



**DESERT COMMUNITY ENERGY
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING AGENDA**

**Thursday, October 15, 2020
5:30 p.m.**

Pursuant to Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-29-20 (March 18, 2020), this meeting will only be conducted via video/teleconferencing.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Online:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89410196206?pwd=dXgyQjZM1AvSkdDMFpMN0FOUGtiZz09>

Passcode: 531834

One tap mobile:

US: +16699009128,,89410196206#

By Phone:

Dial In #: +1 669 900 9128

Meeting ID: 894 1019 6206

Passcode: 531834

This will provide listening access and ability to address the CAC when called upon.

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO CONNECT VIA DIAL IN OPTION, PLEASE CALL 760-346-1127

Members of the public are encouraged to submit comment in connection with the DCE Community Advisory Committee meeting by email to: cvag@cvag.org by 5:00 p.m. on the day prior to the committee meeting. Comments intended to be read aloud into the record should be no more than 300 characters in length.

**THIS MEETING IS HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE.
ACTION MAY RESULT ON ANY ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA.**

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair David Freedman, resident of Palm Springs

2. **ROLL CALL**

3. **PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS**

Any person wishing to address the Desert Community Energy CAC on items appearing on this agenda may do so at this time. Please limit comments to 3 minutes. At the discretion of the chair, additional public comment time and/or opportunities during the meeting may be granted.

4. **BOARD MEMBER / STAFF COMMENTS**

5. **CONSENT CALENDAR**

A. Approve Minutes from CAC Meeting of October 29, 2019 P3

B. Approve Minutes from CAC Meeting of November 21, 2019 P6

C. Approve Minutes from CAC Meeting of December 19, 2019 P9

D. Approve Minutes from CAC Meeting of January 16, 2020 P11

6. **DISCUSSION / ACTION**

A. Update on DCE post-launch activities in Palm Springs

B. Options for future DCE community programs

C. Roundtable discussion on climate / energy resiliency

7. **INFORMATION**

A. Utility Discount (CARE/FERA) Program Update P13

8. **PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Any person wishing to address the CAC members on items not appearing on this agenda may do so at this time. Please limit comments to 2 minutes. At the discretion of the chair, additional public comment time and/or opportunities during the meeting may be granted.

9. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The next regular CAC meeting will be on February 18, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom.

10. **ADJOURN**



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Community Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 29, 2019 - 5:30pm

73710 Fred Waring Drive #200
MSW Conference Room
Palm Desert, CA 92260
(760) 346-1127

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ACTION MAY RESULT ON ANY ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA

Conference line: (888) 573-2460

- I. CALL TO ORDER** – The second meeting of the Desert Community Energy Community Advisory Committee was called to order by Benjamin Druyon.

II. ROLL CALL – Members present were:

Members Present: – Jeremy Roos, Elmer Diaz, Daniel Paris, Kim Floyd, Paul Murphy, Shelley Kaplan, John Goins, Carl Baker, David Freedman, Lani Miller

On the phone: Noel Loughrin, Terry Applegate

Members Absent: Kathleen DeRosa, Berlinda Blackburn

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

Rosario Avila, Cathedral City resident, commented on the rescheduled CAC meeting and future meeting notices. Ms. Avila also provided feedback on discussion items 6B-6D.

IV. COMMITTEE MEMBER / DIRECTOR COMMENTS

David Freedman shared information about a free 2019 Energy Code Ace workshop being held at UCR Palm Desert campus and invited everyone to register and attend. Katie Barrows added that it was presented by SCE, SoCal Gas, the Palm Springs Sustainability Commission, CVAG, and the Desert Valley Builders Association.

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- V. The CAC members concurred with the meeting notes from July 11, 2019.**

VI. DISCUSSION / ACTION

A. Election of Chair and Vice Chair –

Several members made a nomination for David Freedman to serve as Chair. A motion was made by Shelley Kaplan and seconded by Kim Floyd. It was unanimously approved.

