

# **City of Naperville**

*400 S. Eagle Street  
Naperville, IL 60540  
<http://www.naperville.il.us/>*



## **Naperville**

### **Meeting Minutes - Final**

**Thursday, March 6, 2025**

**5:00 PM**

**Special Meeting**

**Council Chambers**

**Public Utilities Advisory Board**

**A. CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Louis Halkias called the March 6, 2025 PUAB meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

**B. ROLL CALL:**

Chairman Louis Halkias, Abbas Bhikapurawala, James Fillar, Brandon Hoeft, Philip Schrieber, Councilman Nathan Wilson and Bhavni Yalavarthy

PHONE: Russell Paluch

ABSENT: Michelle Ackmann and Hans Roeder

**C. PUBLIC FORUM:**

**FERNANDO ARRIOLA**

My name is Fernando Arriola, I am the Community Relations Chair for Nest. I have two messages today. One message is from NEST, and one is from me. So, I am putting on the NEST hat to kick this baby off. You will be hearing from a variety of members of the Naperville Environment and Sustainability Task Force/NEST and Say No to Coal Consortium tonight from the public comment period.

Our goal tonight is to respond to the CES report and last week's IMEA presentation addressing areas that require further investigation and questions that require answers. Like PUAB, NEST are advisors to the City of Naperville. We have been a trusted partner with the city and our advice to slow down and not sign the proposed IMEA contract has been embraced by our elected officials.

We have built this trust, because we bring expertise, we do extensive research, and we back our advice with evidence, and we have the best interest of the community at heart. Together NEST, PUAB, community members, city staff and city council can chart a path forward that is both physically and environmentally responsible.

As the speakers address you this evening, our leadership team is happy to answer any questions. If we do not have an immediate response, we will get back to you.

Now I am putting on my Fernando's hat, which is Bears. So, I just want to say, it looks like the scope of the CES didn't really dive into the weeds of the energy industry, how dynamic it is, how the demands changing, how supply is changing, how the regulatory environment is uncertain, all those things.

It also didn't get into, when you are picking partners and you obviously, what are our partners objectives? What are their priorities? What is their culture? Does it fit with us? As I have been involved with NEST, a little bit over a year, one of the things we've noticed is that the IMEA's priorities are not always consistent with Naperville's priorities. And so, as we look at this, what is the right partner and how is that going to work?

I think about things like demand response, I think I heard that in someone's bio, dynamic pricing, peak shaving, the notion of having utility scaled battery packs, virtual power plants made up of diversified of energy resources, all of those

things.

I was in a ComEd meeting last week, and ComEd was putting down major chips in these areas, especially the virtual power plants, that was big. I also look at like this legislation that was in the Tribune a few days ago that is going through legislation in Illinois right now, also similar thing. Lot of like modern energy techniques to manage resiliency and lower prices.

When you look at the owners of Prairie State and Trimble County, these guys have different objectives. Their objective is to keep coal plants running full speed as much as possible. The reason they want to do this is because they want to keep their financial situation in the right place. If they don't keep those coal plants running their financial model starts to break.

**THERESA HUS**

Good evening, I am Theresa Hus, a long-time resident of Naperville and a member of Say No to Coal consortium. I am here to respond to IMEA's presentation last week. We agree with the chairman, that the facts matter, but IMEA's presentation didn't tell the full story. On costs, IMEA omitted ongoing maintenance and replacement costs for aging coal plants. They mention rising transmissions costs as if they were inevitable. But their contract restricts local generation and storage which could lower those costs. The thirty-year contract they have to source power from Kentucky means the costs of putting power onto our grid is likely to keep climbing. And their Trimble County ownership contract requires purchasing electricity regardless of costs creating risks and uncertainty.

Now IMEA's wholesale rates have been higher than ComEd's for years which they do not mention. Their competitive residential rates are simply offset by higher commercial and industrial rates. Naperville negatively affecting costs to our businesses and our schools the latter which of course are paid by residents through our property taxes. But the bottom line is, any claim that IMEA makes about costs from the year 2035 to 2055 is pure speculation, because the contract is silent on costs, making apples to apples comparisons impossible.

