

M.O.R.E Steering Committee Meeting Minutes  
August 18, 2010  
Russell's Landing, Orcas Island

**MORE Committee in Attendance:** Winnie Adams – Chair (OPALCO Board Member), Peter Risser (San Juan), Chris Greacen (Lopez), Jeff Dyer (Lopez), Eric Youngren (Orcas)

**Public in Attendance:** Morgan Meadows (Orcas), Susan Risser (San Juan), John Bogert (OPALCO Board Member), Chris Thomerson (OPALCO Board Member)

**OPALCO staff in Attendance:** Beth Anderson (OPALCO Energy Services/ Technical Service), Anne Bertino (OPALCO Energy Services), Elisa Scott Howard (OPALCO Energy Services)

The minutes from August 4<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved with one correction in the last paragraph, the word “installments” should be “installations.”

Winnie Adams called the meeting to order at 10:45 a.m. She determined and confirmed that there was quorum of MORE Steering Committee Members.

Winnie began the meeting by asking Chris Thomerson to review the following questions:

- I. What are the suggested logistics for administering this program?**
- **Set up the rules.**
  - **Deciding if this is the right committee; does it need to be larger or smaller and does it geographically work.**

Chris Thomerson said the committee should be monitoring the program at least quarterly to begin with and can modify as needed.

Peter Risser asked how much staff support can the steering committee rely on?

Collectively the committee responded that OPALCO staff would keep records and provide information to the steering committee. OPALCO would oversee the advertising, and filter applications making sure they follow criteria.

Chris Greacen does not feel it is up to the steering committee to decide on which projects to approve and not approve. The committee's role is monitoring the effect and to establish the rules.

Eric Youngren feels the committee's role is to make sure agreements are established and processes are in place. In addition, there should be production incentives for good installations.

John Bogert responded there are two items: one being the incentives, second being the interconnects/ OPALCO. Application for generation needs to meet OPALCO's criteria.

Jeff Dyer would like to see OPALCO *Policy 14 – Interconnection of Member Owned , Grid Connected, Alternate-Electric Generating Facilities* amended and the steering

committee should oversee the standards. It would help enhance the program by allowing input from the steering committee. He also inquired about “solar site assessment.”

Anne Bertino shared that OPALCO currently has a pre-installation inspection in place. Going forward this process should be completed before installation rather than in some past installations where the member has contacted OPALCO after installation.

Beth Anderson said OPALCO has a system engineer to do inspection on site (system load, OPALCO facilities, etc.) verses a solar site assessment for viability.

Eric Youngren would like to see monthly data from OPALCO of applicant’s connection.

Chris Greacen said site evaluation should not be the determining criteria; instead there should be more of a light handed regulation.

Eric Youngren noted that it would be beneficial if there was a marketing / outreach program to encourage members to evaluate installers and equipment. In addition, some of the local generation should be public - it would be beneficial for the members to see what their production is doing.

## **II. How often should the steering committee be meeting to discuss distribution?**

Collectively the committee decided twice a year with a mechanism in place between meetings to correspond. It was decided the first meeting would take place three months after the program is in place.

## **III. What is the procedure for replacements or committee members retiring?**

The general feeling was that it is not for OPALCO to appoint new MORE Steering Committee (SC) members, instead the committee should nominate and vote on new members.

Eric Youngren said that geographic representation is important, so keep with the original SC distribution.

It was decided that the MORE SC should be made up of nine committee members and a quorum should be five.

Temporary substitutions to the SC would be approved by majority vote.

## **IV. Is an energy audit required for applicants to receive MORE funding?**

Winnie Adams commented that conservation is the greenest measure available.

Peter Risser feels that conservation is the cheapest and best that can be done. He feels that comprehensive audits are measurable and should be required.

Anne Bertino shared that a Comprehensive Energy Audit through a certified Building Performance Institute Auditor ranges from \$500.00 to \$100.00 and takes about four to five hours to perform.

Chris Greacen noted that requiring an energy audit can be awkward in areas of new construction, pump houses, & agricultural facilities and the variation in member installations can become cumbersome and audits are not always appropriate. He recommended that an energy audit not be a prerequisite for MORE funding, however use conservation as an education piece instead of a requirement.

