



Minutes of the City Council Workshop  
Tuesday, February 22, 2022  
6:00 p.m.

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**ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS**

The meeting was called to order by Acting Mayor David A. Witham. The following Council members were present: Councilors Pepin, Vincent, Austin, Michaud, Witham, Cameron, and Messier.

Councilor Dumont arrived at 6:20 p.m. Councilor Gerding was excused.

City Manager Bob Belmore, Finance Director Scott Smith, Public Works Director Michael Bobinsky, and City Clerk Jonathan Slaven were also present.

Present from Ameresco: Kleo Taliadouros, Luis Alegria, Ryan Fahey, Rob Bukowski

**CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP – Presentation by Ameresco Representatives Regarding a Proposed Solar Array on the City's Closed Landfill Site Off Blackwater Road**

Mr. Taliadouros, VP of Renewables, went through a brief PowerPoint presentation. He spoke regarding Ameresco's proposed 2.7-megawatt solar array at the City's landfill. Ameresco has experience with both large and small solar arrays and have done about 20+ landfill projects. He also mentioned Ameresco has good working relationships with Eversource and environmental regulatory agencies. Mr. Taliadouros stated he does not anticipate needing to obtain a wetland permit as the setbacks are far enough away, though Ameresco will be seeking a stormwater runoff permit. He stated the project could start right away since the City is the sole off-taker of the power with most construction being complete by December of 2023. Additionally, Ameresco can provide educational experiences to students K-12 and a public kiosk with live information regarding the solar array.

Councilor Vincent stated he has sat on energy Committees at the State level and has heard it is not safe to enter into a deal for more than 3 years. Mr. Taliadouros responded that the 25-year term being proposed is an industry standard and is a length of time that allows them to gain a return. Vincent asked if the power being generated gets sent back to the grid. Mr. Taliadouros replied that it does and further explained that the City receives credits on their electrical bill through the agreement.

Councilor Witham stated that pricing in the future may be different which could potentially pose a risk to the City. Ryan Fahey, Senior Project Manager of Renewables, explained that the agreement is set up with a fixed discounted rate for the City which is essentially risk protection from being required to pay more if rates increase. Director Smith explained that the real risk to the City is the market risk. He stated that Ameresco is proposing a 90% metering credit.

City Manager Belmore stated that in the past the City planned to complete a risk assessment moving constructing an array on the Landfill and in this instance Ameresco has agreed to assist the City with it. Belmore stated that once a full contract is negotiated it would then come before full Council for a vote.

Councilor Witham stated that the landfill's treatment system is working well. What worries him is the risk that comes from needing to maintain this system. He added that if the City sees positive results, he is also excited for the potential to expand the array.

Councilor Vincent asked if this array is considered large or small. Mr. Taliadouros stated Ameresco has arrays from 1 megawatt up to 15/20 megawatts and beyond, so this could be considered a small solar array.

Manager Belmore explained that some areas of concern to the City are the maintenance needed, how often it is required, and potential sun glare to abutting properties or vehicles traveling along the adjacent road. Mr. Taliadouros explained that Ameresco has in-house teams dedicated to operation and maintenance and if work is required, they send someone out and fix the issue at no cost to the City. He also stated that he has not encountered any issues of sun glare. The grass on the property would be cut some 2 or 3 times during the growing season and Ameresco has the ability to monitor the functionality of the array remotely.

Councilor Witham asked about site security. Mr. Taliadouros stated the array will be fenced in which would be included in any agreement. Councilor Austin asked what happens if after the 25-year term another agreement cannot be negotiated. Mr. Taliadouros explained that Ameresco will decommission the array and leave the site in the condition it was found. Councilor Vincent asked if there was a building necessary to convert the power to the grid. Luis Alegria, Director of Engineering, stated that it is typically a few poles, but Ameresco will know more once they submit their plan to the Eversource who tells them how to proceed.

Acting Mayor Witham thanked Ameresco folks for their presentation.

**The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,

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Jonathan Slaven, City Clerk