

VALLEY CLEAN ENERGY ALLIANCE

Staff Report – Item 9

TO: Board of Directors
FROM: Alisa Lembke, Board Clerk / Administrative Analyst
SUBJECT: Community Advisory Committee Task Group 2022 Year End Reports
DATE: December 8, 2022

RECOMMENDATION

Receive and file the Community Advisory Committee 2022 Year-end reports from the following Task Groups:

1. Legislative/Regulatory
2. Outreach
3. Programs
4. Energy Resilience

Attachments:

1. Legislative/Regulatory Task Group Report
2. Outreach Task Group Report
3. Programs Task Group Report
4. Energy Resilience Task Group Report

**VALLEY CLEAN ENERGY
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**LEGISLATIVE/REGULATORY TASK GROUP (Leg/Reg TG)
2022 YEAR END REPORT**

Task Group Members: Lorenzo Kristov, Jennifer Rindahl, Christine Shewmaker (through March), Yvonne Hunter (through July)

Primary Staff Contact: Mitch Sears

Task Group Structural Change: Beginning in August, Yvonne Hunter joined VCE staff in the position of Legislative and Project Specialist which includes serving as liaison to CalCCA's legislative committee. In her new position she is continuing to participate in regular LRTG meetings.

2022 Charge:

Work with VCE's lobbyist and VCE staff to:

- Provide feedback, technical information and strategic advice to VCE staff on key legislative and regulatory issues facing VCE and the CCA community in general, including legislation and regulatory issues related to VCE's Strategic Plan and Environmental Justice Statement.
- Provide periodic reports to the CAC about legislation and regulatory issues.
- Solicit recommendations from the CAC on VCE positions on key legislation and regulatory proceedings.
- Advise VCE staff on CalCCA's regulatory work when appropriate.
- Work with staff to consider options to enhance the Task Group's and CAC's understanding of regulatory proceedings.
- Contribute to VCE's engagement with legislators and other stakeholders.
- Work with staff to periodically review and update VCE's Legislative Platform for consideration by the CAC and VCE Board.

Highlights of Accomplishments:

During 2022, the Leg/Reg Task Group met bi-weekly with staff and VCE's lobbyist and worked closely with them to:

1. Review pending legislation, provide feedback, technical and policy information, and strategic guidance on legislative and regulatory issues. Discuss and recommend VCE positions and legislative strategies for pending legislation and regulatory issues.
2. Provide input on selected regulatory proceedings of interest to VCE.
3. With Ms. Hunter's new position on VCE staff, periodically discuss CalCCA's legislative activities of interest to VCE.

4. Discuss VCE's AgFIT program and its potential impacts on regulatory and legislative issues as well as how best to brief VCE's legislative representatives about AgFIT.
5. Discuss end of session politics and legislation and how they may impact VCE.
6. Provide periodic updates to the CAC on legislative and regulatory issues.
7. Prepare a draft 2023 Legislative Platform for CAC review and Board action.

Challenges:

1. Navigating the process as the Legislature moves from a Covid to a post-Covid structure.
2. Identifying those legislative and regulatory topics where VCE has a significant interest and can make a difference given VCE's limited resources. This is particularly challenging with regard to CPUC proceedings because there are so many that affect retail electricity customers, they continue to proliferate, and there is no VCE staff person assigned to track regulatory activities.

Opportunities:

1. Become better informed about CalCCA legislative activities and how VCE may become more engaged.
2. Work with CalCCA and/or other CCAs to advocate for and secure funding for an expanded AgFIT type of program.
3. Advise VCE staff on developing briefing materials to educate legislators and other policy makers on CCA goals, activities and issues.

**VALLEY CLEAN ENERGY
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**OUTREACH TASK GROUP (OTG)
2022 YEAR END REPORT**

Task Group Members: Mark Aulman (chair), Marsha Baird, Yvonne Hunter (through 6/22)

Primary Staff Contact: Rebecca Boyles

2022 Charge:

- Collaborate with VCEA staff and consultants on community outreach to, and liaison with, member communities
- Assist in the development of public information strategies, planning, and materials related to VCEA policies and programs. As requested by staff, review draft materials and provide comments as appropriate

Highlights of Accomplishments:

- Reviewed and provided editorial feedback on in-progress marketing materials.
- Assisted with message development regarding cost-based rates and 2021 power content label.
- Assisted with public outreach by staffing tables at public venues as conditions allowed.
- Reviewed VCE advertising (bus banner ads in May 2022) and updates to the VCE website, (heat pump and EV rebate programs).
- Monitored social media for VCE-related postings and replied, as needed.
- Initiated monthly task group meetings to review near-term marketing project calendar and provide feedback on specific projects in-progress.
- Contacted Yolo County supervisor's office to coordinate outreach to Spanish-speaking customers
- Contacted community members in City of Woodland through the city's Sustainability Advisory Committee regarding benefits of electrification
- Conducted review of submissions and participated in interviews with marketing communications firms that responded to the RFP for Marketing, Website and Social Media services.

Lessons Learned – Challenges and Opportunities:

Challenges:

- VCE remains in an evolving and challenging fiscal and regulatory environment.
- Benefit messages should focus on diverse customer segments (example: ag customers).
- The OTG recommends a proactive, rather than reactive role, to ensure the accuracy and clarity of marketing materials, following marketing communications best practices.

- The OTG would benefit from: a) participation of additional CAC members; b) closer working liaison with the CAC Programs Task Group.