It was decided that the committee should not be requiring an audit for MORE funding, since an audit would be too cumbersome. The committee has to set guidelines that are diverse to customers and classes and provide more education on conservation.

Peter Risser asked if there could be an incentive or an extra percentage if the member did do an audit?

Morgan Meadows asked how do you qualify for incentives if you can not afford it? She is retrofitting her home and would like to make her home to model for neighbors.

Anne Bertino agreed that it is not just the audit, but what is needed after the audit. (Examples: insulation upgrade, window installation) not everyone can afford to implement the audit recommendations.

#### **V. Does the steering committee want some of the money set aside for education?**

Peter Risser said that according to John Mottl in the BPA Implementation Manual there is renewable option dollars for education.

Anne Bertino responded that yes, in the manual there are dollars for education, however on August 15, 2010, OPALCO selected the option to purchase Environmentally Preferred Power (EPP) in lieu of other offerings.

Winne Adams noted that education is also marketing.

Anne Bertino shared John Mottl's research on SNAP, in his absence. The main idea is to keep up education and marketing so program participating doesn't fall off. Other electric utilities that participated in "SNAP-like" programs said they saw a drop in contributions when marketing efforts were cut back.

Chris Thomerson discussed the buy/ sell program - in 2009 OPALCO had 14 members- 55 kW times 8,760 hours per year times twenty percent equals 96,360 kWh's per year. If you take 96,360 kWh times \$.15 equals \$14,454.00. If every member that is connected wanted to move to the MORE program we would have 136kW which equals \$35,740.00 annual payout.

Eric Youngren feels that \$.15 per kWh for production is a little high and should be the ceiling. The ceiling each year will decrease by a percentage.

John Bogert said that anything that is fed back into the system should be compensated.

Chris Thomerson noted that the OPALCO Board has agreed that dollars will not be paid for administration of the MORE program and also will not require MORE to pay back the \$25,000 in incentives that have been paid out in 2010.

Chris Greacen said that the committee should exclude past systems from the program which would leave more money for the new systems.

Chris Thomerson said the board cannot accept long term incentives and are not interested in the floor.

#### **VI. The question came up if the MORE program should be for OPALCO members only? Are there disallowed categories?**

Winnie Adams asked what if they feed in and not on the grid? Would they qualify? General consensus was no interconnection to the grid – would not qualify.

Eric Youngren said they must have proper permits. The committee should not be paying for things that are illegal. They need to be fully permitted, legal and compliant facility. Jeff Dyer inquired about solar hot water heating and if these systems would be eligible for rebate.

Eric Youngren responded that this is a great idea, but the committee should address it later. He noted that a few years ago, BPA supported solar hot water heating with the Bright Way program, but they have dropped this program.

Chris Greacen asked what about community solar?

Beth Anderson responded that OPALCO is interested in working with community solar systems, but would only coordinate and pay the one member who had the meter in their name.

Chris Greacen asked if wind, hydro and solar should be compensated at the same rate?

Eric Youngren responded there should be a multiplier to equalize capacity factors between different productions.

Chris Greacen will work on a formula for the various multipliers before the next meeting.

Chris Thomerson volunteered to compose and distribute notes on the items the MORE SC agreed to at this meeting. He suggested that these notes be included in the next meeting's agenda to be reviewed, modified, and accepted by the committee for the record.

Outstanding discussion/decision items include the following:

1. Incentive Proposal/Production Multiplier

Chris Thomerson suggested that Chris Greacen to pencil out and circulate a production incentive proposal for renewable energy delivered to the grid including technology multipliers, caps, etc. with \$/kWh proposals and expected overall cost projections for the next few years.

2. Education Proposal

Chris Thomerson suggest that Winnie Adams pencil out and circulate an education proposal showing how an education might look, what measures might be in place, who would monitor the expenditures and progress, etc. and provide some cost projection.

Next meeting is on **Wednesday, September 1, 2010** on San Juan Island at the **Masonic Lodge ~ 15 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Friday Harbor** starting at **8:30 a.m.**