

California High-Cost Fund-A Administrative Committee
Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, December 8, 2021, at 10:00 am

Venues:

Important Notice to the Public Regarding COVID-19:

Based on guidance from the California Department of Public Health and the California Governor's Office, to minimize the spread of the COVID-19 virus, please note the following:

- There is no physical location of the meeting open to the public.
- The public is invited to call in and provide public comments during the meeting.

Telephone Conference Phone Bridge:

Access: 415-655-0002

Participant/Access Code: 2482 242 0128

Attendees:

Present – Committee Members

- Patrick Hoglund (CPUC, Public Advocates Office)
- David Clark (Sebastian and LEC representative)
- Stephen Kalish, Alternate Committee Member (Community Based Organization)

Present – Others

- Felix Robles (CPUC, Communications Division)
- Nancy Lee (CPUC, Communications Division)
- Hannah Steiner (CPUC, Communications Division)
- Lucia Magaña (CPUC, Communications Division)
- Sindy Yun (CPUC, Legal)
- Bixia Ye (CPUC, Public Advocates Office)
- Ashnita Lal (CPUC, Fiscal)
- Patrick Rosvall (BRB Law)

Agenda:

1. Introductions – Patrick Hoglund, Chairperson

Attendees introduced themselves. Patrick Hoglund observed that a quorum was present, meeting commenced at 10:00 am

2. Announcements – none

3. Public Comments - none

4. Review and Approval of the August 25, 2021, Meeting Minutes

The committee requested three corrections: one on item #5a and two on item #5c –

- *Item #5a: Last sentence, second bullet point – change “mean” to “means.”*
- *Item #5c-1: Second page, middle of paragraph that starts with “Felix mentioned...35.6 billion,” change the **b** to an **m**.*
- *Item #5c-2: Second page, second sentence on 5th paragraph – change **statue** to **statute**.*

David Clark made a motion to approve and adopt the minutes as amended above. Patrick Hoglund seconded the motion. The committee voted unanimously to approve the August 25, 2021; minutes as amended. The adopted minutes will be posted on the CHCF-A AC webpage as amended.

5. Liaison Staff Reports:

a. Fiscal Report –

Ashnita Lal presented the fiscal report as of September 30, 2021, for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 and Fiscal Year 2021-2022. She also included information about the current cash balance (as of December 8th, 2021).

Additionally, Lal clarified the acronym “ENY” on the report stands for Enactment Year which indicates the year the first budget came out for the Fiscal Year. As an example, she noted the ENY 17 referring to the budget that came out in 2017; however, since the reverting date is later, the balances are still being carried forward.

It was, also, noted that the total dollar value listed in the budget line appropriation line is a cumulative total of unspent money from prior years.

b. Legal Report –

Sindy Yun stated there was nothing to report; no activity in the CHCF-A Fund rulemaking proceeding, no new legislation.

Yun confirmed the ALJ issued a decision extending the statutory deadline for this proceeding and in response to an inquiry, stated that such extensions are standard procedure when there are issues still pending.

Patrick Rosvall requested clarity on a couple of sentences included on the decision extending the deadline that stated the proceeding is being continued due to pending legislation.

Yun stated that the decision was referencing a bill that would require the commission to direct parties to use the ADR process¹, which became a two-year bill and thus is not dead yet.

Rosvall expressed the desire for the proceeding to close soon and inquired what it would take for such to occur. Rosvall stated the bill was defeated in committee last year and is unlikely to come back.

Yun asked Hannah Steiner whether there were any additional issues in the CHCF-A Fund rulemaking proceeding. Steiner said that the issues regarding Tribal areas and informal rate cases have not yet been resolved.

c. Communications Division – Felix Robles

Felix Robles reported the three General Rate Case (GRCs) applications were submitted by Sierra, Siskiyou, and Volcano. Those GRCs have been assigned to ALJ Miles and the assigned Commissioner is Guzman Aceves. Robles mentioned the prehearing conferences are scheduled for January 18th, 19th, and 20th, respectively.

Additionally, Robles reported that the annual support resolution for 2022 is being prepared for service for a vote at the Jan. 13th Commission meeting.

6. CHCF-A (R.11-11-007) Rulemaking Issues – Questions, Comments

¹ AB 1257 would require the Commission to allow GRCs to be filed via Advice Letter and directs the Commission to require parties in GRC cases submitted by Application to participate in mediation.

Stephen Kalish inquired about the filings related to R.11-11-007 in the court of appeals. His understanding was that there were documents rejected by the court and he asked for an update on the acceptance of the filings.

Patrick Rosvall addressed the inquiry by stating that the Small LECs filed an appeal of the broadband imputation issue. The Commission and TURN have submitted documents. The filings were accepted after a back-and-forth with clerks and Rosvall is not certain whether notices are sent when filings are accepted. Rosvall also mentioned that Small LECs have until January 5th to file a response.

7. Annual Advice Letters and CHCF-A Support Resolution

Hannah Steiner reported that the Small LECs requested just over \$35 million in CHCF-A support for 2022 in their annual Advice Letters. She stated that \$35 million is slightly lower than the approved CHCF-A support for 2021 and that the draft 2022 resolution should be served very soon.

Steiner clarified that broadband imputation starts taking effect for each company during their GRC; and therefore, none of the companies are affected by broadband imputation in calendar year 2022.

8. Update from Small LECS on impact of wildfires

9. Patrick Rosvall reported that the Small LECs were fortunate this year. The only fire that really affected Small LEC territory was the Caldor fire in Tahoe, which ultimately went through Kirkwood in Volcano territory. Volcano made significant efforts to help Cal Fire combat the fire. The area is a very mountainous environment where they have significant plant facilities, but the Caldor fire mostly went past, but did not affect Volcano facilities. Rosvall mentioned the company sprayed fire retardant on the facilities in an effort to keep them protected as fire was going through. There were no customer impacts and Volcano did not have to submit outage reports.

10. New agenda items for next meeting

- a) Ongoing impacts from the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program (EBB) and the new Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). Also, new developments related to the last mile grants from the state, any of the broadband programs from federal Build Back Better.

11. Date and time for next meeting

The next meeting will be Wednesday March 9, 2022, at 10:00 AM.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:42 am.