A nomination for Shelley Kaplan to serve as Vice Chair was made by Kim Floyd. A motion was made by Kim Floyd and seconded by Lani Miller. It was unanimously approved.

B. CARE/FERA Enhanced Enrollment program –

Benjamin Druyon introduced Hector Sanchez Perez from Lift To Rise, who is project manager for the CARE/FERA enhanced enrollment program. Hector provided information on Lift as well as some updates to the CAC on his current progress toward a launch in January 2020.

Members were asked to compile a list of organizations for each city that DCE and Lift to Rise could reach out to and leverage the relationships of the CAC members. It was also discussed to make sure all materials and presentations be available in Spanish.

C. Overview of Community Choice Aggregation and Desert Community Energy –

Benjamin Druyon presented a presentation on general information about DCE and CCAs.

D. Desert Community Energy Consultant Team Overview –

Benjamin Druyon provided a presentation which introduced and provided

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background on the various DCE consultants and each of their respective roles:

- The Energy Authority (TEA) – buys and sells power according to state requirements and DCE Board direction
- Calpine Energy Solutions – handles data transfers, billing and customer service which include opt-outs and opt-up/downs
- LEAN Energy U.S. – Legislative assistance and policy development
- Burke Rix Communications – Local outreach and communication
- Donald Dame – Expert energy analyst who provides assistance with budget, calculations, research and anything else DCE needs.
- Best Best & Krieger – DCE’s legal counsel.

There was a brief discussion among members, and staff answered questions from the CAC members.

E. DCE Outreach –

Members discussed possible opportunities for outreach within their respective communities which should include presentations to community groups. Members also discussed outreach to specific customer categories.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Rosario Avila, Cathedral City resident spoke against the change in the agenda regarding public comments.

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next DCE Community Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for November 21, 2019 at 5:30pm.

IX. ADJOURN – The meeting was adjourned at 8:17pm.



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Community Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 21, 2019 - 5:30pm

73710 Fred Waring Drive #200
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Palm Desert, CA 92260
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THIS MEETING IS HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE.
ACTION MAY RESULT ON ANY ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA

Audio recordings of these meetings will be posted to the DCE website

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm.

II. ROLL CALL

Members present: Jeremy Roos, Kathleen DeRosa, Elmer Diaz, Terry Applegate, Shelley Kaplan, Daniel Paris, Kim Floyd, Paul Murphy, Carl Baker, David Freedman, Lani Miller, and Noel Loughrin.

Members on the phone: Berlinda Blackburn.

Members absent: John Goins.

Others present: Peter Coye

DCE Staff and consultants present: Benjamin Druyon, Katie Barrows, Jeff Fuller and Ryan Belgram (on the phone).

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

There were no public comments made.

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IV. DCE STAFF COMMENTS

Katie Barrows asked that the Minutes of the Oct.29 meeting be held for approval until the next CAC meeting.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was recommended to hold for approval until next CAC meeting.

A motion was made by Carl Baker, and seconded by Daniel Paris, to hold Oct.29 meeting minutes until next CAC meeting. . The vote was unanimous

VI. DISCUSSION / ACTION

A. CARE/FERA Enhanced Enrollment Program Updates -

Benjamin Druyon provided an update on the progress of the program since the last meeting.

B. Continuing Education - Roundtable Q&A Discussion of Community Choice Aggregation and Desert Community Energy

Members discussed a number of issues regarding DCE, including policy objectives, messaging opportunities and community engagement.

C. Power Purchasing -

Jeff Fuller with The Energy Authority provided a presentation to the CAC members that covered a variety of questions:

- Who does DCE buy power from?
- What sources of energy does DCE buy?
- Where does the power come from?
- How can we be sure it is 100% Carbon Free?

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A member discussion ensued, including questions about power procurement goals, DCE's financial reserves and the rate setting procedure.

D. DCE Outreach –

Benjamin Druyon provided updates to the CAC on new launch dates and some outreach updates.

