

## **Climate Smart Task Force Meeting Minutes 08/03/20**

Community Choice Aggregation Presentation - by Jeff Domanski, Environmental Scientist & Sustainability Professional, who is also Hudson Valley born & raised and works with Hudson Valley Energy Jeffrey Domanski - [CCA@HudsonValleyEnergy.org](mailto:CCA@HudsonValleyEnergy.org)

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### **● Community Choice Aggregation (CCA)**

*CCA is a policy enabling municipalities to source energy (could be electricity and/or gas, but electricity is prevalent) on behalf of its residents, businesses, and other organizations while keeping their same utility provider.*

- It is based on the opportunity created by NYS “deregulation” of energy markets in the late 90s, that broke up the monopoly of the energy market. This is what allows all utility customers to choose their energy supply. If you don’t make the decision, the utility company makes it for you.
  
  - CCA saves costs and supports renewable energy as a public benefit because it is the municipality, not the individual, entering into the contract. In a community with CCA, the supplier that is selected by the partnership (the municipality and the company they choose), not the utility company.
  
  - Benefits: cost-savings, 100% renewable energy, and consumer protection.
- Community outreach and education associated with energy marketplace

### **● Joule CCA Program**

- Joule is one of the approved orgs that can administer CCA programs
- Joule's focus: Municipality enabled 100% renewable electricity supply, including local clean energy, with cost savings for residents and businesses.
- Hudson Valley Energy, Jeff's Company, is a "Local Program Manager" that Joule works with in the Hudson Valley.
- Joule focuses on bringing the power generation as close to home as possible

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### ● Steps for "new" communities

- Most steps are "no commitment" steps (1-7 on the chart). These steps give you the right to proceed in the exploration of implementing a CCA, but don't require administration of the program.
  - State order requires that the administration of the program needs an approved plan to be its administrator. The administrator can be the municipality itself, a formed organization, or an approved administrator.
- Currently 4 approved administrators exist: Westchester Power (1st CCA in NY, only operates in Westchester), one group upstate in Binghamton and Albany. The 2 others are Good Energy, and Joule Community Power.

- Electricity Supply Choice With CCA
- Individuals always need to choose 1: NYSEG, Third Party Supplier, or the

CCA. (at any point in a CCA program, an individual can opt-out of the CCA default)

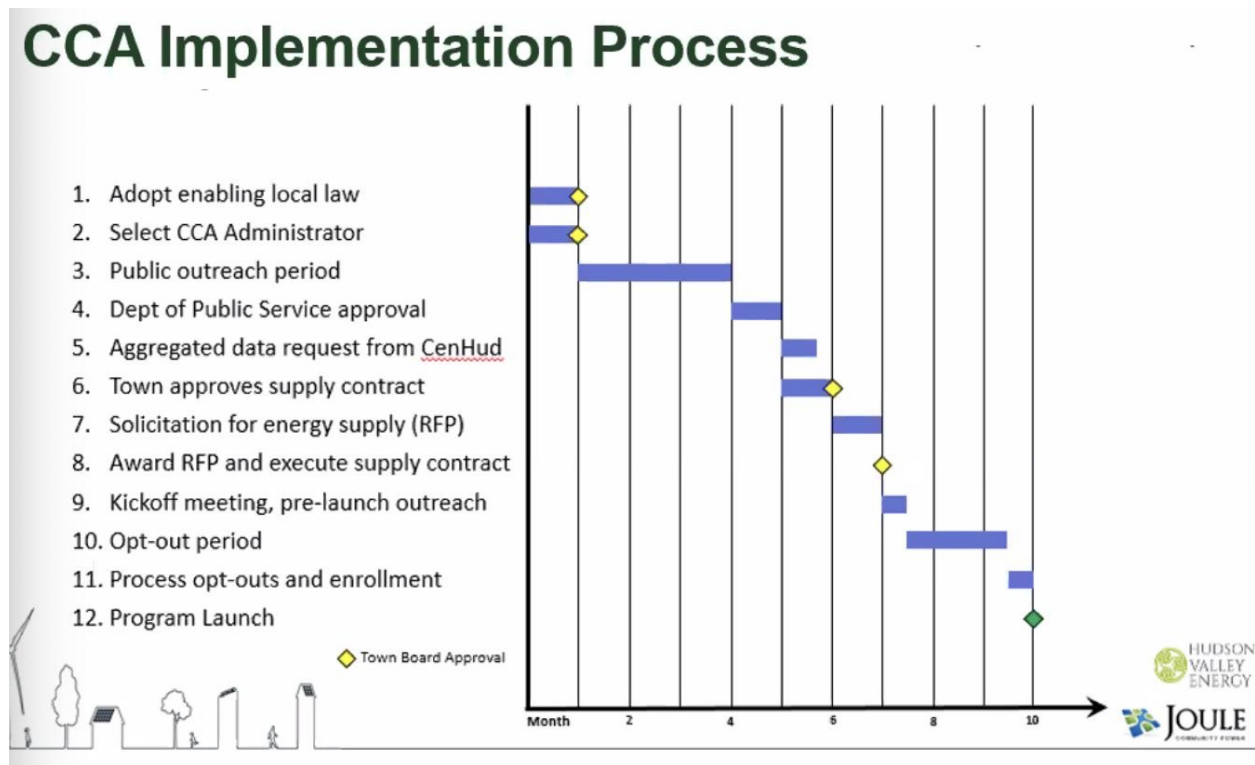
- Hudson Valley Community Power = a partnership that currently includes 10

