



Agenda Date: 6/8/22  
Agenda Item: 8C

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**Board of Public Utilities**  
44 South Clinton Avenue, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Post Office Box 350  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0350  
[www.nj.gov/bpu/](http://www.nj.gov/bpu/)

CLEAN ENERGY

IN THE MATTER OF NEW JERSEY CLEAN ENERGY ) ORDER  
PROGRAM FISCAL YEAR 2022 COMMUNITY ENERGY )  
PLANNING ) DOCKET NO. QO21091113

**Party of Record:**

**Brian O. Lipman, Esq., Director**, New Jersey Division of Rate Counsel

BY THE BOARD:

In this Order, the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (“Board” or “BPU”) considers applications received for participation in the Community Energy Plan Grant Program (“Program”).

**BACKGROUND**

The Board approved the Program on March 29, 2019 in Docket Number QO18040393.<sup>1</sup> The Program was designed to provide local governments with the opportunity to localize the 2019 New Jersey Energy Master Plan’s (“EMP”) energy efficiency (“EE”) and clean energy goals within their communities.<sup>2</sup>

In 2021, the Board requested that the Division of Clean Energy, through the Office of Clean Energy Equity (“OCEE”), perform an evaluation of the Program to develop recommendations that prioritize supporting low- and moderate-income (“LMI”) and environmental justice communities, the communities which may benefit the most from the Program. The objective of the evaluation was to identify and remove barriers to Program participation by this demographic, as well as to provide additional financial and technical support to those communities. Accordingly, the Board issued an order on June 24, 2021<sup>3</sup> pausing the Program pending the results of the evaluation

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<sup>1</sup> In re the Clean Energy Programs and Budget for Fiscal Year 2019 Trued Up and Revised Budget, BPU Docket No. QO18040393, Order dated March 29, 2019..

<sup>2</sup> See 2019 New Jersey Energy Master Plan: Pathway to 2050, [https://nj.gov/bpu/pdf/publicnotice/NJBPU\\_EMP.pdf](https://nj.gov/bpu/pdf/publicnotice/NJBPU_EMP.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> In re the Clean Energy Program Budget for Fiscal Year 2022, BPU Docket No. QO21040720, Order dated June 24, 2021 (“June 2021 Order”).

with a goal of relaunching the Program as part of the Fiscal Year 2022 (“FY22”) budget docket.<sup>4</sup>

As a result, in accordance with a Board Order dated October 6, 2021, the OCEE redesigned the Program to better prioritize LMI and overburdened communities.<sup>5</sup> The redesigned Program, which relaunched on November 16, 2021, simplified the application process for all municipalities in order to remove barriers to communities that generally have access to limited resources and to enhance communities’ ability to participate in the Program. Through the Program reevaluation, the OCEE considered the Department of Environmental Protection “Overburdened Community” census tracts data and the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (“DCA”) Municipal Revitalization Index (“MRI”), collectively, and identified 48 “overburdened municipalities” statewide.<sup>6</sup> As part of the redesigned Program, these 48 municipalities were eligible for both a larger grant amount and additional aid in the form of technical assistance. This technical assistance included providing guidance to these municipalities regarding how to reach particular milestones and complete certain prerequisites so that they were well-positioned to apply for the grant. The technical assistance also included providing guidance to these municipalities with respect to completing and submitting the grant application itself.

Program grants are made to municipalities based on the completeness of the municipality’s application, the municipality’s demonstrated focus on planning initiatives, and whether the municipality has been identified as one of the 48 overburdened municipalities. All New Jersey municipalities are eligible for grants under the Program. Per the October 2021 Order, each municipality identified as an “overburdened municipality” is eligible for a \$25,000 grant, as well as additional aid in the form of technical assistance to help that municipality complete the grant application and technical support to develop the community energy plan (“Plan”). Each Plan is a municipality-specific, written strategy and guidance document that, through the establishment of certain priority sustainability initiatives (based on demonstrated effectiveness, unique local factors, and co-benefits, such as improved local air quality, energy savings for residents, and workforce development), helps communities effectively organize and undertake measures to lower greenhouse gas emissions rapidly by reducing energy use and expanding sustainable energy production. All other municipalities are eligible for \$10,000 grants. Municipalities previously awarded a Community Energy Plan Grant during the immediate prior grant cycle under the Program were not eligible to apply for the FY22 round of Program grants.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

