



San Juan Regional Community Energy Board  
Meeting Agenda-Draft

**September 28, 2010 3:00 p.m.**

Placerville Firehouse

Call-in Option: 218-936-7979, access code 394137

Kim Wheels, Nina Kothe, Elaine Fisher, Bob Risch, Brad Zavorski, Jen Coates, John Clark, Keith Meinert, Sandra Esch, Bob Delves

**1) Advisory Board members – Activity Update**

The Ouray Hydro project has been granted a variance and is moving forward.

The Solar PV farm for Ouray was denied by the Joint Planning Board in Ouray County.

Bob Delves is installing solar panels on his roof in Mountain Village. Currently a permit is required and the Town is exploring options to make the process easier and more affordable.

**2) Ridgway Solar Project location – “Nimbyism”**

Planning Commission hearing last week voted 4-3 to reject the application, a few days after Sun Edison held an Open House for the community.

General comments from the community indicated that they like the project but it is in the wrong location, with general concerns expressed about location of project and high visibility, and the undesirable rendering of the fence. There were questions on the county land use code and visual impact regulations and the fencing. The Board discussed the idea of providing support for the project from the WSJCEB. It was agreed that this was probably not something the Board should do as the WSJCEB is not an advocacy group at this time. After release of the action plan to the public for input and finalization, the WSJCEB may consider issuing letters of support for projects of this sort.

**3) TNCC Program Update**

- a) *Blues & Brews CRT –EPA WARM site used for estimated GHG reduction = 6 MTCO<sub>2e</sub> from Compost/Recycling diversions of festival waste*
- b) *Telluride High School Intensive Study Period (Kris) – several ISPs for students to select from, focusing on school food, a building trades, comedy and GIS mapping of features on Valley Floor*  
Zero waste home
- c) *Telluride – Electronic Recycling Days – Oct 1, 2*
- d) *Green Business Roundtable, Telluride Library - Fri Oct 8 – “Local Food”*
- e) *10/10/10– collaboration with Telluride Library, Action events*
- f) *Eco-Audit Program – Mentors / Participants needed - mentor training – Oct 5 or 6*

This is “350 day”, which is an international event. The focus this year is on “action” events. TNCC will be hosting activities at the Telluride library and in the community, focusing on activities. They will work with the greenhouse at the school in Telluride and involve the community and other energy reduction educational activity items.

In advance, TNCC is looking for mentors to get involved with their own energy use, but then also to assist others with participating in the program. TNCC will facilitate the data management component. The mentor will assist others with assessments, etc. Please let Kim know if you are interested.

*g) Energy 101 Workshops – starting in October*

The focus of the workshops will be to engage people in the process through interactive workshops instead of lecture.

*h) Bioneers Oct 15-17 – collaboration with Telluride Library*

*i) October 7-9 – Silverton – Mountain Studies Institute – Climate Workshop: Managing for Resiliency in the San Juan Mountains: Adaptation and Planning for Climate Change*

Bob Delves indicated that in this region, the MSI is the best connected to academia and research and also to the federal government. MSI is based in Silverton, but much administration is out of Durango. These workshops are generally very good and you could probably do less than the entire 3 day event if you wish.

*j) GHG brochure from Aspen*

Kim passed around brochure for WSJCEB to consider

**4) GEO Programs**

*a) Recharge Colorado – Rebate Program – Funds available for almost all rebates. Appliance rebates pooled to remove waitlists.*

*b) Weatherization Program update – success of representative at SMPA offices & Telluride library*

The push for WAP sign up in the region was a great success to date with local representatives available to assist in each county. At least 15-20 additional households registered for the WAP.

**5) GEO Grant Update**

*a) Main Street Efficiency Initiative Grant – “Main St. in a Box”*

*i) Application details, due Oct 15*

*ii) Group application – interested businesses? Other info needed...*

Some of the program details have changed since the previous WSJCEB meeting. Now the funding is \$7500 per applicant/local administrator (ie: TNCC), just for administration. The remainder of funds goes into a statewide rebate pool. The job now is to locate interested businesses for: energy audits, lighting, programmable thermostats, HVAC, and apply for rebates statewide. The businesses will receive free technical assistance for audit reporting. The program is active in several front-range communities, and this grant is for rural, small communities. The application will be scored based on local community involvement and local outreach efforts. The audits will consider utility cost intensities and each business opportunity for energy savings with the GEO completing the initial assessment to see if the business needs lighting only or a comprehensive audit, and then retrofits will be performed in conjunction with the resulting audit. Qualifications: space is 25k sf or less, demonstrated need for energy savings, etc.

