

# Citizens for Clean Energy, Inc. (CCE)

[www.ccemontana.org](http://www.ccemontana.org)

## Minutes for October 12, 2021 Meeting

**Location:** Zoom Meeting in Great Falls, Montana

**Welcome:** Rich Liebert, Chair, called the Zoom meeting to order at 7 p.m. Ten CCE, Inc. supporters were present at the Zoom meeting; a quorum was present. Thank you David Saslav and Melissa Smith for setting up the Zoom meeting.

Rich welcomed guest, Ron Colwell, General Manager Montana Renewables, from Calumet Montana Refinery. Rich invited those present to introduce themselves to Ron. Ron said he's a Navy veteran and graduated from Colorado State University after his time with the Navy. He worked as a process engineer in Texas and then at Exxon-Mobile in Billings, MT before joining Calumet in Great Falls where he has worked for over thirteen years. Ron discussed Calumet's plan to make about 10-15,000 barrels per day of hydrogenated renewable diesel as well as continue to produce about 10-15,000 barrels per day of conventional fuels. Federal and state tax credits of about \$1/gallon provide an incentive to produce renewable diesel. The markets for Calumet are in CA, WA, OR, and Canada where the use of low carbon fuel is encouraged or mandated. Ron answered questions from the group and the following are some of the answers: Production of biodiesel could be as early as 12-18 months away; the feedstock initially will consist of soybean oil or tallow that has been refined, bleached and deodorized as any pollutants would poison the catalyst; in the future they are looking at using all types of raw oils such as canola, camelina, etc. but it is all in the conceptual design stage; the cleaned feed like tallow has a faint cheeseburger smell around the holding tanks at the Long Beach, CA refinery that makes biodiesel; the pretreatment unit may have a smell with tank cars needing to be heated to unload the tallow, etc. they may have to install a deodorizer system; the refinery is looking into putting the pretreatment facility in a different location to control the odor; extra products above the 10,000 barrels/day used locally would be transported by rail out of the refinery; Calumet is working with BNSF to move products out of town - BNSF runs two switches/day in a 24 hour period; and working with the proposed slaughterhouse would require a rendering plant and it is not on Calumet's radar. Ron Colwell said he'd send a copy of the powerpoint presentation that he usually used to discuss the project. Rich thanked Ron for his presentation to CCE members.

**Secretary:** Kathy Gessaman highlighted the September 14, 2021 CCE meeting minutes. **Shannon Wilson moved to accept the September 14, 2021 CCE, Inc. electronically distributed minutes; Ken Palisin seconded.** Rich called for discussion; **the motion was approved.**

**Treasurer:** Shannon Wilson said she deposited a \$50 donation from Melissa Smith earmarked for a one year membership to Northern Plains Resource Council (NPRC) and sent NPRC a \$50 check. The balance in the checking account remained the same. **Melissa Smith moved to accept the treasurer's report and Kathy Gessaman seconded; the motion was approved.**

**CCE Website/Communications:** Please visit the new CCE, Inc. website for the latest updates on CCE activities. <https://www.ccemontana.org/> The original CCE website address continues to be active as an archive along with current LENR info: <http://www.cce-mt.org/>. Send articles of general interest and notices about CCE activity to Kathy G. at [cce.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:cce.secretary@gmail.com). Please check out the new website to view any new links to current events.

### Unfinished Business:

**Energy Sustainability Committee - Aquatic Center (ARC):** Rich L. noted Melissa S., Kathy G. and he attended the ground breaking ceremony for the ARC at Lions Park on September 15th. Rich was impressed that the speeches were short and to the point; he also had a chance to speak with architect, Tim Peterson. Melissa said Tim plans to put solar on his house. David said the City isn't motivated to install solar on the ARC until they have a resolution to reduce electricity use.

**MEIC/Northern Plains Resource Council Natural Gas 'Virtual' Forum:** David S. said he learned a lot from the forum where Dr. Lori Byron and Dr. Rob Byron, Montana Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate and Anne Hedges, Montana Environmental Information Center, spoke about how gas extraction, transportation and use in our buildings and homes for electricity, heating, cooking and more come with serious costs and health risks. David said the breakout room that he helped to host gave him and six other partners about a minute to identify their groups'

purpose, which didn't give CCE much exposure. The group also discussed how Northwestern Energy bypassed the PSC to finance a new gas plant provided they can convince their shareholders.

#### **New Business:**

**Federal Department of Energy (DOE) Solar Permitting 'Express':** Rich briefly discussed a new government program to help streamline permitting for solar installations, however, the system might not be needed in Montana yet since the market is smaller than, say, California or Massachusetts. Learn more at: <https://solarapp.nrel.gov/>

The group discussed the local solar situation. Shannon mentioned Tesla is offering to install and maintain a solar system to provide electricity for \$160/month.

Ken P. said the City has a six year contract from 2017-2023 with Energy Keepers, Inc. (a corporation of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes) and he will try to find out more about the contract from the City Clerk.

#### **Reports:**

**Grassroots:** Rich said KGPR (FM 89.9) sends out public service announcements for CCE, Neighborhood Councils, and other nonprofits; KGPR reports local activities for no charge including the meeting time and location. Check out KGPR podcasts for current events.

**Legal:** Rich L. included CCE, Inc. in signing on to the comments focusing on climate impacts and BLM's upcoming review of the federal coal program as Jenny Harbine with Earthjustice was part of the team that drafted the comments.

The next CCE, Inc. Zoom meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, November 9, 2021 at 7 p.m. Watch your email for Zoom meeting instructions. Please email agenda items to Rich L. at [wwranch@3rivers.net](mailto:wwranch@3rivers.net).

**David S. moved to adjourn and Melissa S. seconded; the meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.**

**UPCOMING EVENTS:** Please check your email and the CCE, Inc. website for additions or updates.

- Oct 19 – Cascade County Planning Board meeting in Family Living Center at Fairgrounds
- Oct 21 – MEIC Zoom meeting 5:30–6:30 p.m. Register: <https://meic.org/dont-fall-for-gas-event-series/>
- Nov 2 – **Vote** – Election for City of Great Falls Commissioners and Mayor
- Nov 9 – CCE Zoom meeting at 7 p.m.

***“The greatest tragedy is for somebody to do nothing because they thought they could only do a little.” Edmund Burke***