IMEA also uses some misleading data, they inflated their renewable energy claims by using name plate capacity instead of capacity factor which would be more accurate than wind and solar. They talked a lot about renewable's but didn't mention that eighty percent of our energy comes from coal still. They claimed they have more renewable's in Illinois, but Federal data shows it's just not true. Illinois is fourteen point seven-five percent IMEA has twelve percent. But most critically, eighty-four percent of IMEA's electricity comes from CO2 admitting sources like coal and natural gas. In Illinois, that's thirty-one percent, that's an incredibly stark difference. So going with IMEA means that we will fail to meet our sustainability goals. They claim to be transitioning to renewable's, but the fact is today eighty percent of their portfolio is coal and by their own data in ten years, eighty percent of their portfolio is going to be coal.

The climate goals laid out by the City of Naperville by the city council will not be met with IMEA, and we'll all pay the price environmentally and financially. But Naperville has a chance to make a forward-thinking decision, we don't have to be tied to a polluting energy source for another thirty years. Clean energy isn't just possible, we've seen it all over the country, all over the world. It is necessary. We urge the PUAB to join us and demand real answers. Support public forums so you know what the residents want and ensure Naperville is not

locked into an outdated contract that fails our businesses, our residents, our schools and our future generations. Thank you.

**TED BOURLARD**

Good evening, Mr. Chairman, PUAB members, Councilman Wilson, Ann and Madeline. I'm Ted Bourlard, the NEST co-chair. I live in Naperville and am a rate payer. After reviewing the CES presentation, I was left with many questions. We look forward to CES addressing these questions after their presentation.

CES explains what bi-lateral PPA's are on slides nineteen through twenty-seven, but nowhere in this report is there any discussion of power contracts with major power providers such as Constellation Energy, Next Era and many others. So, why were power contracts from major power providers not discussed as an option. This is a major omission, power providers with whom NEST has spoken have said they would be eager to compete for our business. Naperville by itself is certainly large enough to have the same leverage to negotiate a good deal for Naperville. Power providers are able to provide the same services IMEA offers and more and could provide pricing and emissions data in form of quotations for several different types of energy portfolios.

Members of council have said publicly, we need to use normal procurement processes and obtain quotes by issuing an RFP. Surely this needs to be considered. And I have another question for CES. Why was peak shaving as a capacity mitigation strategy to reduce costs by lowering peak demands not discussed. CES made a point on slide 15 to discuss the cost of capacity prices due to an increasing load in PJM and discuss the impact to our bills. None of the capacity risks mitigation strategy suggests on slide seventeen include peak shaving which can be achieved through the use of batteries, distributed energy management systems, time of use pricing, energy efficiency programs and other technologies if possible.

CES describes an option to sell our utility to ComEd on slide six but did not cover this option in this report so, why not? Why was this option not covered? Well, the option should be considered to provide a more complete picture for decision makers. At a minimum, there is value in exploring the many programs ComEd offers to its customers to provide energy choice, reduce demand, increase energy efficiency, fund renewable energy credits and pursue electrification that Naperville Electric and IMEA together do not offer. If one is to compare the cost of NEU plus IMEA to ComEd plus a choice of power, one must also look at benefit streams in order for this comparison to be apples to apples. Thank you very much.

**JOE HUS**

Hi, I'm Joe Hus. I've been a resident for over 25 years. And there is only one thing I want to talk about today, and at the last meeting, we talked about the elephant in the room that we really didn't really dig into. So, we get our power from the dirtiest plant in the entire state of Illinois. The majority of our electricity comes from that plant. It's one of the seven dirtiest major plants in the country, and that's why a couple of hundred people were in this room, in January, all with signs saying, no to coal. They don't want their electricity to come from coal. They realize that global warming is a serious problem, and they want the city council to take action. And fortunately, we have the city council form on the environment, and every single one of the eight candidates came in and said they did not support moving forward with the IMEA proposal.

Our city councilors are listening to us, and we appreciate that they are taking input from the citizens. Basically, we need to hold public hearings. We need to find out what our residents want. Create a score card and then look at all of our options and score them against what the citizens of Naperville want and then select an option. The Chairman talked about being from Gary. I was also born and raised in the region. My grandfather worked in one of the coal powered steel plants, and he died of lung cancer.

The generation after him took action. They started the EPA. They passed laws for cleaner water. They passed laws for cleaner air. That generation took action. What we are saying is this generation needs to take action now on climate change. That's why all those citizens were in this room with signs saying we want action.

