

**State of California**  
California Energy Commission  
Minutes of the January 26, 2022, Energy Commission Business Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Chair Hochschild. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner McAllister.

Present:

David Hochschild, Chair  
Siva Gunda, Vice Chair  
Karen Douglas, Commissioner

Patricia Monahan, Commissioner  
J. Andrew McAllister, Commissioner

The California Energy Commission's (CEC) January 26, 2022 Business Meeting will be held remotely, consistent with Assembly Bill 361 (Rivas, Chapter 165, Statutes of 2021) to improve and enhance public access to state meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic. The public can participate in the business meeting consistent with the direction provided below.

Please note that the CEC aims to begin promptly at the start time and the end time is an estimate based on the agenda proposed. The business meeting may end sooner or later than the time indicated depending on various factors.

Pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Title 20, section 1104(e), any person may make oral comment on any agenda item. To ensure the orderly conduct of business, such comments will be limited to three minutes or less per person. Any person wishing to comment on information items or reports (non-voting items) shall speak during the general public comment portion of the meeting and have three minutes or less to address all remaining comments.

**THE CEC WILL CONSIDER AND MAY TAKE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING:**

**1. Consent Calendar.**

Items will be taken up and voted on as a group. A commissioner may request that an item be moved and discussed later in the meeting.

- a. Aspen Environmental Group. Proposed resolution approving Amendment 2 to Agreement 700-18-001 with the Aspen Environmental Group for a \$350,000 augmentation and time extension to assist in evaluating applications for energy facilities and transmission corridor designations, monitoring compliance for permitted facilities, reviewing petitions to amend or modify permitted facilities, greenhouse gases and global climate change and natural gas pipeline safety assessments; and supporting other activities in the areas of environmental impact assessment, engineering, and related regulatory matters. (EFLCF Funding) Contact: Hilarie Anderson
- b. University of California, Berkeley, Energy Institute at Haas School of Business. Proposed resolution approving Agreement 800-21-002 with the Energy Institute for a \$15,000 contract to co-sponsor the 2022 POWER Conference on Energy Research and Policy scheduled in Berkeley on March 11, 2022, and adopting staff's determination that this action is exempt from the California Environmental

Quality Act (CEQA). The 2022 POWER Conference will focus on electricity markets and policy. (ERPA Funding) Contact: Lynn Marshall

- c. Allotrope Partners LLC. Proposed resolution approving Agreement ZVI-21-013 with Allotrope Partners LLC for a \$175,256 grant to assess and scope the potential to utilize zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) in the logging and biomass transport industry, in particular the potential to convert logging trucks delivering logs to sawmills and chip trucks delivering wood chips to biomass power plants, and adopting staff's determination that this action is exempt from CEQA. (General Fund Funding) Contact: Kate Reid
- d. California State Pipe Trades Council (CSPTC) Amendment to Provider Application. Proposed resolution approving the CSPTC proposed amendment to CSPTC's acceptance test technician certification provider application. The proposed amendment would add a prerequisite allowing highly qualified tradesmen already working in the field smoother entry into the training program. Contact: Sam Cantrell

*Vice Chair Gunda moved to approve Item 1. Commissioner McAllister seconded. The vote was (5-0).*

## **2. California Energy Demand 2021-2035 Forecast of Natural Gas and Electricity Consumption.**

Proposed resolution adopting the *California Energy Demand 2021-2035 Forecast of Natural Gas and Electricity Consumption, as well as Hourly and Peak Electricity Demand for California and for Certain Utility Planning Areas within the State*. The forecast includes estimates of achievable energy efficiency and fuel substitution to provide managed forecast scenarios for planning. The adopted forecast will be used in planning processes, including the California Independent System Operator's transmission planning and the California Public Utilities Commission's (CPUC) integrated resource and distribution planning. Contact: Nick Fugate (Staff Presentation: 10 minutes)

*Vice Chair Gunda moved to approve Item 2. Commissioner McAllister seconded. The vote was (5-0).*

## **3. Information Item on Russell City Energy Center Joint Agency Working Group Regarding the Steam Turbine Explosion and Summer 2021 Operations.**

Staff will present an update on Russell City Energy Center's Summer 2021 operations while temporarily running in a simple cycle configuration; and on the ongoing investigation, conducted in collaboration with the CPUC's Electric Safety and Reliability Branch, of the steam turbine generator failure and explosion that occurred May 27, 2021. Contact: Elizabeth Huber (Staff Presentation: 5 minutes)