A member discussion ensued.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

There were no public comments.

VIII. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS AND UPCOMING AGENDA DEVELOPMENT

Daniel Paris recommends DCE look at the list of events to prepare for outreach to the communities for DCE and CARE/FERA.

Elmer Diaz inquired about language in the DCE JPA.

Kim Floyd asked about a list of large energy users in each city.

Chair Freedman asked staff to schedule a presentation regarding community solar at a future meeting.

Elmer Diaz asked about the cannabis cultivators.

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next DCE Community Advisory Committee meeting: Planned for December 19, 2019, at 5:30pm

X. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 7:40pm.

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Community Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, December 19, 2019 - 5:30pm

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The audio file for this committee meeting can be found at:
<http://www.desertcommunityenergy.org>

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:30pm.

II. ROLL CALL

Members present were Terry Applegate, Kathleen DeRosa, Elmer Diaz, Daniel Paris, Kim Floyd, Paul Murphy, David Freedman, Lani Miller, and Noel Loughrin.

Members on the phone were John Goins.

Members absent were Shelley Kaplan, Berlinda Blackburn, Jeremy Roos, and Carl Baker.

Non-members present were Rosario Avila.

DCE Staff and consultants present were Benjamin Druyon, Katie Barrows, and Hector Sanchez Perez.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

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Rosario Avila asked that the Minutes of Oct. 29 be amended to reflect that she asked the Committee for help regarding the change in how Public Comments are addressed and that she spoke on Items 6B, 6C, and 6D.

IV. DCE STAFF COMMENTS

There were no comments made by staff.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There was a motion by Chair David Freedman to hold minutes for October 29 and November 21 for approval until next CAC meeting. It was seconded by Kathleen DeRosa. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. DISCUSSION / ACTION

- A. CARE/FERA Enhanced Enrollment Program Updates** - Benjamin Druyon and Hector Sanchez Perez provided updates on the progress of the program since the last meeting.

There was no action taken on this item.

- B. Continuing Education - Roundtable Q&A Discussion of Community Choice Aggregation and Desert Community Energy**

There was member discussion but no action taken on this item.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next DCE Community Advisory Committee meeting: Planned for January 16, 2020, at 5:30pm

VIII. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 7:40pm.

Respectfully submitted by Benjamin Druyon



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Community Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 16, 2019 - 5:30pm

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MSW Conference Room
Palm Desert, CA 92260
(760) 346-1127

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The audio file for this committee meeting can be found at:
<http://www.desertcommunityenergy.org>

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:30pm.

II. ROLL CALL

Members present were Jeremy Roos, Kathleen DeRosa, Elmer Diaz, Terry Applegate, Shelley Kaplan, Daniel Paris, Kim Floyd, Paul Murphy, Carl Baker, David Freedman, Lani Miller, and Noel Loughrin.

Members on the phone were Berlinda Blackburn.

Members absent were John Goins.

Non-members present were Peter Coye

DCE Staff and consultants present were Benjamin Druyon, Katie Barrows, and Hector Sanchez Perez.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

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There were no public comments made.

IV. DCE STAFF COMMENTS

Katie Barrows asked that the minutes of the October 29, 2019 meeting be held for approval until the next CAC meeting.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was recommended to hold for approval until next CAC meeting.

A motion was made by Carl Baker, and seconded by Daniel Paris, to hold Oct.29 meeting minutes until next CAC meeting. . The vote was unanimous

VI. DISCUSSION / ACTION

- A. **CARE/FERA Enhanced Enrollment Program Updates** - Benjamin Druyon provided an update on the progress of the program since the last meeting.

There was no action taken on this item.

- B. **Continuing Education-- Roundtable Q&A Discussion of Community Choice Aggregation and Desert Community Energy.**

The CAC members had a discussion on this item, but no action was taken.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next DCE Community Advisory Committee meeting: Planned for February 20, 2020, at 5:30pm

- VIII. **ADJOURN:** The meeting adjourned at 6:40pm.