Global warming is clear. In 2023, it was the hottest year in history. That was broken last year in 2024, where it became the hottest year in history. 2035, it's on track to be the hottest year in human history again. The climate is getting warmer, there is no question about that. It used to be that we would talk about climate change is something that would happen in the future and people wouldn't have to worry about that. Some later generations would have to deal with that. That's not the case, we passed the one point five degree Celsius, that was in the Paris agreement. We are already hotter than today and that was sixteen years ago or 2016 when they set that goal, and that is affecting citizens today. In 2024, Illinois had more billion-dollar disasters weather events than they had in recorded history. Whether it is the wildfires in California or the hurricanes in Florida or the flooding in North Carolina, those disasters are happening all around the world and they are happening every single year.

The World Health Organization said that millions of people will die because of global warming and I ask this generation to take action on global warming. Thank you

**GREG HUBERT**

Good evening, PUAB, Councilman Wilson, and CES. Greg Huber, cleanenergy.org, citizen of Naperville, who has been sharing IMEA board meeting reports since 2018. I am here to ask a question of CES and to share our public perspective. CES, please, we ask for you to explain aggressive on page thirty-six where it says IMEA has aggressive renewable energy integration plans and coal retirements. Please explain how you see aggressive, along with your data, your benchmarks and your comparison, so we can understand. And this is our public, in public power perspective on IMEA plans.

1. We see very aggressive use of open meetings act exceptions, and the Prairie State confidential agreement, to limit transparency in key areas including IMEA's plans.
2. We see a resource portfolio that is now full, with the addition of that hundred and fifty-megawatts Bee Hollow solar project. Along with the IMEA forecast continuing flat or decreasing members energy sales. There is no apparent room for further renewable energy resources without an increase in demand or turning down the dial on that coal fire generation.
3. We see the force of Illinois law and not IMEA that will reduce Prairie State's

generation by 2038 and not 2035 which is what IMEA's charts have apparently illustrated.

4. We see an IMEA Vistra Coal Contract that ended in 2022. Earlier than planned because Vistra announced plans in 2020 to pivot to clean energy and early retire its own coal fleet in Ohio and Illinois.

Before this last item of my public comments, please I ask that you review this list and additional items I have given to you, our Electric Director and CES.

5. During the IMEA resource plans presentation at the October 24 IMEA board meeting, October 2024 IMEA board meeting. I heard the IMEA CEO say that the IMEA portfolio now allows the members and IMEA leadership to watch and wait, as technologies develop before choosing new resources. Please note that IMEA, unlike Naperville and many if not most Illinois units of local government, does not provide recordings to hear those words yourselves if you are not able to attend. We do not see aggressive, so please CES, help us to understand your perspective. Thank you very much.

**BRUCE JONES**

Hi, Bruce Jones, longtime Naperville resident. Naperville is a leading and prosperous city in the Midwest. But residents do not want electricity generated from coal. The sooner we remove it and use clean energy resources the better for everyone here and for everyone living in the area and around those coal plants.

Why didn't CES provide options to remove coal and fossil fuel based electricity? Over the last 20 years, coal-based electricity dropped from fifty-one to sixteen percent in the United States. While clean energy- based electricity increased from thirty-two to forty-one percent. Why didn't CES provide an option to release an RFP for competitive bidding? This was a major flaw. They focused in on JAA's, Joint Action Agencies.

My colleagues and I, NEST, have been talking with energy and service companies for the last several years and they are ready and waiting for Naperville to release an RFP. The North American Energy Markets Association or naema.com is the place where the most cities, utilities and government entities go to post their energy related RFPs to get the best service and energy pricing. We need a competitive bid.

Why didn't CES incorporate utilities scale battery energy storage systems. I look at the chart, there's the picture of what we want. Solar, wind and battery storage right there. The CES chart report implies massive overbuilding of solar and wind is needed to make them viable. You will see the lists of solar and wind as being really high to be necessary. Solar and wind energy systems should be combined with battery energy storage to provide back up, frequency regulation, peak shaving, cost savings and major benefits to what we want. Incorporating battery storage significantly increases the accredited capacity of solar and wind to help mitigate the variable output of these resources.

Of all the U.S. planned utility scaled electric generating capacity being added in 2025, this year, thirty-two and a half gigawatts are for solar, seven point seven gigawatts are for wind, and eighteen point two gigawatts are for battery storage. It's necessary, it's what we want. I have some other charts we can give to you

guys via email and soft copy if you want. Thanks.

**DEBBIE MADER**

Good evening. My name is Debbie Mader and I'm a resident of St. Charles and a member of the Tri-Cities Clean Energy. I'm here tonight, because St. Charles city council also has a decision to make on whether or not to sign the IMEA extension, and we are all watching what is happening here in Naperville very closely.

