

Citizens for Clean Energy, Inc. (CCE)

www.ccemontana.org

Minutes for April 12, 2022 Meeting

Location: Zoom Meeting in Great Falls, Montana

Welcome: Rich Liebert, Chair, called the Zoom meeting to order at 7 p.m. Nine CCE supporters attended the Zoom meeting; a quorum was present. Seth Lutter who helped create C-PACE (Property Assessed Commercial Energy Enhancement Program), was a guest speaker. Thank you, David Saslav and Melissa Smith, for setting up the Zoom meeting.

Rich welcomed Seth Lutter, Montana Facility Finance Authority (MFFA), who provided an overview about C-PACE in Montana. Seth spoke at the Solar 101 Installer Meet and Greet at the Ursuline Center on April 5th and David Saslav invited Seth to make a presentation at the April CCE meeting. Seth outlined the C-PACE process. Seth said his group got involved with energy efficiency upgrades with St. Patrick's Hospital where over \$180,000 was saved by changes in their utilities programming. C-PACE emphasized capital enhancements, jobs, and economic development rather than clean energy to get the program approved by the Montana Legislature. Seth said the commercial businesses who decide to invest in energy efficient projects such as solar or renewable energy upgrades first get financing from a financial institution, then the local government (like Cascade County) adds an assessment to the tax rolls, and the building owner pays the assessment for up to 20 years (hopefully using the saving from increased energy efficiency to cover the assessment). Seth answered questions from those present – some of the answers are as follows: Seth is paid by MFFA, a quasi-governmental group, and they currently earn money from upgrading hospitals; MFFA might charge a 1% fee for C-PACE projects in the future – currently there is no cost to work with MFFA to get C-PACE financing; when local cities or counties collect the tax assessment they would send the money to MFFA who would pay the lenders; and the minimum loan package is around \$40,000 though projects in the \$75,000 to \$100,000 range make more financial sense. For more information about C-PACE contact Seth: Seth.Lutter@mt.gov or <https://lastbestpace.com/>.

Secretary: Kathy Gessaman reviewed the March 8, 2022 CCE Zoom meeting minutes. **Lita Sharone moved to accept the March 8, 2022 CCE, Inc. electronically distributed minutes; Shannon Wilson seconded.** Rich called for additional discussion; **the minutes were approved.**

Treasurer: Shannon Wilson said there were no checks since the last meeting - the CCE debit card was used on 3-15-22 to purchase 32 Money Orders from the Post Office for a total of \$606.40 for the Science Fair awards and the debit card was used on 3-15-22 for USPS postage to mail the awards to the student's schools for a total of \$9.90. [Note the motion to spend \$600 on the Science Fair was approved at the January 11, 2022 CCE meeting.]

CCE Website/Communications: Please visit the active CCE, Inc. website for the latest updates on CCE activities at <https://www.ccemontana.org/>. The original CCE website address continues to be used as a historical archive along with current LENR info at <http://www.cce-mt.org/>. Send articles of general interest and notices about CCE activity to Kathy G. at cce.secretary@gmail.com. Please check out the new website to view links to current events. **Look for the 2022 Earth Day Proclamation on the CCE website!**

CCE Facebook: Shannon Wilson is the administrator of CCE's Facebook site and David is a co-administrator. Please visit the site at <https://www.facebook.com/Great-Falls-Citizens-for-Clean-Energy-CCE-110217491438621/> Shannon said about 994 people were reached by a 45-minute boost for the April 5th C-PACE meeting. Shannon said she was concerned about the negative clean energy comments. David suggested CCE continue to boost positive news. Shannon said she might write a short C-PACE article to post on the Facebook page. Shannon said she is a little over budget - \$53 was spent on Facebook boosts. [\$50 was allocated at the November 9, 2022 CCE meeting for boosts on Facebook.] Shannon said she usually spends \$20/boost and asked for another \$50 for the boost budget. **David Saslav moved to spend \$60 on three Facebook boosts. Ken Palisin seconded and the motion was approved.**

Unfinished Business:

C-PACE: Rich asked David to highlight the Montana Renewable Energy Association's (MREA) Solar 101 and Installer Meet & Greet program held on April 5, 2022 at the Ursuline Center in Great Falls. David said about 30 people attended the hour-long program and it was a good opportunity to listen to the Montana Energy Office at the Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) presentation and the MFFA's (represented by Seth) presentation. Carolyn Craven Sluys said she would love to have solar on her house but that's not part of C-PACE. Lita said a residential solar program is being researched by Emily Auld with the Northern Plains Resource Council (NPRC).

2022 Science Fair: Rich said he saw Mike Enk and Kathy Gessaman at the Great Falls Public Library working on sending out USPS Money Orders to the Science Fair award winners. Kathy said it was a lot of work to fill out the information on the 32 USPS Money Orders. Mike received thankyou notes from Sunburst teachers and Charla Merja from Great Falls College – MSU for CCE's participation in the 2022 Science Fair.

New Business:

Earth Day Friday, April 22, 2022: Rich read the Earth Day Proclamation and asked David if he would accept the proclamation at the April 19, 2022 City Commission meeting. David said he would accept the Proclamation and Shannon said she would try to attend the meeting.

NPRC: Rich said Northern Plains Resource Council is launching their latest affiliate - Golden Triangle Resource Council at the Celtic Cowboy on April 28, 2022 from 6-8 p.m.

Reports:

Grassroots:

PSAPLING: Rich asked David to explain this group. David said it is a business in Billings where they are exploring small high-tech renewable energy projects. See more at: <https://www.facebook.com/psapling>

I-187: David asked people to like the Facebook page for I-187 since they post good information on clean energy. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1737254959850983/>

Montana Constitution: Rich recommended people call (406) 444-2807 and talk to Sue at the Montana Secretary of State's office to get a free copy of the Montana Constitution.

Slaughterhouse: Charles B. said the Slaughterhouse project seems to be moving forward. Rich said the Distillery and the Cheese Plant are going forward. Carolyn noted there are rumors that dirt is being moved.

Coal Lease Moratorium: Rich said nothing is happening at this time.

The next CCE, Inc. Zoom meeting was tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, May 10, 2022 at 7 p.m. Watch your email for Zoom meeting instructions. Please email agenda items to Rich L. at wwranch@3rivers.net.

Kathy Gessaman moved to adjourn and Lita Sharone seconded; the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

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

- Apr 19 – City of Great Falls Commission meeting, Tuesday, 7 p.m. - **Earth Day Proclamation**
- Apr 22 – Earth Day
- Apr 28 – Launch of NPRC's new Golden Triangle Resource Council at the Celtic Cowboy from 6-8 p.m.
- May 10 – CCE Zoom meeting at 7 p.m.

“I have learned you are never too small to make a difference.” Greta Thunberg