Respectfully submitted by Benjamin Druyon

**Desert Community Energy Board
September 21, 2020**



STAFF REPORT

Subject: Utility Discount (CARE/FERA) Program Update

Contact: Benjamin Druyon, Management Analyst (bdruyon@cvag.org)

Recommendation: Information

Background: California Alternate Rates for Energy (CARE¹) and Family Electric Rate Assistance (FERA) are two CPUC authorized low income assistance programs offered by Southern California Edison (SCE) and SoCalGas. CARE customers receive a savings reduction of up to 30% on their energy bill, while FERA customers can save up to 18%. Customers may qualify for CARE or FERA if someone in their household already participates in a public assistance program, such as CalWorks, food stamps, or Medi-Cal. Customers may also qualify based on household income. CARE customers save an average of approximately \$864 each year on their energy bills.

In early 2019, DCE staff conducted research that showed low participation rates for the CARE/FERA program managed by SCE within DCE's respective service territory. Furthermore, there were only two contractors in the Coachella Valley that were enlisted by SCE to help secure new enrollments. And data showed there were only a handful of new enrollments secured by those contractors in the past several years.

From October 2019 until the COVID-19 pandemic hit earlier this year, DCE had Board-approved services agreement with Lift to Rise to boost enrollment in the utility discount programs. The social distancing requirements caused by the COVID-19 pandemic forced DCE and Lift to Rise to revisit the planned workshops and community events as well as the overall outreach efforts. The program had many successes and ensured customers were getting the discounts for which they qualified.

However, the unprecedented unemployment rates experienced during COVID-19 prompted SCE to increase their own outreach efforts. SCE has aggressively been communicating the availability of financial assistance programs and services to their customers. CARE/FERA programs are on the forefront of some of those outreach efforts. SCE has implemented a CARE mailing campaign, increased advertising through social media platforms, and launched an email and text campaign. SCE's Corporate Philanthropy group has been reaching out to their constituents, business partners, food banks, etc. to promote the availability of these discount programs. In addition to increased outreach efforts, SCE has existing data-sharing relationships with other governmental agencies who offer programs like Women Infant and Children (WIC) and Food Stamps. Customers that sign up for those programs are automatically enrolled in the CARE or FERA programs. SCE also indicates any calls to their call center from customers asking for financial assistance or that are experiencing a financial burden, are automatically considered for the CARE program.

¹ CARE/FERA is funded through a rate surcharge paid by all other utility customers. The income limits may be adjusted each year depending on inflation. California has a Low-Income Oversight Board (LIOB), which was established by the Legislature to advise the CPUC on energy related low-income assistance programs of utilities under the CPUC's jurisdiction.

Because of the unprecedented unemployment rate due to COVID-19, and as a result of SCE's increased efforts with outreach, as well as automatic enrollments through existing aid programs, SCE's enrollment numbers have increased dramatically throughout their service territory. SCE reports enrollments from March 2020 through May 2020 had increased by 250% compared to March 2019 through May 2019. In light of these factors, DCE staff notified the Board in June that they prudently decided to terminate the contract with Lift To Rise.

Recent reports from SCE show that enrollment numbers continue to grow with each passing month. DCE staff is providing the table below to show the total cumulative enrollments for DCE's service territory. Staff will continue to provide updates on the CARE/FERA enrollment numbers on a quarterly basis as requested by the Board. SCE also reports high enrollment numbers in other regions, averaging between 100 and 200 enrollments per month.

CARE/FERA Total Enrollments from January 2020 to July 2020

City	Zip Code	Enrollments JAN - MAY	JUNE	JULY
Palm Desert	92211	1,443	1,781	1,864
Palm Desert	92260	7,506	8,192	8,534
Cathedral City	92234	3,075	4,364	4,525
Palm Springs	92262	3,503	4,162	4,307
Palm Springs	92264	2,498	2,971	3,041

Fiscal Analysis: There is no fiscal impact for DCE.