

VALLEY CLEAN ENERGY ALLIANCE

Staff Report – Item 20

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Mitch Sears, Interim General Manager
Edward Burnham, Director of Finance and Internal Operations
Alisa Lembke, VCE Board Clerk/Administrative Analyst

SUBJECT: Community Advisory Committee Structure

DATE: September 9, 2021

Recommendation

Provide feedback and direction on the structure of the Community Advisory Committee.

Background

In December 2016 the Board formed a Community Advisory Committee (CAC) to advise the Board and Staff on policy matters related to the launch and operation of VCE. The CAC began meeting in Fall 2017. In September 2018, the Board approved modifications to the terms of CAC service and criteria for new member recruitment and selection.

As structured the CAC consists of 12 members (3 seats for each jurisdiction), with three seats currently vacant (unincorporated Yolo County, cities of Woodland and Winters). Since formation, one or more seats have remained vacant, making it more difficult to achieve quorums and maintain appropriate work loads/time commitments for Committee members. These factors prompted a recent review of the membership structure of the CAC. Based on Board member and CAC input, Staff is bringing the topic to the Board for discussion and direction.

Discussion

The CAC has been structured based on geography and an attempt to gather policy and community input from each of the jurisdictions. Staff believes that this approach has been largely successful based on the quality (and quantity), of work produced by the CAC over the past four years. However, as VCE begins to emerge from “start-up” mode to a more defined organization staff finds that more programmatic and technical topics are being added to VCE’s existing group of core business interests. Therefore, Staff believes it is appropriate for the Board (and CAC), to consider the CAC structure in the context of evolving organizational needs.

Based on these set of factors, working with the CAC Chair and Vice-Chair, Staff presented three basic options for CAC structure at the August 26th CAC meeting. The first option maintained the existing structure, the second added “at-large” members to fill long-term vacancies, and the third reduced regular CAC seats to 2 per jurisdiction and added an alternate seat for each. A summary of the three

options begins on page 3 of the attached CAC staff report (also linked [here](#)). The CAC input from their August meeting is summarized below.

Board Direction

Board direction would be helpful on the following two general questions:

1. Should the CAC membership structure be modified to specifically target technical needs regarding policy advice? This could point toward defining those needs and allocating seats to one or more “at-large” CAC members. Note: Staff believes that the current number of 12 seats should be a maximum to maintain efficient operation of the Committee and allocation of staff resources.
2. Should there be a minimum number of CAC seats allocated to each member jurisdiction? Note: Staff believes that a diverse membership from each jurisdiction adds value to the CAC discussion and weight to its recommendations and therefore supports a minimum number of seats from each jurisdiction.

CAC Input

At the August 26th CAC meeting Staff sought the CAC’s input and a recommendation to the Board on the possible restructuring of the Community Advisory Committee. For discussion purposes, Staff presented the three options noted above.

Although a formal recommendation was not made by the CAC, the general consensus was the importance of having applicants from all jurisdictions and qualified applicants appointed to the CAC. The CAC agreed that the cities of Davis and Winters seats should be filled now, and active solicitation should continue to fill the city of Woodland and unincorporated Yolo County seats. The CAC asked Staff to discuss recruitment efforts by the respective individual Board members and discuss with the entire Board the possibility of restructuring the CAC to include some at large members. The CAC thought that at-large members could be chosen based on various approaches, including limiting to one additional from another jurisdiction, knowledge or interest areas such as rural, etc. Long term, the CAC feels that VCE is best served with a CAC that has a full complement of 12 members.

Conclusion

Staff agrees with the CAC on the need to continue the discussion on a possible long-term alternate CAC structure. Board direction will help Staff and the CAC develop a recommendation for future Board consideration.

Attachment

1. CAC staff report 8/26/21 – CAC Structure

VALLEY CLEAN ENERGY ALLIANCE

Staff Report – Item 9

TO: Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

FROM: Mitch Sears, Interim General Manager
Edward Burnham, Director of Finance and Operations
Alisa Lembke, VCE Board Clerk/Administrative Analyst

SUBJECT: Discussion on possible restructuring of the Community Advisory Committee

DATE: August 26, 2021

RECOMMENDATION

1. Consider Community Advisory Committee restructuring options, including maintaining existing structure.
2. Provide a recommendation to the Board for their review.

SUMMARY

Since 2017, the CAC has been helping the Board and Staff assess and provide recommendations on critical policy issues, provide feedback and insight on customer engagement, and informed advice on energy issues. Historically, it has been difficult for VCE to fully fill CAC vacancies. Staff are seeking CAC input on the possible restructuring the Community Advisory Committee. For discussion purposes, multiple options are presented. The CAC Ad Hoc Committee (Chair Christine Shewmaker and Vice Chair Cynthia Rodriguez) have reviewed and participated in discussing this staff report subject. Staff is seeking input and a recommendation from the CAC to the Board for their review and discussion at the September 9, 2021, Board meeting.

BACKGROUND

The VCE Board of Directors on December 13, 2016, via Resolution #2016-006 formed a Community Advisory Committee (CAC); on September 13, 2018, the Board approved the terms of service and officer position of members who serve on the Community Advisory Committee; and on October 18, 2018, the Board approved a three-year term for Community Advisory Committee seats, how to determine the terms of service of current CAC members, and criteria for new recruitment and selection.

On November 15, 2018, the Board adopted Resolution 2018-030, which summarized VCE's recruitment and appointment process to the CAC and appointed seats. This process included an initial staff review for completeness, a review by the Board subcommittee, and a recommendation to the full Board.

