

**MINUTES OF THE
ENERGY TASK FORCE
of the
CITY OF SANTA FE / SANTA FE COUNTY
REGIONAL PLANNING AUTHORITY**

**1 PM, Friday, September 11, 2009
Santa Fe, New Mexico**

The Regular Meeting of the Energy Task Force (ETF) of the City of Santa Fe / Santa Fe County Regional Planning Authority (RPA) was called to order by Chair Kathy Holian at approximately 1:05 PM on the above-cited date in the meeting room of the First Community Bank, 100 North Guadalupe Street.

ROLL CALL

Kathy Holian, Chair
David Blackman
Randy Grissom
David Griscom
Brendan Miller *[arrived after roll call]*

Member Excused:

David Van Winkle

Member Absent:

Patti Bushee, Vice-Chair

Santa Fe RPA Staff:

Mary Helen Follingstad, Executive Director

Others Present:

Don Pearson, Environix

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Blackman moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Mr. Grissom and approved unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There were no minutes available to approve.

PETITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no petitions from the public.

INFORMATION ITEMS

- **Public Meetings Information**

Chair Holian explained that legal staff has informed her it is necessary for the task force to operate under the Open Meetings Act. This means the meeting will be noticed a week prior to the meeting date and there will need to be a quorum present to conduct business. The agenda and minutes will be published on the website.

- **Renewable Energy Financing District Act**
 - **Update on County Implementation**
 - **Update on Standards for Installers/Installations**
 - **Update on Financing Issues**

Chair Holian explained that Duncan Sill, Santa Fe County Economic Development Coordinator, has made significant progress in the implementation of the program and has drafted a Statement of Work for an RFP that includes program development, administrative services and financing.

All in attendance requested a copy of the draft when it is available.

Mr. Grissom asked if the management of the program will be outsourced.

Chair Holian replied that as much as possible will be outsourced, but that County staff will check titles. She went on to say that Mr. Sill has begun a draft of qualifications and installations for all three pieces. He is also working on a cost-benefit analysis for the County. The cost of the program will ultimately be paid by the administrative fees, but the start-up will be funded by some of the stimulus money for energy efficiency projects that has come into the County. An FAQ has been written for installers and applications, which will be posted on the County website.

In response to a question from Mr. Griscom about the administrative fees, Chair Holian replied that the upfront fee for an application will be \$200 to be sure that the applicants are serious. The initial startup of the program may be limited to a pilot group of 50 to 100 to work out any problems.

Ms. Holian explained that the next goal is to publish the title and summary as an ordinance creating the program at the BCC meeting on September 29, 2009. A public hearing will need to be held, hopefully at the following BCC meeting. Once the ordinance is passed, there is a 30-day waiting period before the program can be started, with the end of November being the earliest rollout.

Chair Holian said there will be a board to administer the district concept, membership of which she will bring up at an RPA meeting. Initially, the composition may be City Councilors and County Commissioners. The legislation allows for the possibility of having elected board members, but does not require it.

Mr. Blackman gave an update on the financial aspects of the program and said that the local financial community has become more accepting, since they now see that it is comparable to the

Special Assessment Districts, which are often used for road projects and other infrastructure improvements. Among other funding options, when the program begins, the first program participants may use renewable funding micro bonds.

Chair Holian stated that once the ordinance is in place and responses to the RFP are received, applications can be accepted. There are already interested persons who will be notified at the appropriate time.

[Member Miller arrived at this point in the meeting.]

Mr. Griscom noted that many customers are waiting to make decisions on construction based on this program and local installers are looking to have it implemented as soon as possible. He added that the program will make solar available to more people, and the fees become important when considering someone from a low income community wanting to install solar.

As an installer, Mr. Pearson commented that interest in the program is spilling out into counties, and they are waiting to see what happens in Santa Fe County. He also stressed the importance of having the ordinance implemented soon.