cities/towns/villages.

- Go to <https://www.hudsonvalleycommunitypower.com/> to learn more about their partnership

### ● CCA + Community Solar

- How community solar works: You subscribe to a share of a solar farm. The solar farm feeds clean power into the grid while earning you energy credits. You purchase these energy credits at a discount, reducing your electricity costs by ~10%.



- Brings advantage of community solar to people who otherwise don't have the benefit of solar energy on their homes.

- CCA is a *parallel* decision to community solar.

- Below is Jeff's slide showing how electricity supply works w/ community solar: (in Putnam Valley, NYSEG is in Central Hudson's place)

### **Questions/Concerns/Miscellaneous Notes**

- Suppliers bidding on this have to negotiate a rate that is lower than the current 12 month average benchmark with non-renewable utilities.

- What are the oppositions to this? A major one is that many people oppose it because it's an opt-out program. They have their own 3rd party providers or are already defaulted to the utility company making their decision for them.

- There is sufficient supply around us to generate renewable energy so there is no requirement to construct local renewable energy generation, but it does make it an even more desirable option.

- What would be the community benefit directly for constructing power generation in a town? Cost benefits, health benefits (air and water quality), economic benefits (creates jobs). There are a few models out there - most communities use community solar. Red Hook is an example of this. They built a solar field on the community solar model wherein they offered subscription rights to the solar field to Red Hook residents first. Cost benefits to doing this.

- Indian Point Workforce - can they be redirected and taught to work in renewable energy models if constructed locally? Yes, but there is not a direct program for this right now.
- Putnam Valley Specific - NYSEG is our utility company. If someone already has opted to use a third party that isn't NYSEG, they are automatically opted-out, but they can opt-in to the CCA in their community if they want to.

## Electricity Supply and Solar: Your "Menu" Choices

### INSTRUCTIONS:

Choose only one option from each column:

Electricity Supply	Solar
1. Central Hudson	A. No Solar
2. Third Party Supplier (ESCO)	B. Solar at your home/business
3. CCA*	C. Community Solar

- How long are contracts for? Jeff says they usually are 2-year contracts based on comfort level of suppliers, and the fact that they're new. He says they will likely become longer contracts in years to come as municipalities and suppliers find the benefits of the agreement and feel more comfortable long term.

- If you have solar panels on your house, would you benefit from CCA + community solar? Not from your solar panels themselves, but if you aren't zeroing out your energy costs with your solar panels, the rate you pay the utility for electricity is lower because of the CCA.

- In communities where Jeff has worked on a CCA, how much might a person save on their electric bill? On average, they anticipate 5-10% better supply rates than the benchmark. This is what they've seen in the Hudson Valley Community Power partnership so far. 7% benefit to the average household, which comes out to about 40-50 dollars a year. This is for their 100% renewable sources now, vs. their 20% renewable before the CCA. It's not unheard of for municipalities to enter into renewable source contracts at 2x the cost of their non-renewable utilities, so having the CCA really benefits the homeowner in choosing renewable resources.

**Next steps for us to start exploring:**

- NYSERTA has the local law templates on their site, as well as two cases of how a town and a village applied the local law and selected their CCA administrator. Jeff has also forwarded these to Ralph who can pass them along to the rest of us.

- Looking for stats on pros and cons of different renewable sources

- Let's think about how this will hit people in Putnam Valley specifically. What sort of things will people worry about? This way, we can prepare to answer questions.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sara Zadrina