

VALLEY CLEAN ENERGY ALLIANCE

Staff Report - Item 7

TO: Community Advisory Committee

FROM: Alisa Lembke, Board Clerk/Administrative Analyst

SUBJECT: Review draft 2023 Programs & Outreach Task Group Year-End Report

DATE: October 26, 2023

Attached for your review and comments is the draft Programs & Outreach Task Group year-end report.

At the CAC's October 26, 2023 meeting the Legislative & Regulatory Task Group and Strategic Plan Task Group year-end reports were reviewed. The schedule is to provide all final year-end reports to the Board for their information at their December meeting.

Attachment: Programs & Outreach Task Group Year-End Report

**VALLEY CLEAN ENERGY
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**PROGRAMS AND OUTREACH TASK GROUP (POTG)
2023 YEAR END REPORT**

Task Group Members: Keith Taylor (Chair), Rahul Athalye, Mark Aulman, David Springer

Primary Staff Contact: Rebecca Boyles

2023 Charge:

The CAC Programs Task Group will collaborate with VCEA staff and consultants on policies, procedures and programs aimed at improving the customer experience and customer satisfaction in VCE, including:

1. Assist in the development of public information strategies, planning, and materials related to VCEA customer marketing, outreach, policies and programs. As requested by staff, review draft materials and provide comments as appropriate; assist with customer-facing community outreach to, and liaison with, member communities.
2. Help define audience segments within VCE's service area and consult on appropriate messages and communications approaches; provide a sounding board to assist in message development and copy testing. Conduct review of marketing materials at the draft (pre-release) stage upon request from staff.
3. Assist with identification of statewide program opportunities and development of strategies for disseminating information on eligibility, rebate amounts, stacked incentives, and other details; assist Staff with finding and applying for external funding for potential programs.
4. Collaborate with Staff on an annual update to the 3-year Programs Plan, discuss 2023 program implementation with Staff; assist with the update of 2022 program design/implementation forms and program prioritization for implementation in 2023.
5. As requested by the Director of Customer Care and Marketing, provide outreach and messaging support for the efforts of other CAC task groups, as well as outreach to VCE's participating jurisdictions to encourage collaborative dissemination regarding programs, energy savings tips, rebates/incentives etc. on their websites and social media platforms.
6. Provide summaries and updates at monthly CAC meetings on Task Group activities.

///

///

Highlights of Accomplishments:

- Merged the Programs Task Group and Outreach Task Group together to finalize the amended charge for 2023.
- Recommended a \$20,000 budget increase to Phase 1 of the EV rebate program, launched in September 2022. As of today, 39 rebates totaling nearly \$120,000 have been issued, 10 of which went to low-income residents.
- Assisted in the development of Phase 2 of the EV rebate pilot program which will provide low-income residents with rebates of \$1500 to \$3000 depending on vehicle type. Additionally, it will provide rebates up to \$500 for home EV charging equipment and \$500 for panel upgrades, as well as multifamily housing charging infrastructure incentives of \$3000 per charger and up to \$21,000 per property. Twenty-five percent of the EV rebate funds will be prioritized for income-qualified applicants. Phase 2 is pending VCE Board approval. Additional Phase 2 program elements could include:
 - Incentives vehicle-to-grid integration
 - Incentives for non-residential vehicle chargingVCE's EV rebate program has relied on the California Clean Vehicle Project (CVRP) for qualifying applicants. Unfortunately, the CVRP funds were exhausted in September 2023, and the 2024 program will be limited to low-income applicants only. VCE customers have been able to join a wait list while adjustments to VCE's qualification process are under development.
- Participated in calls with program providers that administer incentives for the installation of heat pumps and heat pump water heaters. With the launch of the California Energy Smart Homes program, the TECH program, and forthcoming offerings under the Inflation Reduction Act, POTG members will continue to help develop materials that will allow customers to navigate and benefit from these programs.
- Provided industry expertise to ERRO or the Electrification Retrofit Rebate Outreach Program, in the development of an educational outreach program on electrification and energy efficiency. POTG members continue to brainstorm with staff on how to best support low-income households in the adoption of electrification, as well as steps VCE can take to include renters.
- Provided input on the design and marketing of programs developed through 3rd party partnerships, which include:
 - **AgFIT or Agriculture Flexible Irrigation Technology** -Launched in July 2022; supplying hourly dynamic prices and automation incentives to Yolo County irrigators. Deliberation of an AgFIT pilot expansion is underway at the California Public Utility Commission. The pilot program continues to be successful and will supply much

needed data dynamic rates schedules, shaping the future of load management in California.

- **OhmConnect** - In the second year of the program. Continues to see steady enrollment and customer participation during events.
 - **SACOG or Sacramento Area Council of Governments Grant** – Provided funds for local municipalities to install for EV charging infrastructure. The City of Winters has completed all their installations and are open to the public now. The County of Yolo has recently finished their first EV charger installation at the county library.
 - **Vehicle to Grid Program with SMUD or Sacramento Municipal Utility District** – Applied for funding and are awaiting reply.
 - **REDWDS or Responsive, Easy Charging Products with Dynamic Signals** - Received initial approval for funding from the California Energy Commission. Implementation of this program is expected to begin in 2024.
- Developed and targeted alongside staff future program goals, including agriculture equipment electrification, Self-Generation Incentive Program partnerships or opportunities, energy efficiency and electrification rebates, and workforce development. Due a wide array of opportunities and limitations on staff time, POTG efforts are invaluable. Members may move forward to support staff on specific items, that best suit their interests and industry expertise.

Lessons Learned – Challenges and Opportunities:

Challenges:

- Limited staff time to develop, market, and manage programs, especially as programs continue to grow in complexity and scope.
- Partnerships have proven to be time-consuming but productive.

Opportunities:

- Continue to learn from experiences of other CCAs on programs that have worked well for their customers.
- Potential to add staff and/or hire consultants to help with program implementation.
- Engage with Staff on availability of funding as reserves build.
- Support Staff with specific needs as time permits, such as ideas for and review of website updates, strategies to maximize customer access to incentives, and identification of future program and outreach needs.
- Collaborate with Yolo, Woodland, Davis, and Winters Climate Action Commissions and Cool Davis.
- Potential to collaborate with other public utilities.