

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JUNE 15, 2021**

**DOCUMENTS RECEIVED
AFTER PUBLISHED AGENDA**

AGENDA QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Item 5

AGENDA QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

MEETING DATE: June 15, 2021

Item #5 [CONS 21-303](#): Adopt a Resolution Approving Waste Management of Alameda County's Plan to Adjust Recycling Rates for Multi-Family Customers and Issue Refunds for Overcharges

Regarding the WM reimbursement, is the over payment due to the 20% contractual agreement not being applied, and if so what was the time frame that these multifamily accounts were over charged?

Also, what safeguards are in place to prevent this from happening again?

The overpayment was due to the 20% not having been kept constant at that level. The overcharge started in 2017 when all commercial/MFD recycling rates for the city started being gradually increased annually. The gradual increase was chosen in order to reduce the overall impact of the cost of recycling over the course of the contract. The recycling rates for MFD bin customers were not supposed to increase beyond the 20% because they already pay a separate per unit fee.

The gradual increases for the recycling rates have ceased, so there is no opportunity for the mistake to happen again. All rates (garbage, recycling & organics) will be adjusted by the same amount for each year remaining in the contract.

An additional question, are garbage and recycling rates usual built into the rent, ie: not a separate cost to the tenant?

Yes, garbage and recycling rates are usually included in rent. However, some property managers will itemize per-dwelling-unit costs for garbage, water, etc.

Regarding the WMA overcharge of recycling rates, will WMA be paying interest to affected property owners?

No interest included; staff will raise the question with WMAC.

ITEM #10 LB 21-023

**East Bay Community Energy Default Product:
Adopt a Resolution Selecting a Default Electricity
Product from East Bay Community Energy
(Report from Public Works Director Ameri)**

PUBLIC COMMENTS

From: Arti Garg
Sent: Tuesday, June 15, 2021 11:38 AM
To: List-Mayor-Council
Cc: Erik Pearson
Subject: EBCE default rate decision - Please support Bright Choice

CAUTION:This is an external email. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you know the content is safe.

Dear Council Members and Mayor Halliday,

I'm writing to share my thoughts regarding the upcoming EBCE rate decision, and to urge you to choose the lower cost Bright Choice option as Hayward's default rate.

As a member of the Community Services Commission, I have heard from numerous services agencies in Hayward about the extent to which our residents struggle financially to afford the expense of living in the Bay Area...and this was prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. I don't think I need to itemize the devastation this past year has wrought, and from which we will not immediately recover. It's not in the interest of our Hayward community to ask residents to pay more for electricity, especially because (as I will describe below) the Renewable 100 plan will not materially impact climate risk in our region or reduce GHG emissions in PG&E territory at all. In effect, choosing a more expensive EBCE electricity plan is deciding to ask Hayward residents to subsidize an accounting trick that will make us appear greener than our neighbors.

First, to address the cost issue, I understand that residents who already receive subsidies will be defaulted to the Bright Choice plan and that effort will be made to sign more people who qualify up. But we already know that many people are hesitant to sign up for programs, either because of pride or because of concerns about sharing information about themselves with the government. Also, the Bay Area's cost of living is so high, many more people struggle than qualify for subsidies. We need to do what we can to make their lives easier, not harder.

Second, as someone who works on and has advocated for increased renewables, it is very important to me that we implement sustainable policies. Hayward faces risks both from increased fire danger and from flooding on our shoreline, so this is an existential issue for us. Nonetheless, paying more for EBCE electricity is not the answer. I have spoken to numerous industry experts, including staff at other Bay Area CCAs about this. The Renewable 100 plan will not increase the supply of renewable energy available in PG&E territory...it will just drive up the costs of renewables and lower the cost of the carbon-intensive generation purchased by PG&E. This is because our regional CCAs have already entered into contracts to procure energy from new renewable projects, they simply aren't operational yet. It would be more effective to use our seat at the EBCE board to advocate for more aggressive renewable procurement contracts than to have Hayward residents subsidize cheaper natural gas for other PG&E customers.

I understand that Hayward has articulated GHG targets, and defaulting to Bright Choice (and assuming most people will keep their default plan) will impact our ability to meet them. But, for now, this is simply an accounting and optics problem, not one of actually achieving a reduction in atmospheric carbon. The City should focus on things that would actually reduce overall carbon emissions, such as a program encouraging energy efficiency, especially during the late afternoon. At this time even on the Renewable 100 plan we will be using power generated by natural gas plants, since they are the primary source of production at that time. Perhaps the City could subsidize smart power strips to reduce electricity use and host outdoor events to encourage people to leave their private, climate-controlled environments. All of these things would help our residents while also meaningfully reducing GHG emissions.

I apologize that this note is long and coming very close to the vote. I wanted to be sure I had complete information before reaching out to Council. I urge you to make the choice that is best for our residents, which I firmly believe is Bright Choice. If you'd like to discuss these thoughts, please feel free to reach out as I have some availability today.

Thank you for your consideration,
Arti Garg
Resident and CSC Member

CC: Erik Pearson