



Local Solar Advisory Committee
Thursday, August 9 from 6:30-9:15 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 6:40 PM.

Committee Members in Attendance: Steve Wiese, Stan Pipkin, Christine Herbert, Michael Kuhn, Colin Meehan, John Sutton, Gabe Flores, Sal Valdez, Mark Begert, Roger Wood, Tom “Smitty” Smith, Varun Rai, Monica de la Rosa, Mark Begert, Chris Stanton (proxy for Tuan Pham)

Non-Committee Members in Attendance: Leslie Libby, Michael Osborne, Scott Grantham, Jim Burns, Dan Richards, Kaiba White, Charlie Hemaline, Matt Weldon, Tod Wickersham

- 1. Approval of minutes from the August 2, 2012 meeting of the Local Solar Advisory Committee**
Sal Valdez made a motion to approve minutes. Second by Christine Herbert.
- 2. Briefing on Council Committee for Emerging Technology and Telecommunications**
Steve gave the committee a brief update on the meeting. Steve had presented the LSAC’s recommendation for FY 2013 solar budget. Council members Laura Morrison and Chris Riley, were receptive to the recommendations, had wanted to see more details, but understood that the strategic plan would need to be completed first.
- 3. Presentation from Jim Burns from Community Sun on Community Solar Opportunities for Austin** - Jim’s presentation covered Community Sun’s research and business plan for the development of community solar systems in Austin. Dan Richards from Community Sun was also present. Community sun’s model involves “true ownership” of panels not located on the owners roof. Their model works like a condominium in which customers own panels that are part of a larger complex. Dues would be paid to a property management group that would cover maintenance and insurance for the panels. The pilot project would be 2 MW. The project would not depend on Austin Energy rebates to make the economics work. Community Sun has had conversations with Austin Energy about regulatory issues related to their proposal. Third party ownership issues have been resolved and the Wheeling Rule has been addressed the Value of Solar (Residential Solar Rate). The committee had several questions that were addressed by Jim and Dan.
- 4. Presentation by Scott Grantham from Pecan Street on the Best Practice Review**
Scott delivered hard copies of the Best Practices Report to the committee and walked the committee through the document, briefly summarizing the strategies covered in the report. The committee had several questions, mostly on topics of Austin’s current practice with regard to the strategies. Steve suggested that, if future work on the document occurred, that Austin’s current practice be added to it. Committee members thanked Scott for his work on the document.
- 5. Process for Completing the Strategic Plan**

- a. Steve Wiese expressed that the committee needs to move quickly towards the goal of producing the Strategic Plan. There is a deadline of September 20 for the strategic plan, based in part on Council's timeline.
- b. Steve raised two possible approaches for the committee to go about preparing the Strategic Plan. In the first approach, the working groups would bring their draft chapters back to the LSAC for discussion and at least one additional round of revisions. In the second approach, the working groups would prepare chapters and the LSAC would receive them, and they would be compiled into the final plan. Both approaches would involve convening the working group chairs at the end to reconcile all chapters and make final changes as needed. Chairs will also be able to represent any dissenting opinions within their working groups.
- c. Several committee members expressed that the first approach was preferable, which would involve bringing draft chapters back to the LSAC for discussion and further revisions. There was an understanding that this process may involve some extra meetings.
- d. Christine Herbert raised a question about whether convening the working group chairs will trigger any open meetings rules. Steve said he would ask about this and follow up if anything needed to be done.
- e. The next step will be for the working groups to draft their respective chapters for the Strategic Plan. Mark Begert proposed that the working groups be given 3 weeks for this step and Steve agreed that this was reasonable.
- f. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, August 30 and working groups will need to submit their drafts to Steve and Colin Meehan by close of business on Monday, August 27.
- g. There will be regular meetings scheduled on Thursday September 6, and Thursday, September 20.
- h. The Mission and Values working group and the Economic Development working group presented material that they had prepared during their respective meetings.

6. Citizen Communication: General - No citizens expressed interest in speaking at the meeting.

7. Future Agenda Items - The agenda item for the next meeting on August 30 will be presentations by the working groups of draft sections of the Strategic Plan.

8. Adjournment – 9:20