

# **CLEAN ENERGY ADVISORY BOARD**

## **MEETING MINUTES - APPROVED**

**February 12, 2020  
Virginia Housing Center  
Glen Allen, VA**

The second meeting of the Clean Energy Advisory Board (CEAB) was held in Glen Allen, Virginia, on Wednesday, February 12, 2020. Board Chair Hannah Coman called the meeting to order at 1:13 p.m.

Board members present: Chair Coman, Co-chair Greenleaf, Bleile, Casper, Kruse, Ostrowski, Towell, Warren (ex-officio) – quorum was reached

Staff support present: Hearne, Farrell, Simcoe, and Warren from DMME; Kronenberg from OAG

Representative for Delegate Aird

Minutes from the December 3, 2019 meeting were reviewed and approved by unanimous vote, on a motion by Casper, seconded by Bleile.

Chair Coman outlined the objectives for this meeting regarding the Pilot Program design, such as financing scenarios, potential funding sources, 2020 Roadmap creation, work plan/deliverables, and establishment of standing committees to guide program design.

Several updates were provided by DMME staff:

- CEAB's first Annual Report was filed on January 8, 2020, to the Governor and General Assembly
- Legislative bill HB1707 would expand the CEAB's membership by two additional members, bringing the total to 17 members, and removes the original 2022 sunset date
- Proposed budget amendments being discussed by the General Assembly would increase funding to DMME for grants for low-income solar projects; DMME also has a General Fund request in the Governor's budget for clean energy financing programs, which may include the Low-to-Moderate Income (LMI) Solar Pilot to be established with guidance from the CEAB.
- DMME has formally requested technical assistance from the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory to help analyze solar distributed generation data regarding the solar adoption trends among different income groups and the location of distributed solar generation in Virginia;
- DMME plans to work closely with the Virginia State Corporation Commission on a solar mapping project to track distribution and solar systems sizes of net-metered solar in Virginia

The Board heard presentations from Office of the Attorney General (OAG), Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA) representatives:

- Board counsel Grant Kronenberg (OAG) discussed the CEAB’s statutory authority/enabling legislation that sets out the parameters of its powers and duties, the Low-to-Moderate Income Solar Loan and Rebate Fund, and Pilot Program requirements.
- Willie Fobbs from the DHCD talked about the Department of Energy’s Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) for low income households (60% below area median income), and its focus on providing “healthy homes” through energy efficient improvements to heating/cooling systems and building envelope enhancements. 2020 WAP allocations were just released by DOE, and Virginia’s WAP and SERC applications will be submitted shortly.
- Board member Toni Ostrowski from the Virginia Housing Development Agency (VHDA) discussed the lack of affordable housing supply and how smaller homes are not being built in adequate numbers for first-time homebuyers. Ostrowski described a new program called Acquire, Renovate, Sell which could be a good fit for adding solar to low income housing in Virginia. VHDA partners with DHCD and non-profits on this pilot program to acquire and renovate homes as an affordable option for first-time homebuyers.

A general Board discussion then focused on Pilot Program models, design and development; known and potential funding sources; project financing scenarios; and potential use of a third-party administrator. A handout prepared by DMME staff that included estimated project costs, value of net-metered energy produced, and different grant and loan scenarios that could reduce net monthly payments on electric bills for customers was cited by Board members as a very useful resource document to reference in future program development discussions.

Establishing standing committees was the next order of business for Board members. After being reminded by the OAG counsel of the various FOIA requirements about providing the public with notice of committee meetings and calls held separately from Board meetings, the Board decided to create two committees: Program Development; and Stakeholder Engagement and Marketing. Membership on each committee was established as follows:

- Program Development Committee: Greenleaf (chair), Ostrowski, Bleile, Casper
- Stakeholder Engagement and Marketing Committee: Coman (chair), Towell, Kruse, Reisinger

On a motion by Towell, seconded by Kruse, the Board voted unanimously to establish these two standing committees for now.

The next topic of discussion was developing a 2020 Roadmap, with the goal of “establishing a pilot program for disbursing loans or rebates for the installation of solar energy infrastructure in low-income and moderate-income households.” Several tasks were identified for consideration to reach this goal:

- Brainstorm customer base, organizations that work with them, delivery systems
- Engage customers, installers, housing agencies, WAP and energy efficiency providers
- Identify fund sources, obstacles to funding, how to leverage other funds
- Assess current existing programs, including gaps in program options

Projects to undertake in 2020, and in advance of next Annual Report:

- Outline stakeholder process
  - Examples including: Program participants, Solar installers, Financing lenders, Energy efficiency delivery, State agencies, Urban/Rural community organizations, NGO advocacy groups such as the VPLC, Appalachian Voices, and Affordable housing organizations
- Identify funding sources
  - Via state agencies, private impact investors, CDFIs, foundations, etc.
- Conduct assessment of current programs in Virginia
  - Solar energy; Energy efficiency; Financing; Gap analysis
- Develop program guidelines and grant application

Before wrapping up the meeting, the Board discussed meeting dates for future meetings. They decided to target the second Wednesday of every other month, from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. in June, September and November 2020. A Doodle poll will be sent out to Board members to pick a meeting date in April due to conflicting scheduling issues. Committees will set up their own meeting schedules, but should meet before the April meeting. A suggestion was made to invite third party fund administrators to speak at the April meeting, as well as someone to present a post-legislative session analysis relevant to the Board's scope of work.

Public comments were solicited, but none were offered.

There being no other business to conduct, Chair Coman adjourned the meeting at 3:59 p.m. EST.