Community Working Group Meeting #2 Notes– 10/7/25

Attendees:

- Tom Evans (Public Utilities Board Member)
- Mark Dowling (IVAR)
- Michael Burger (Compel Media)
- Matt Barth (UCR)
- Tom Donahue (Ward 1 resident, Family Service Association)
- Brian Siana (Public Utilities Board Member, virtual attendee)

Staff:

- Rafael Guzman
- Ryan McManus
- Kelly Murillo
- Ceri Dowsett
- Tracy Sato
- Andrew Galvan
- Fortino Morales III
- Ryan Gleason
- Zoe Ridgeway
- David Garcia

Meeting Notes:

Concept #1: Public Benefits (PB) Fund is accruing interest

> Question: How much of the $34M in the PB reserve is a result of interest earned?
>
> Response: From 2009 to FY 24/25, the interest earned is $4,722,980.19.
>
> Follow-up: staff to review legality of returning interest back to ratepayers.

Concept #2: Programs and metrics

> Question: What programs did we discontinue during COVID?

Response: Energy Savings Assistance Program (ESAP) and Demand-Side Management, Energy Efficiency (EE) & Conservation Programs due to social distancing requirements.

Question: Ideas for replacing Energy Star, most likely the state of CA would replace if the programs sunsets. Can RPU partake in this process?

Response: RPU lacks the infrastructure and technical expertise. It would require extensive laboratories and staff with expertise and ongoing expenses.

Question: How do we measure the effectiveness of our advertising?

Response: Clicks, email open rates, engagement on social media.

Question: How is energy efficiency verified for master-metered customers?

Response: Master-meter EE savings based on appliance assumed savings

Question: is the Mobile Home Park (MHP) program fully saturated? There are limited amount of potential customers.

Response: RPU has about 2,000 MHP customer and the program is about 1-2 years old, MHP residents leave and replaced. RPU outreach plan is to revisit sites ~5 years to connect with customers on EE measures.

Question: Utility shut-offs impacted by low-income SHARE program?

Response: Data is difficult due to the impacts of COVID and the inability to disconnect customers during that time.

Concept #3: Programs/projects to benefit many ratepayers, not the few

Question: Can we adjust programs so that the many pay for benefits to the many, drive costs down, more renewable power generation.

Comments:

- Interest in Ward-based PB fund usage, heat maps
- Tangibility for PB funds, lower electric rates is an economic development. Do things to keep the rates low
- Determining the value of energy independence. Is it a goal of RPU?
    - Staff to present potential definitions of energy independence and what steps RPU has taken towards the concept

Concept #4: Programs/projects utilizing PB funds

Project idea: Education center or technology demonstration center project proposal

Comments from members:

- Members present does not believe additional funding should go towards an education center or technology demonstration facility(s).
- STEPCon doing exactly what is proposed, suggested RPU builds on what is established
- UCR could partner as they are doing something similar with LACI
- Make it clear to ratepayers how they are benefiting from a project like this, be mindful of ratepayers by making more practical. Make communication clear to customers.
- Bring schoolchildren to educate on microgrids and technology, workforce development, STEM education.
- Funding could be sourced from a variety of sources: grants, public benefits, etc.
- EV truck to transport to different Wards showcasing Vehicle-to-Grid (V2G), microgrids with concepts
- Use to demonstrate to businesses on what is coming to Riverside and give ideas for economic development
- Leverage partnerships with universities, new businesses
- Ongoing costs of a demonstration project is not desirable

Demonstration project ideas:

- Community solar and generate low-cost electricity. Comments and questions:

        - RPU to calculate the cost difference of procuring solar vs. building community solar
            - Staff to provide definitions of private behind-meter solar, community solar, and utility-owned solar projects
            - Staff to research the land requirements for different options
            - Staff to provide a list of other factors to consider for solar options
        - Can solar be put on warehouse roofs?
        - Comment from a member that community solar should be paired with energy storage
        - Put solar on all carports. Project example: RCC recently put ~2MW on parking lots

    - Energy water nexus idea – put solar panels on the Gage Canal similar to Project Nexus at Turlock Irrigation (TID).
        - Staff to research project feasibility
            - Gage Canal is significantly narrower
            - Installations would require to be removable for Canal maintenance operations
            - Gage Canal would require to approve the project

Next steps:

Last meeting RPU will bring costs and timing for considerations

Last meeting in early January, we will work to schedule an agreeable time

The customer survey was not covered during the meeting due to time constraints