Opportunities:

- VCE Strategic Plan and Marketing Plan offer opportunities to promote goals and objectives through consistent benefit-focused communications
- New programs (examples: recent EV incentives, heat pump rebates, Ohm Connect) enable VCE to enhance its benefit messaging.
- The professional experience of VCE's marketing staff, including Rebecca Boyles and Sierra Huffman, continue to strengthen VCE's outreach strategies and programs.

**VALLEY CLEAN ENERGY
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**PROGRAMS TASK GROUP (PTG)
2022 YEAR END REPORT**

Task Group Members: Marsha Baird (Chair), David Springer, Rahul Athalye (beginning 8/22)

Primary Staff Contact: Rebecca Boyles

2022 Charge: The CAC Programs Task Group will assist Staff with development and planning of Customer Programs that are prioritized for implementation by the criteria outlined in the 3-year Programs Plan adopted by the Board in June 2021. Specifically, the Task Group will:

- (1) advise on program details and review program design/implementation forms for programs prioritized for implementation in 2022,
- (2) assist VCE Staff with updates to programs already in place,
- (3) collaborate with Staff on annual update to the 3-year Programs Plan,
- (4) assist Staff with finding and applying for external funding for upcoming programs,
- (5) have preliminary discussions with Staff on programs in line for implementation in 2023, and
- (6) provide summaries and updates at monthly CAC meetings on Task Group activities.

Highlights of Accomplishments:

- Assisted Staff with the development and implementation of new 2022 VCE programs:
 - Promote Heat Pumps for space conditioning and water heating – With sizable rebates offered by PG&E’s Comfortable Homes and TechClean California, Task Group and Staff felt phase 1 of this program should focus on education on heat pumps and information on rebates. Task Group provided input and review of website content and suggested the inclusion of GoGreen Financing. Launched in June 2022.
 - Electric Vehicle Rebates – Discussed numerous options for rebate program at monthly Task Group meetings. Phase 1 is designed to be easy for staff to implement while providing large rebates to customers. Future phases will expand. Launched in September 2022.
- Received updates from Staff on programs developed through partnerships:
 - AgFIT (Polaris): Launched in July 2022; new program concept with understandable challenges and time commitments but much future potential.
 - OhmConnect: Second year of program, running relatively smoothly.
- Brainstormed and discussed with Staff future programs such as Ag Electrification, SGIP, Energy Efficiency rebates for low-income customers and Workforce Development.

- Researched and updated spreadsheet of programs offered by other CCAs.
- Assisted Staff with update of Energy Efficiency Graphic on website.

Lessons Learned – Challenges and Opportunities:

Challenges:

- Limited staff time to develop programs due to lean staffing and other marketing activities and priorities.
- Partnerships have proven to be time consuming but worthwhile.
- Limited financial resources to augment program funding.

Opportunities:

- Continue to learn from experiences of other CCAs on programs that have worked well for their customers.
- Consider hiring consultants to help with implementation of some programs.
- Engage with Staff on supplemental program funding as reserves build in the future.
- Work with Staff and Community Advisory Committee to identify future program needs.

**VALLEY CLEAN ENERGY
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**ENERGY RESILIENCE TASK GROUP (ERTG)
2022 YEAR END REPORT**

Task Group Members: Lorenzo Kristov
Gerry Braun

Primary Staff Contact: Gordon Samuel

Excerpts from 2022 Charge

Concept: Form a Task Group (TG) to consider practical ways that VCE can work with its member jurisdictions and other local collaborators to address imminent challenges related to climate disruption. The TG would focus initially on how VCE could contribute to building local energy resilience, i.e., the capability to maintain electric service for essential community needs and functions during planned and unplanned power system outages.

2022 Charge: Work with VCE staff and other potential collaborators to develop specific ideas and initiatives for providing energy resilience benefits for Yolo County people and communities while maintaining VCE’s financial health and core responsibilities.

The TG proposes the following tasks for 2022:

1. Develop a draft local energy resilience vision for VCE, to provide a context for resilience efforts that can serve as a guidance document for the next several years. Aim for CAC adoption by end of 2022 for recommendation to VCE Board.
2. Identify a specific school in VCE service area for implementation of a resilience hub. In collaboration with relevant partners (i.e., school board, microgrid technology company) develop an implementation plan in the form of a “shovel-ready” project description that can be submitted for funding. Aim for complete project plan by end of 2022.
3. Work with other CCAs and CalCCA to explore advancing RCES as a statewide program and collaboratively develop a strategy for advocacy.
- 4.

Accomplishments:

- Met with Davis JUSD Superintendent, Facilities Manager and Energy Manager to explore potential for creating a resilience hub at a school facility, such as a multi-purpose room. They expressed strong interest in the idea, noting the recent completion of several new MPRs that could be potential sites.

Challenges:

The primary challenge is our own bandwidth. The charge was overly ambitious. For example, achieving item 2 above would require several significant steps, including:

- Identifying a partner facility, i.e., facility operator and relevant decision authorities who would collaborate with our TG to develop project proposal
- Developing desired performance goals for the resilience hub (i.e., services it should provide; number of people to serve; duration of off-grid operation)
- Identifying a developer partner to formulate technical plan to achieve desired performance (i.e., size & location of solar array & battery storage; incorporation of EV charging; wiring, controls and other electrical infrastructure)
- Identifying appropriate funding opportunities and preparing grant applications.

Opportunities:

California is now formally recognizing the importance of creating resilience centers throughout the state, particularly for extreme heat; see 10/18/22 Extreme Heat Symposium conducted by CA OPR + Resources Agency.

New CEC proceeding on Community Energy Resilience Investment, to distribute Federal DOE funding for community resilience projects; applications may begin in Q1/2023. Funding from federal Inflation Reduction Act and prior Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act becoming available.