In December 2019, the Board approved the City of Winters as a member of VCE. A condition of membership was to help identify community representatives to serve on VCE's Community Advisory Committee. In June 2020, the Board appointed David Springer, Jennifer Rindahl, and Peter Meyer to fill the City of Winters seats with staggered terms. In July 2020, Cynthia Rodriguez was appointed to fill a vacant Yolo County seat.

Per the Board's request, for the Class 3 terms expiring in June 2021, solicitation of applicants from all VCE jurisdictions was advertised via social media, MailChimp, and VCE's website. The Class 3 original recruitment was extended to Thursday, July 1, 2021. As the result of this solicitation, we received two (2) applications from Davis residents. Again, the due date was extended, to Friday, August 20, 2021 by 4 p.m. to seek additional candidates. As the result of the extension, we received an application from a Winters resident and as of Thursday, August 19th, no other applications have been received.

Staff and CAC should consider the optimal size based on current and future member jurisdictions. The optimal size of the CAC ranges from eight (8) to twelve (12) seats. The CAC and Board optimal size may change, for example, if additional jurisdictions join the JPA. The JPA structure will reduce Board seats from two to one should the JPA have five or more member jurisdictions. The optimal size and equal representation provide effective participation and equitable representation of member jurisdictions at the CAC committee and task group support functions.

Currently, there are nine (9) seats filled out of twelve (12) seats total. The current CAC quorum requirement is seven (7) seats based on 50% of seats +1 of 12 seats (filled or vacant). The options below are based on Davis and Winters reappointment/appointment of a representative from the current pool of reapplicant/applicants to serve out the Class 3 term as regular seats (not as alternates described in option 3).

Please see the below details of the current class appointments and terms for the CAC.

CLASS 3 – (Expired) June 2021

Yolo Rep.– Vacant
Woodland Rep. - Christine Casey
Davis Rep.– Lorenzo Kristov
Winters Rep. - Peter Meyer

Class 3 Updates: Lorenzo Kristov (Davis) has submitted his interest to be reappointed. Christine Casey (Woodland) and Peter Meyer (Winters) did not seek reappointment. Mr. Kristov has agreed to remain an active CAC participant as the Board considers reappointment/appointments to the CAC.

Class 1 and 2 are as follows:

CLASS 1 – Expiring June 2022

Yolo Rep. – Cynthia Rodriguez
Woodland Rep. – Mark Aulman
Davis Rep.– Yvonne Hunter
Winters Rep. – David Springer

CLASS 2 – Expiring June 2023

Yolo Rep.– Marsha Baird

Woodland Rep. – Christine Shewmaker

Davis Rep.– Gerry Braun

Winters Rep. – Jennifer Rindahl

ANALYSIS

Since formed in 2018, the CAC has provided over 1,800 hours of volunteer service to VCE, helping assess and provide recommendations on critical policy issues, provide feedback and insight on customer engagement, and informed advice on energy issues. However, it has been difficult for VCE to fill CAC vacancies. Therefore, Staff outlines several options for consideration that attempt to address this issue while retaining the value the CAC provides to VCE’s decision-making process. Three possible options are:

Option 1 - No Change:

Option 1 continues a twelve-seat committee structure with three seats from each current jurisdiction. This option includes no changes or modifications. The recommendation below includes continued recruitment for two vacancies (unincorporated Yolo County - Class 3 and Woodland - Class 3).

- Reappoint / Appoint from the current applicant pool for Davis and Winters Class 3 seats.
- Continue to actively advertise and solicit applicants for the two vacant seats (Woodland and Yolo)

As described above, the current structure has proven to provide support and meaningful contributions to the organization successfully.

Option 2 – Addition of Member-at-large appointment:

Option 2 is a twelve-seat committee structure with three seats from each jurisdiction. This option includes modifications to allow the temporary appointment of Member-at-large for vacancies greater than 90 days. The recommendation below includes one reappointment, one appointment, and continued recruitment for two vacancies (Yolo County - Class 3 and Woodland - Class 3).

Member-at-large is an applicant(s) from jurisdictions that have filled all available seats for their respective jurisdiction. Member-at-large would be appointed for a one-year term and limited to one per jurisdiction.

For example, the current CAC committee has two vacancies. The two vacant seats are Woodland and unincorporated Yolo County. The two vacancies could be filled by one Davis and one Winters Member-at-large. Member-at-large would participate in task group and committee meetings as a voting committee seat until the one-year term or the Class Term has expired.

- Continue recruitment for the two (2) vacant positions (Yolo and Woodland),

- Allow appointment for member-at-large to CAC vacancies for a one (1) year term for vacancies greater than 90 days.
- Member-at-large terms limited to one per jurisdiction. i.e., A maximum of four seats for each jurisdiction of the twelve-seat committee to prevent majority jurisdiction representation.

Option 3 - Modified Structure:

Option 3 is an eight-seat committee structure with two seats from each jurisdiction and the creation of one alternate from each jurisdiction. This modified structure would reduce CAC seats from twelve to eight committee seats and add four (4) alternates. This modified structure is aligned with the current form of VCE Board seats. Alternates would be allowed to act in the absence of a committee seat of their jurisdiction with voting rights at CAC meetings. Additionally, alternates may participate in all task group activities and CAC meetings without voting rights.

- Terms for the eight seats would continue to be staggered
- Continue recruitment for the two (2) vacant seats (Yolo and Woodland),
- Before the adoption and implementation of Option 3, Option 1 in the interim period

Transition to this option would be optimal for future years, provided there are continued vacancies. Current structure and recruitment would continue, and strategy for implementation developed with Staff and CAC Ad Hoc Committee for future consideration.

CONCLUSION

Staff is seeking feedback/recommendation on Community Advisory Committee restructuring options, including the option to maintain the existing structure.