The evaluation committee, consisting of Board Staff (“Staff”), reviewed all Program applications and found 46 FY22 applications to be complete and eligible for Community Energy Plan Grants. All municipal applicants, who will become grantees under the Program, met the requirements of submitting a complete application and detailing how grant funds would be used to develop a thorough Plan to guide their municipality in reducing energy use and supporting the clean energy

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<sup>4</sup> The Program also includes a set aside portion of the budget for non-overburdened municipalities that could be eligible for smaller grants and a lower level of technical assistance. June 2021 Order at 181.

<sup>5</sup> In re the New Jersey Clean Energy Program Fiscal Year 2022 Community Energy Planning, BPU Docket No. QO21091113, Order dated October 6, 2021 (“October 2021 Order”).

<sup>6</sup> See “What are Overburdened Communities?”, <https://nj.gov/dep/ej/communities.html>; Municipal Revitalization Index, <https://nj.gov/dca/home/MuniRevitIndex.html>.

transition.<sup>7</sup> Staff recommends that the Board approve all 46 applications, as identified in attached Appendix 1. Staff notes that 24 of the recommended grantees are identified as overburdened municipalities. Staff further requests Board authorization for Staff to disburse the grants associated with these applications in accordance with BPU procedures.

### **DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS**

Through the Community Energy Plan Grant Program, local governments identify which strategies of the EMP are most applicable in their communities, what obstacles may exist, what opportunities there may be, and which BPU incentive programs or other programs may assist them in meeting the goals of the EMP. The Board **FINDS** that the municipal applicants included in Appendix 1 submitted complete Program applications that were reviewed and that qualify for grants through the Program. The Plans that municipal grantees create will help them to localize the EMP's EE and clean energy goals within their communities.

The Board further **FINDS** that more than half of the FY22 Program grantees are overburdened municipalities. The Board **HEREBY APPROVES** the Program applications identified in Appendix 1 and **HEREBY DIRECTS** Staff to disburse the appropriate grant amounts from the Program budget in accordance with BPU procedures.

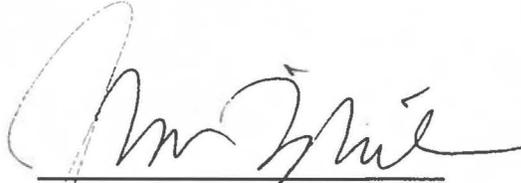
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<sup>7</sup> See EMP at Goal 6.1.1.

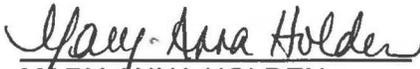
This Order shall be effective on June 15, 2022.

DATED: June 8, 2022

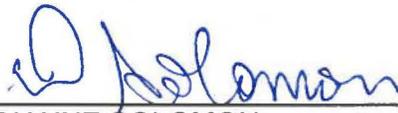
BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES  
BY:



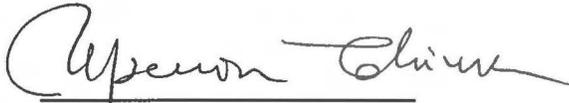
JOSEPH L. FIORDALISO  
PRESIDENT



MARY-ANNA HOLDEN  
COMMISSIONER



DIANNE SOLOMON  
COMMISSIONER

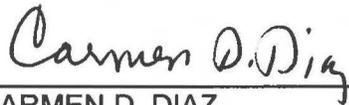


UPENDRA J. CHIVUKULA  
COMMISSIONER



ROBERT M. GORDON  
COMMISSIONER

ATTEST:



