area-wide marketing campaign. We have done joint emails with cities and low-income pilot projects—for example, one in Contra Costa County that got a good response. Market-rate customers need incentives but don't know all of the incentive that are available. The Air District has a vehicle replacement program (there was a pilot project in Richmond) that allows people to scrap a vehicle and receive incentives to buy an EV or take public transit. MCE should leverage other incentives.

Belle: What is the overall goal in expanding EVs in your service area? A. We don't have one yet.

Robert: Do you track real-time charging data, the demand side of the equation? Are you open to doing that? A. Yes. We did a small pilot last year. The vendor did not meet goals.

Carleen: We need strategic thinking. MCE is not community-based, it is siloed. Actions speak. We need broad adoption at the single-family center of the market. A. In February, we will be taking to the board a menu of options. Go to the board meeting and speak in favor of the option you prefer. In all programs, we strive to provide an equitable share to low-income customers. Q. The core of the market drives the rest of the market. A. There is a question of prioritization: the amount to be directed to EVs vs. other goals.

Doug: Re the PCIA, is the issue of resource adequacy before the CPUC? A. Direct access is moving forward—an existential threat [to CCAs]. The state could organize its own collective.

10: 10 Discussion 2: Report on retreat for CCAs (Dan)

Dan: There were 30 sessions and more than 100 panelists. Major themes were innovation and less regulation of CCAs. It was noted that customer data are the CCAs' biggest asset.

- Load data enables forecasting of the amount and shape of the load. This promotes risk management. CCAs can also aggregate and analyze data, which allows them to segment the customer base and target rates and programs to specific customers.
- Best practices were discussed, with examples. These include leveraging multiple sources of funding and load forecasting, combined with parcel data.

- Time of use matters, and load-following. 100% renewable energy requires storage or a portfolio of energy.
- DER: an emphasis on resilience and reliability and reducing investment in wire. CCAs have local influence, but incentives built into the existing system cast a cloud.
- An RMI study analyzed cost parity of utility-scale solar and grid reliability services provided by renewables.
- Hallway chatter: PCIA vintage charges vary by year of existence. There are various levels of concern among CCAs. Resource adequacy requires CAISO approval. Centralized procurement is a major threat.
- There was a Silicon Valley charrette promoting innovative thought. Stakeholders created a template and a plan. This might be a model for Drawdown Marin. A CAISO application for Time of Use: tracking supply and emission rates at specific times.

Ed: It's clear that data analytics is a new frontier. CCA's can gain a competitive advantage, be more attuned to customer interests. There are challenges from the legislature and the CPUC. We have the benefit of 19 CCAs. Look at which ones are ahead. Learning among CCAs should be encouraged. For example, Monterey is ahead in data analytics; East Bay, ahead in DER; Redwood Coast, ahead in maximizing use of local renewable energy. "CCA 3.0" is a package of how to move CCAs to realize their potential, to take advantage of new technology and approaches that will lead to true DER systems. This is a benchmark. There was a session on community advisory groups. These groups could have a substantial role in policy and management, decision-making. MCE has only a monthly phone call; there is no way that discussion gets to MCE staff or the board.

Doug: It's difficult. MCE has two communities and constituencies.

Ed: Resource adequacy was discussed in the last phone call. Shalini Swaroop briefed us. This is a serious concern. AB 64 is an allied bill.

Doug: We have flagged this. Ken is following the issue. The CCAs control purchasing. There is pushback from the utilities. They want it back in the hands of the big utilities. There's a conflict of interest behind it. The CPUC is considering taking back the purchase of energy. There is a hearing on January 10.

Ken: It calls for a central buyer, and 100% of resource adequacy required for everyone. It's a 3-year program with possible long-term contracts. It removes buying potential from CCAs and devalues existing contracts of CCAs.

Ed: Swaroop was asked if there is anything to this concern about resource adequacy. She said it's a "total myth."

Dale: Data is important. The push to ban smart meters and 5G is not helpful. This might be an opportunity for MCL.

Kate: A week after the meeting, we get the information that was mentioned in the meeting. This is valuable follow-up.

Reports

Drawdown Marin and MCAN (Robert and Doug). The stakeholder group considering renewable energy has met once. They are assembling data and then going into the community. An Executive Steering Committee has formed; also, a community-facing group. There's a lot underway. They are learning as they go, fleshing things out. There's an effort to collaborate. The earlier groups start moving right away, not waiting for the subsequent groups. It's a balancing and coordination act.

Environmental Forum of Marin (Norma). The Master Class student projects are ramping up.

Resilient Neighborhoods (Bill). The program has reached the level of 6 million pounds of annual CO₂ reduction. There are three classes starting in January, in San Rafael, Novato, and Mill Valley. Check the website.

Sustainable Novato (Ed). On January 24, the Green Film Series will screen "Wilder than Wild" at 6:00 at City Hall.

Cool The Earth (Carleen). Cool The Earth is focusing on marketing messaging. This is an opportunity to collaborate. We will be hosting EV house parties. There will be more outreach to businesses. There will be EV car demonstrations at College of Marin.

Citizens' Climate Lobby (David). We've had success in the House and Senate. The Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act has been introduced in the House and there is a similar bill in the Senate.

Sustainable San Rafael (Bill). The Climate Action Plan has been revised, setting a goal of a 40% reduction from 1990 levels. Approval is anticipated in February or March. On January 17, at 4:00, the quarterly meeting will be held at City Hall.

Town of Corte Madera (David). The Town of Corte Madera has passed its current climate action plan. It will undertake adaptation planning with sales tax funding and a grant from Cal Trans.

Mothers Out Front (Carleen). Mothers Out Front is working with the Health Department and schools' Parent Ed. Days to address the problem of smoke and solutions. Solutions include driving EVs.

Organizing for Action (Belle). OFA is undertaking a collaborative effort, Firestorm 2, which will focus on climate change. They have the report from the previous collaboration and will go forward on follow-up.

Doug requested that participants let him know re suggestions for future speakers and ideas to be covered. He noted that there may be an MCL event addressing the issue of fire. Fire accounted for 10% of emissions last year.

Next month's meeting will take place on January 18.

Meeting adjourned 11:00.

Minutes: PN.