Mr. Blackman suggested speaking with the Santa Fe Community Housing Trust or Homewise, since they have lending underwriting programs in place and might be used on a pilot basis. They have consumer education courses and are used to working with people who would not qualify for conventional financing. They have a sensitivity for not putting people into a debt they cannot service.

Chair Holian said she will ask Duncan Sill to see if they are interested. Mr. Miller agreed they should be contacted, even if they only provided advice.

Mr. Grissom stated that the only State requirement to qualify for state tax credits is that a person be a licensed contractor in the State of New Mexico.

Following some discussion on enforcement and inspection, it was explained that a form will need to be filled out regarding all the information about the installation, the contractor and equipment used.

Chair Holian said that applicants will be required to attend meetings that will explain the finances and other restrictions

Mr. Pearson suggested that CID be alerted that this program is upcoming so that more inspectors can be trained in preparation. Mr. Miller said he would speak to CID prior to the next meeting.

- **Update on PNM case regarding Renewable Energy Portfolio Plan for 2010**

Chair Holian said that she knew of nothing new from the County's point of view and that a brief in support of PNM not limiting the number of solar installations they accept is being filed.

In response to Mr. Pearson's question about a preliminary take at the PRC, Mr. Griscom said that it will be recommended to the hearing examiner that it is illegal that the third party financiers are utilities. He spoke with Commissioner Marks, who said that the PRC will make a decision on the third party in late December. Part and parcel to this issue, the PRC, by law, has to decide on the status of PNM's filing by December 31, 2009. Mr. Griscom said that the Governor stepped in and asked the industry and advocates to find common ground and work on compromises.

Mr. Griscom added that there will be a mediation session on Wednesday, September 16, with all interveners in the case. He said he felt it would be best if the County were interveners and said the County is not represented at the PRC in many of the energy related hearings, although the City has been more represented. Those who show up at the PRC hearings are the big utilities and the advocates. If the County goes down the path of working towards freeing up the grid and energy equality, it would be good if County legal staff were represented.

Mr. Miller agreed it would be a good opportunity for the City and County staff to be on the same page and possibly cobble resources with the Association of Counties help with the legal expenses at the PRC.

Chair Holian asked Mr. Griscom to provide an update at the next task force meeting. She said that she will speak with Paul Gutierrez.

- **Discussion of how to proceed on identifying other projects for the ETF to research and support**

Chair Holian suggested that another project would be to move towards a green grid for both the City and the County.

Mr. Pearson stated that the situation with PNM needs to be resolved before there will be an opportunity for the green grid to become a reality.

Mr. Grissom said he received an email from DOE on smart grid investment demonstration projects.

Mr. Miller said it would be great if the City and County pushed energy efficiency in buildings, and it would be nice to have a program to be a stimulus to foster a structure where people can be in business and get a self-sustaining model.

Chair Holian suggested this topic would be a good companion to renewable energy and suggested that ideas be brought to a future meeting.

Regarding creating a government-owned utility, Chair Holian reported that she met with Buck Monday, who is retired and could be available as a consultant. She said that she is favorable to moving towards a municipal grid, but did not know what would be involved.

Mr. Griscom added that Nan Winter is a good resource and suggested that the experts could be brought to the next meeting, which should result in a robust conversation.

DATE AND TIME FOR NEXT ETF MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Energy Task Force will be held at 1 PM, Friday, September 25, 2009, in the Legal Conference room at the County Building.

Several members had a conflict with the September 25 date, and it was decided to still hold the meeting. Guests for the utility discussion will be invited to the October 9 meeting when more member will be in attendance.

Mr. Griscom stated it is important that the City be involved in the task force's discussions. Chair Holian replied that Councilor Bushee has a conflict with the time that the meetings are held and said she would talk with Councilor Bushee about appointing another representative from the City to the task force.

Chair Holian reported that she will be meeting personally with each County Commissioner to talk about the Renewable Energy program.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the ETF, this Regular Meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:30 PM.

Approved by:

Chair, RPA Energy Task Force
Kathy Holian, Santa Fe County Commissioner

Minutes transcribed and drafted by: Kay Carlson