

OPERATING COMMITTEE MEETING
February 21, 2023
9:30 AM

The ARPA Operating Committee met at the Las Animas City Council Chambers, 532 Carson, Las Animas, CO., at 9:30 AM on February 21, 2023. Committee members in attendance included Bill Jackson (La Junta), Lynn Wright (Las Animas) Houssin Hourieh (Lamar), Dave Bachicha (Trinidad) and Heath Piper (Springfield). Also in attendance was Chris Arguello (La Junta), John Krajewski, (JK Energy Consulting) and ARPA staff members Rick Rigel, Aarin Ritter and Arvenia Morris.

Call to order: Chairman Hourieh called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM.

Approval of Agenda:

The agenda was approved as received.

Approval of Minutes: a. **October 20, 2022, November 14, 2022, and January 19, 2023.** The minutes of the October 20, 2022, November 14, 2022, and January 19, 2023, meetings were approved as published.

Operating Committee Member Reports: Houssin reported that Lamar was in the process of upgrading their 4kv feeder protection relays. Lynn reported that Las Animas will be looking for transformers in preparation for a customer installation of center pivot sprinklers. Chris reported that La Junta will be providing new transformers to support one of their industrial customers that has added new equipment. Bill reported that La Junta's PV customers has increased. Heath reported construction for the 24-unit housing project in Springfield is progressing. The construction for the hotel in Springfield has been completed and the hotel is open. Pad mount transformers they have on order are estimated at 84 weeks wait time. Dave reported they will be purchasing a 750 kW transformer to serve the 24-unit Timberview Apartments which is an all-electric load.

Discussion on Solar Net Metering: *General Discussion.* Members reported on the number of anticipated new roof-top solar installations in their communities. *Grid Access Charge.* Discussed possible options for minimizing the impact of net metering reimbursement. John Krajewski explained how a grid access charge might work for a utility to implement. *Annual Reporting.* The Committee was reminded to do their annual renewable generation reporting for type of renewable, number of installations and capacity of each. Staff will email the form so it can be submitted electronically. Staff requested that beginning in 2024, this information be submitted annually, by February 1. a. **Consider Membership in COSSA (Colorado Solar and Storage Association).** It was a consensus to attend additional webinars before deciding whether or not to consider membership in COSSA.

Update on Federal and State Funding Opportunities: a. **Distribution System Planning Services.** Recently, the Committee had zoom meetings with both Exponential Engineering and City Light and Power Engineering to determine which firm to consider for performing a distribution system modeling plan for their individual distribution systems. i. **Consider Engineering Firm to Perform Distribution System Planning Services.** There being a wide margin between the price quotes of the 2 firms, the Committee wanted additional information before making a selection. Staff will get references for the 2 firms in order

to evaluate which firm is the best fit for ARPA. If that doesn't provide conclusive results, staff will request one more proposal. The Committee will plan a zoom call in a few weeks to review any additional information and to make a decision. **ii. Review the Scope of Services for Distribution System Planning Services.** The Committee received a copy of the proposed Scope of Services for review. **b. Microgrid Funding.** The grant application for microgrid funding opened on February 1 and will close on March 31. The grant application details were reviewed. It is expected there will be additional opportunities to apply for microgrid grant funding in the future. **c. EV Funding.** The Committee members are not interested in seeking funding for EV charging stations at this time.

Discussion on Opacity Testing (certification). Gerald Armijo (Trinidad) is a certified opacity tester. The Committee was asked to consider if someone from their utility would be interested in becoming certified. ARPA will pay for the certification.

AST Overfill Prevention Equipment Inspection (certification). The Committee was asked to consider the potential to either have someone within the ARPA group, or someone within their community(ies) become certified to do the AST overfill prevention equipment inspections. The training involves a series of classes and testing to become certified.

Update on Economic Analysis for Renewable Power Supply. Staff has been working with JK Energy Consulting to do an economic evaluation of our power supply options once the Guzman contract begins. The Committee reviewed the options for self-supplying 20% renewables that will be allowed in the Guzman contract. **a. Wind Turbine Repowering Update.** Currently, the wind turbine generators account for 50% of the amount that can be self-supplied. ARPA has a proposal to repower the ARPA/LUB wind turbines which would result in a significant increase in wind generation and would provide the entire amount of the self-supplied energy leaving no room for additional renewable installations in ARPA member communities.

Miscellaneous Operations. The General Manager updated the Committee on legislation CAMU is currently monitoring. 1) SB-23-016 regarding solar gardens. This provides that solar garden participants must receive full retail value from the output. Note, municipal utilities are exempt from this legislation. 2) Potential for "On-Bill" financing for customer weatherization and efficiency improvements. This bill is to incentivize consumers to switch from natural gas to electric. 3) Potential for creation of a rate class for low-income customers.

Member's Usage Report. *Report on Energy Outreach Colorado Report to CAMU.* Energy Outreach Colorado (EOC) has a shortfall in its funding. Their goal is to encourage funding to make up for the shortfall. CAMU may be reaching out to the municipalities to gather information on funding they are providing for energy assistance programs in their own communities. *Discussion on SPCC Plans.* The Members were encouraged to review their Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasure Plans to ensure they are up to date. The Plans are to be renewed every 5 years. *Year End Summary.* *The Committee reviewed December usage information and YE 2022 information.* *Department of Energy Published a Federal Register Notice.* The Committee members were made aware of the proposed rulemaking pertaining to increased energy efficiency standards for distribution transformers. The DOE will accept comments, data, and information regarding this until March 13. ARPA staff will submit comments. If any Committee member wishes to include comments, they were encouraged to provide them to staff. *Poletop and Bucket Truck Rescue Training.* Last year the training was held in June. Chris Arguello said La Junta will continue to host the training; however, they would like to find another instructor in order that their line workers can

participate in the training exercise. The Committee was encouraged to see if there is someone in their line crews that would be interested in providing the instruction for the pole top and bucket truck rescue training. *Mobile Substation training*. The last training on the mobile substation operation was in October 2021.

Next Meeting Date: The next meeting of the Operating Committee will be May 18, 2023.

Adjourn: The meeting concluded at 12:10 PM.



Submitted by Houssin Hourieh, Chairman