*Elizabeth Huber presented staff update on Russell City Energy Center's Summer 2021. Informational item only, no vote was taken.*

#### **4. Information Item on Draft Report to the CPUC on Supply-Side Demand Response.**

Staff will present an overview of its draft report. This report represents draft findings and recommendations in response to the CPUC's June 2021 request in CPUC Decision 21-06-029 that the CEC launch a stakeholder working group process to develop recommendations on the qualifying capacity of supply-side demand response. Contact: Erik Lyon (Staff Presentation: 15 minutes)

*Erik Lyon presented staff overview on Draft Report to the CPUC on Supply-Side Demand Response. Informational item only, no vote was taken.*

#### **5. Pecho Energy Storage Center (PESC) (21-AFC-01).**

Proposed order adopting the executive director's recommendation to find the PESC application for certification (AFC) incomplete and directing the applicant to provide additional information about why the proposed project qualifies for the AFC process rather than the notice of intention process, and staff to provide a recommendation as to whether this information is sufficient to proceed with an AFC. On November 23, 2021, Pecho LD Energy Storage, LLC, a joint venture of Hydrostor, Inc. and Meridiam Infrastructure Partners, filed an AFC to construct and operate the PESC, an advanced compressed air storage facility in San Luis Obispo County. The CEC may appoint a committee to preside over the proceeding. Contact: Eric Knight (Staff Presentation: 10 minutes)

- a. Possible closed session deliberation on the above-described filling.  
[Government Code Section 11126(c)(3)].

*Presentation and comments on Item 5 was heard. Chair Hochschild moved commissioner discussion and votes after public comment on Item 6.*

#### **6. Gem Energy Storage Center (GESC) (21-AFC-02).**

Proposed order adopting the executive director's recommendation to find the GESC AFC incomplete and directing the applicant to provide additional information about why the proposed project qualifies for the AFC process rather than the notice of intention process, and staff to provide a recommendation as to whether this information is sufficient to proceed with an AFC. On December 1, 2021, GEM A-CAES LLC filed an AFC to construct and operate the GESC, an advanced compressed air storage facility, in unincorporated Kern County. The CEC may appoint a committee to preside over the proceeding. Contact: Eric Knight (Staff Presentation: 5 minutes)

- a. Possible closed session deliberation on the above-described filling.  
[Government Code Section 11126(c)(3)].

*After public comment, Chair Hochschild proposed amending the proposed order to direct the applicants for the Pecho and Gem projects to file information supporting an exemption from the NOI process by February 9, 2022, and to direct staff to file a response to the applicant's information in the form of an executive director's recommendation no later than February 23, 2022.*

*Chair Hochschild proposed appointing a committee consisting of Commissioner Karen Douglas, as presiding member, and Commissioner Andrew McAllister, as associate member, to preside over the Pecho Energy Storage Center proceeding.*

*Chair Hochschild proposed appointing a committee consisting of Commissioner Karen Douglas, as presiding member, and Commissioner Andrew McAllister, as associate member, to preside over the Gem Energy Storage Center proceeding.*

*Chair Hochschild announced Chief Counsel, Linda Barrera, will read additional edits proposed to the order to clarify the scope of the role of the committees appointed to preside over the Pecho and Gem proceedings. A copy of the revised proposed order was filed in the docket and emailed to Commissioners.*

*Commissioner Douglas moved to approve Item 5 by adopting the revised proposed Order that was prepared and filed in the Docket with the following changes:*

- 1. Under findings in the third paragraph add the following text after the second sentence in that paragraph: The scope of the committee shall include managing the conduct of all aspects of the proceedings required for thermal powerplants, including but not limited to the qualification of the PESC filing for an exemption from the NOI process, the data adequacy of the filing, and the NOI or AFC proceeding itself, as appropriate, and making recommendations to the CEC on final action(s) in these proceedings, including on findings of an exemption from the NOI process, data adequacy of the filing, and whether to approve or deny the NOI or AFC.*

*Commissioner McAllister seconded. The vote was (5-0).*

*Commissioner Douglas moved to approve Item 6 by adopting the proposed Order that was prepared and filed in the Docket with the following changes:*