I was hoping the CES report would provide detailed information about the options available to our cities and a comparison for those options. I am specifically concerned about the risk. I was wondering why the CES report doesn't talk about the risk of signing a thirty-year contract with anybody. I am not an energy expert, but I have become a student.

Earlier this year we hosted an energy forum in St. Charles and we had three industry experts, each with different backgrounds and opinions. The forum was held to help educate our residents about the energy market and the factors to consider in our energy future. Each one of these experts spoke at how rapidly the energy market is changing. How quickly renewable's and batteries storage are improving and becoming less expensive than coal. They describe how the energy market is expediently evolving with more sustainable, renewable and affordable options. Why would we sign now with a supplier who clearly wants to continue providing us with a heavy mix of coal fired energy for as long as they are able. If we sign now, we may lock ourselves out of the newest technologies along with affordable energy and more sustainable solutions for our cities.

So that's all I have. Thank you for your time and attention and the hard work everyone is doing.

**TOM COLEMAN**

Hello, I am Tom Coleman, and I am co-chair of the Climate Reality Project in Chicago. We are a seven-hundred-member organization, and we are part of the national organization which is about fifty-thousand-member group. I lead our energy team. Successful organizations try to develop an unbiased specification for what they are trying to do. Whether it is a new contract, or an old contract. I think that is what the City of Naperville needs to do.

I am going to talk about two things I think that is important to be in this specification. First is energy cost, the goal should be to include life cycle energy costs versus current costs. The second thing would be to develop a view of energy costs in an unsubsidized version, okay using a levelized cost of energy. If we look at that, we see from Lazard that the cost of wind is about fifty dollars a megawatt hour, solar is about sixty-one, coal is about a hundred eighteen and nuclear is about one eighty-two.

Now Naperville shouldn't compare the cost of ComEd cities because they are about fifty-four percent nuclear, and nuclear is the most expensive form of energy. I suggest using unsubsidized costs because there is no guarantee with the current administration or future administration whether or not subsidies will be retained. Whether it be for renewable energy or fossil fuel energy and it turns out our fossil fuel energy is the most heavily subsidized form of energy much more than renewable energy.

The second part of this is the sustainability goals that we should really have. The U.S.A. is the number two annual emitter about with a total global admission of fifty-three gigatons. Now when we look at that the United States is the number one commutative of emitters of admissions in history at hundred thirty-one billion metric tons. These admissions, like CO<sub>2</sub>, last in the atmosphere for up to one thousand years, so you can imagine how that builds up in the atmosphere over time causing a problem for our future.

Therefore, Naperville's energy specification should have strong sustainability goals. We need these goals to survive political changes which always happen in Federal and State in cities. I think the NEST group in Naperville is an excellent group to help make decisions about sustainability and costs.

Finally, there is no guarantee that IMEA will continue to be more or less separate from what ComEd and Amron have to comply with as far as CEJA goals and so forth for admissions. So, therefore, even though it is today, I would not count on it going in the future. As far as the CES analysis, and the IMEA analysis that I've seen, there's real concerns that I don't have time to get into today, but all I can say is things like South Dakota, Iowa, Idaho and so many red states today have dominant forms of renewable energy in their portfolio, and blue states of course like Vermont is one hundred percent right now.

So, I think it would be helpful for PUAB, the City of Naperville, to consider these things. Thank you very much.

**CATHY CLARKIN**

I am Cathy Clarkin. I am one of the leaders of NEST. I am also a chemist, an environmentalist and a climate solutions professional. When my family moved here from Long Beach, California in two thousand and nine, we wanted to buy a house, rather than rent. We wanted a big yard so my son could play, and I could grow a big vegetable garden. My parents lived in Wheaton, so we targeted north Naperville. We thought it would be nice if we could be walking distance to the elementary school. We also had criteria with cost and size. We didn't look at every house in town or try to find the absolute cheapest house. We first determined what type of house met our needs, our values and our budget. This criteria helped us to choose a house in Hobson Village, walking distance to Prairie, and I grew my vegetable garden and had enough to share with the neighbors.

Similarly, when considering our future electricity utility supply, as a community, we need to consider our needs and our values. To access our options based on measurable metrics. Standard practice for procurement is to establish specifications and then seek bids to meet those needs. We are still at the defining stage of the process well before we can seek bids or make decisions. To establish specifications, we must first set goals for clean energy, for local control, for local job creation and economic development, decarbonization, the length of the contract, local generation and storage, energy efficiency and load shifting incentives, protecting low-income rate payers and costs.