CARMEN D. DIAZ  
ACTING SECRETARY

IN THE MATTER OF NEW JERSEY CLEAN ENERGY PROGRAM FISCAL YEAR 2022 COMMUNITY  
 ENERGY PLANNING

DOCKET NO. QO21091113

SERVICE LIST

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**Appendix 1: Approved Recipients of Community Energy Plan Grants**

	<b>Municipality</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Docket Number</b>	<b>Overburdened Municipality</b>	<b>Amount</b>
1	Asbury Park	Monmouth	QO22030202	Yes	\$25,000.00
2	Atlantic City	Atlantic	QO22040271	Yes	\$25,000.00
3	Audubon	Camden	QO22030203	No	\$10,000.00
4	Bradley Beach	Monmouth	QO22030204	No	\$10,000.00
5	Brick	Ocean	QO22040272	No	\$10,000.00
6	Cape May Point	Cape May	QO22040273	Yes	\$25,000.00
7	Cherry Hill	Camden	QO22030205	No	\$10,000.00
8	Delran Township	Burlington	QO22030206	No	\$10,000.00
9	East Newark	Hudson	QO22030207	Yes	\$25,000.00
10	East Windsor	Mercer	QO22040274	No	\$10,000.00
11	Egg Harbor	Atlantic	QO22030208	Yes	\$25,000.00
12	Evesham	Burlington	QO22040275	No	\$10,000.00
13	Fairfield	Cumberland	QO22030209	Yes	\$25,000.00
14	Flemington	Hunterdon	QO22040276	Yes	\$25,000.00
15	Franklin	Somerset	QO22030210	No	\$10,000.00
16	Garfield	Bergen	QO22040277	No	\$10,000.00
17	Gloucester City	Camden	QO22030211	No	\$10,000.00
18	Haddonfield	Camden	QO22030212	No	\$10,000.00
19	Highland Park	Middlesex	QO22040278	No	\$10,000.00
20	Highlands	Monmouth	QO22030213	No	\$10,000.00
21	Hoboken	Hudson	QO22040279	No	\$10,000.00
22	Irvington	Essex	QO22040280	Yes	\$25,000.00
23	Lindenwold	Camden	QO22040281	Yes	\$25,000.00
24	Madison	Morris	QO22030214	No	\$10,000.00
25	Maplewood	Essex	QO22030215	No	\$10,000.00
26	Morris Plains	Morris	QO22030216	No	\$10,000.00
27	New Brunswick	Middlesex	QO22040282	Yes	\$25,000.00
28	Newark	Essex	QO22040283	Yes	\$25,000.00
29	North Wildwood	Cape May	QO22030217	Yes	\$25,000.00
30	Ocean City	Cape May	QO22030218	No	\$10,000.00
31	Orange Township	Essex	QO22030219	Yes	\$25,000.00
32	Park Ridge	Bergen	QO22030220	No	\$10,000.00
33	Paterson	Passaic	QO22030221	Yes	\$25,000.00
34	Paulsboro	Gloucester	QO22030222	Yes	\$25,000.00
35	Penns Grove	Salem	QO22030223	Yes	\$25,000.00
36	Perth Amboy	Middlesex	QO22040284	Yes	\$25,000.00
37	Phillipsburg	Warren	QO22040285	Yes	\$25,000.00

38	Plainfield	Union	QO22040286	Yes	\$25,000.00
39	Pleasantville	Atlantic	QO22040287	Yes	\$25,000.00
40	Prospect Park	Passaic	QO22030224	Yes	\$25,000.00
41	Secaucus	Hudson	QO22030225	No	\$10,000.00
42	Summit	Union	QO22030226	No	\$10,000.00
43	Union City	Hudson	QO22040288	Yes	\$25,000.00
44	Westfield	Union	QO22030227	No	\$10,000.00
45	Wildwood	Cape May	QO22040289	Yes	\$25,000.00
46	Woodbine	Cape May	QO22040290	Yes	\$25,000.00