- 1. The scope of the committee shall include managing the conduct of all aspects of the proceedings required for thermal powerplants, including but not limited to the qualification of the Gem filing for an exemption from the NOI process, the data adequacy of the filing, and the NOI or AFC proceeding itself, as appropriate, and making recommendations to the CEC on final action(s) in these proceedings, including on findings of an exemption from the NOI process, data adequacy of the filing, and whether to approve or deny the NOI or AFC.*

*Commissioner McAllister seconded. The vote was (5-0).*

*After Item 6 was voted on, Chair Hochschild announced a break for lunch and reconvene at 1:30 p.m.*

*Chair Hochschild reconvened the meeting at 1:30 p.m.*

## **7. EV Ready Communities Phase II – Blueprint Implementation - GFO-19-603.**

This solicitation sought proposals to fund projects developed and identified in Phase I, Blueprint Development, of the EV Ready Communities Challenge to advance and support communities in their transition to ZEVs. (Clean Transportation Program Funding) Contact: Patrick Brecht (Staff Presentation: 10 minutes)

- a. San Francisco Department of the Environment. Proposed resolution approving agreement ARV-21-045 with the San Francisco Department of the Environment

for a \$2,384,797 grant to implement three strategies from their EV Ready Community Blueprint, and adopting staff's determination that this action is exempt from CEQA. Under this agreement, the recipient will increase public awareness of EVs, expand charging infrastructure, and accelerate mode shift by getting delivery-app workers out of cars and onto e-bikes to make deliveries.

- b. County of Los Angeles Internal Service Department. Proposed resolution approving Agreement ARV-21-047 with the County of Los Angeles Internal Service Department for a \$2,500,000 grant to implement a blueprint, and adopting staff's determination that this action is exempt from CEQA. This project will deploy light-duty EV infrastructure, including a disadvantaged community EV infrastructure project, a broader EV infrastructure planning streamlining pilot, and direct multifamily housing EV charging installation incentives.
- c. Kern Council of Governments (Kern COG). Proposed resolution approving Amendment 1 to Agreement ARV-20-010 with the Kern COG to increase the funding to the full amount Kern COG proposed under GFO-19-603 EV Ready Communities Phase II. This amendment increases the number of charger installations and includes EV transport services that will benefit disadvantaged and low-income communities.

*Commissioner Monahan moved to approve Item 7. Commissioner McAllister seconded. The vote was (5-0).*

#### **8. Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority.**

Proposed resolution approving Agreement ZVI-21-012 with the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority for a \$4,676,000 grant to demonstrate the viability and replicability of utilizing distributed energy microgrids to charge electric transit bus fleets, and adopting staff's determination that this action is exempt from CEQA. (General Fund Funding) Contact: Esther Odufuwa (Staff Presentation: 5 minutes)

*Commissioner Monahan moved to approve Item 8. Vice Chair Gunda seconded. The vote was (5-0).*

#### **9. Bringing Rapid Innovation Development to Green Energy - GFO-20-301.**

This solicitation sought proposals to fund the continued development, specifically in applied research or technology demonstration and deployment, of high-potential, high-impact energy technologies that are too early for significant private-sector investment. (EPIC Funding) Contact: Michael Ferreira (Staff Presentation: 10 minutes)

- a. Swift Solar Inc. Proposed resolution approving Agreement EPC-21-012 with Swift Solar Inc. for a \$2,995,200 grant to develop perovskite-silicon tandem photovoltaic (PV) technology; integrate the technology into an onboard EV charging application; and test the system for efficiency, shade tolerance, durability, ease of integration, and aesthetics, and adopting staff's determination that this action is exempt from CEQA.
- b. Intertie Incorporated. Proposed resolution approving Agreement EPC-21-014 with Intertie Incorporated for a \$2,000,000 grant to design, develop and build an

advanced power electronics module (PEM) that enables a commercially available fast charger to supply high power to EVs to allow ultra-fast charging to be deployed quickly at almost any location, and adopting staff's determination that this action is exempt from CEQA. The project team shall directly connect a fast charger to energy storage and solar resources using the PEM to validate the improved energy efficiencies and reduced operating costs realized from the direct current-coupling technology.