Who sets these goals and how it is important? We should follow the best practices, look to benchmarked cities, aim to meet science based decarbonization goals and ensure public input.

The community has already spoken by showing up to council and PUAB



meetings, saying that the proposed IMEA contract is neither economically nor environmentally responsible. Engaged residents have also confirmed that they want Naperville to part of accelerating the clean energy transition because our values drive us to do our part to leave a livable planet for our kids and grandkids.

There are many pathways to keep our lights on in Naperville including policies and technologies not included in the CES report. To continue to attract families and businesses to Naperville, we should not follow the status quo because it is easy, but instead show the community that we will listen to their voices. Thank you.

**NANETTE WILD**

Hello, I'm not one of these speakers with so much information to share with you, but I do believe in science and the kind of things I see that say net zero isn't even enough. That we have to do more than that, and I was really appalled when I first found that Naperville's connection to this highly polluting coal plant. I think it's bad enough that we are stuck with them for the next ten years without extending that to thirty years. I have fourteen grandkids, and I would really like the world to be a better place for them to grow into. That's about all. Thank you.

**LARRY KOLACH**

My name is Larry Kolach. Not to be confused with turning coal to ash. I'm a resident of Naperville for thirty years and I worked at Nokia. One of the things I heard from Tom and Cathy was, what our environment is going to be like given the CES evaluation? What makes Naperville livable and attractive for businesses as well as residents like myself? One of the things I am concerned about is that maybe not well explored, is perhaps a multi-national company like mine, Nokia, that is responsible to report back to the EU standards which require ESG. They have to report, for example back social environment impacts of their businesses. When they decide, as our plant decided to move their people Naperville to Austin, Texas or Fort Worth area. I am wondering why they would do that is potentially, is one of the questions they have to answer is where is my power source coming from. I see in the CES report that Airacod, that supplies much of Texas and that surrounding area is perhaps the lowest cost and contains a large amount of renewable energy. That is the only point I would like to bring up today. Thank you.

## **D. OLD BUSINESS:**

**CHAIRMAN LOUIS HALKIAS**

Thank you. That is it with the public forum. I appreciate your participation, we all do, which is very good. Normally in our regular meetings, we have old business. This meeting is for the presentation of Customized Energy Solutions, so we will pass that old business section. Prior to that presentation, I would like to make a comment to everyone here in this room. As part of the information gathering process and understanding that PUAB will provide an advisory board recommendation to the city council on this topic. CES will present its preliminary report via presentation at today's meeting. CES' presentation does not include a final recommendation to the city on how to proceed. Rather, it is the compilation of research and fact finding to date.

This PUAB meeting is an opportunity to hear public comments and feedback that can be incorporated to a final report to be presented to the PUAB for further discussion at a future date. For the reasons stated above, I would like to invite Ted Bourlard, Co-Chair of NEST, to make a presentation and to be available for

questions from the PUAB at an April 8th, 2025, special session. I would like for NEST to work with the Electric Utility Director in preparation for your presentation to meet our format that we have used in this entire process. The PUAB will not make any decisions or recommendations at this meeting today. So, Ted, do you except that?

TED BOURLARD  
Accepts

## E. NEW BUSINESS:

CHAIRMAN LOUIS HALKIAS

We will now go to new business. The new business is to receive the preliminary report from Customized Energy Solutions. We appreciate that you're here, and we appreciate also the effort and also the detail you have put into this project.

CUSTOMIZED ENERGY SOLUTIONS

CES presentation by Ann Yu, Vice President, North American Consulting and Madeline Frierson, Lead Consultant.

Receive the preliminary report from Customized Energy Solutions

Attachments: [Naperville\\_procurement\\_options\\_draft\\_03032025](#)

## F. REPORTS:

## G. ADJOURNMENT:

CHAIRMAN LOUIS HALKIAS

Thank you very for going along with our questions and having the patience to help us get through this situation. Again, I thank the city for giving us this opportunity also to have the foresite to be able to hire a company to be able to research this in this way. All the information we picked up today goes towards us to better understand what is going on and the best thing for Naperville. So, thank you again. I would like to thank the people that have been here. I'm looking at this point since I think we've exhausted all of our situation here. I'm looking for a motion for adjournment.

Motion to adjourn: Phil Schrieber  
Second: Jim Fillar  
Motion passed