Kim will explore the opportunity for non-profits to participate.

**6) Energy Efficiency & Expansion Training Grant – TNCC applying**

This grant is to begin facilitating subcontracting for energy audits, HERS ratings through TNCC who in turn will subcontract with the auditors in the region. This presents a training opportunity for staff and the ability to expand the services of TNCC, with some income for TNCC as well.

## 7) Feed-in Tariff discussion (10 min)

Kim has received a number of calls from Durango regarding the FIT. Durango/LPEA and others are working with community to look at Feed-in-Tariffs. LPEA appears to be looking to get all rural co-ops to participate in FIT program. Brad Zaporski briefed the Board on the definition of a FIT.

FIT is a legislatively mandated price on renewable energy and it has to be accepted onto the grid. For example, if a small solar farm is established, SMPA is required to accommodate it at a set price. There are examples and precedents in Germany and all over Europe. FIT is essentially a subsidy for renewable energy, and is responsible for about 75% of the renewable energy that is put onto the grid in Europe. Essentially the FIT accommodates market-driven forces for renewable energy. A TIF is a subsidy that when legislatively driven, everyone pays. In Spain the FIT caused a 5% increase in retail cost of energy. In 2007 the FIT was instituted in Spain. The government mandated utilities to buy renewable energy at 20 times cost of the wholesale price. The mandate increased the retail rate by 5% so the rate payors had to essentially subsidize the drive for renewable energy. In 2008, the government revised the FIT and dropped the subsidy to 13%, which led to an economic bust (oversupply of panels, manufactured goods, increase in unemployment, etc.).

A FIT may lead to an increase in renewable energy, but economically may be problematic. In the US, CA and VT have FITs. In Vermont, the FIT plays off the net-metering agreements where 100% of the energy is provided on site, and then there is a mandated price for the utility to pay if there is excess energy above what the home is using, and the energy is fed back to grid. The VT model for FIT is not as cross-subsidized as the European model. Net metering reduces the subsidy of other members of the coop. FITs, if structured correctly, are an incredible subsidy for renewable energy, but someone has to pay (distribute cost across co-op). If the FIT enacted, SMPA will likely require all members in territory to pay for it. The rate payer becomes the subsidizer, not the government.

Net-metering is very similar to FIT. SMPA pays retail cost (not wholesale) to customer with net-metering (ie: SMPA pay retail rate of \$.13/kWH for net-metered energy).

Is there a way to structure the FIT so that there is not a dramatic increase to the rate payer?

The Board agreed that additional information and education is good for the WSJCEB and the community, and asked Brad Zaporski to inquire if SMPA might allow his attendance at the session in Durango on FITs in October to learn more about them and provide that information back to the Board.

EPA Carbon regulations under the Clean Air Act begins in January 2011.

The WSJCEB requested additional education for the Board on Renewable Energy Credits (RECs), and it was agreed to try and get REC education as a future agenda item.

## 8) STRATEGY

### a) Review of process & our status - set schedule

Kim emphasized importance of obtaining input/feedback ASAP in order to complete a draft document ready for public input, and finalize a complete version in January/February.

Considering Holiday schedules, we are on a tight timeline to meet the GEO timeframe for this deliverable.

- i) *Discussion of Karen G's comments / questions / add columns for Intended Outcome & Timeline?* Interpretation that Karen's comments would help the document to be more specific, however the Mission/Vision statements are intentionally broad because of diversity of region being served. Board/staff will take closer review and provide input for document prior to next meeting.
  - ii) *Public review / input process* Governments would prefer to obtain public input through formal process of putting it on agenda at meetings. Planned for November, after budget discussions and elections.
  - b) *Benchmarking Analysis – jurisdictional, regional energy use data – SMPA request needed?*  
Discussion postponed to next meeting after further analysis is performed.
  - c) *Review Strategic Goals & Action Items – comments / edits*
  - d) *Gunnison/Hinsdale STRATEGY*
- 9) Schedule Next Meeting – October 19. Ridgway**