- ~~c. GreenFire Energy Inc. Proposed resolution approving Agreement EPC-21-015 with GreenFire Energy Inc for a \$2,705,228 grant to advance the development of its Steam Dominated GreenLoop (SDGL) system in an existing low production geothermal well, and adopting staff's determination that this action is exempt from CEQA. The SDGL system is intended to help restore power production of inactive or low production geothermal wells by extracting heat, but not water, via a closed-loop, down bore heat exchanger. The ability to produce power from steam dominated resources without losing water or pressure is crucial to future power generation at steam dominated resources where geothermal production will decline without water injection.~~
- d. Icarus RT, Inc. Proposed resolution approving Agreement EPC-21-016 with Icarus RT, Inc. for a \$1,087,588 grant to conduct the first commercial demonstration of the company's 280-kW Quartet hybrid PV/thermal solar plus storage cogeneration system at the project site, and adopting staff's determination that this action is exempt from CEQA. The Quartet system extracts waste heat from PV panels using Icarus' proprietary heat extractors to improve PV performance while also converting the heat energy into hot water on-demand. The results of the proposed project will demonstrate several aspects of commercial readiness as well as produce real-world data on panel cooling, performance improvements, energy storage, and cost savings.
- e. Carnot Compression Inc. Proposed resolution approving Agreement EPC-21-017 with Carnot Compression Inc. for a \$2,028,350 grant to advance an innovative air compression technology for industrial applications through applied research and development, and adopting staff's determination that this action is exempt from CEQA. The isothermal compression technology has the potential to be at least 20 percent more energy efficient than comparable incumbent air compressors currently on the market. The advanced technology will optimize the air-end components, and through field demonstrations, apply the improved components in relevant customer environments.

*Chair Hochschild announced Item 9c was removed from the business meeting agenda.*

*Commissioner McAllister moved to approve Item 9a, 9b, 9d and 9e. Commissioner Monahan seconded. The vote was (5-0).*

## **10. Minutes.**

Possible approval of the December 8, 2021 business meeting minutes.

*Vice Chair Gunda moved to approve Item 10. Commissioner Douglas seconded. The vote was (5-0).*

## **11. Lead Commissioner or Presiding Member Reports.**

*The Commissioners reported on their recent activities.*

## **12. Executive Director's Report.**

*The Executive Director had nothing to report.*

## **13. Public Advisor's Report.**

*The Public Advisor gave a report*

## **14. Public Comment.**

*Igor Tregub, California Democratic Party Environmental Caucus*

*Cailey Underhill, Solar Rights Alliance*

*Selena Feliciano, self*

*Lee Miller, self*

*Joan Taylor, self*

*Jan Dietrick, self*

*Charles Adams, Albion Power Company*

*Dan Hodapp, self*

*Ben Grundy, Environmental California*

*Jane Affonso, Lutheran Office of Public Policy*

*Susannah Saunders, self*

## **15. Chief Counsel's Report.**

- a. Pursuant to Government Code section 11126(e), the CEC may adjourn to closed session with its legal counsel to discuss any of the following matters to which the CEC is a party:
  - i. *In the Matter of U.S. Department of Energy (High Level Waste Repository), (Atomic Safety Licensing Board, CAB-04, 63-001-HLW); State of California v. United States Department of Energy (9th Cir. Docket, Case No. 09-71014).*
  - ii. *State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission v. HyGen Industries, Inc (Sacramento County Superior Court, Case No. 34-2019-00252543-CU-BC-GDS).*
  - iii. *Interlink Products International, Inc. v. Xavier Becerra, Drew Bohan, Melissa Rae King (United States District Court for the Eastern District of California, Case No. 2:20-cv-02283).*
- b. Pursuant to Government Code sections 11126 (a) and (e), the CEC may also discuss any judicial or administrative proceeding that was formally initiated after this agenda was published; or determine whether facts and circumstances exist that warrant the initiation of litigation, or that constitute a significant exposure to litigation against the CEC, which might include personnel matters.

*The Chief Counsel had nothing to report.*

Appearances:

*Claire Warshaw, self*

*Melissa Yu, Sierra Club*

*Simon Baker, CPUC*

*Tom Luster, California Coastal Commission*

*Todd Thompson, CEO, Carnot Compression*

*Pat Millham, Swift Solar*

*Igor Tregub, California Democratic Party Environmental Caucus*

*Cailey Underhill, Solar Rights Alliance*

*Selena Feliciano, self*

*Lee Miller, self*

*Joan Taylor, self*

*Jan Dietrick, self*

*Charles Adams, Albion Power Company*

*Dan Hodapp, self*

*Ben Grundy, Environmental California*

*Jane Affonso, Lutheran Office of Public Policy*

*Susannah Saunders, self*

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

LIZA LOPEZ

Secretariat