

**Workforce Investment Board  
Economic Development Ad Hoc Committee  
1880 W. Wardrobe Ave  
March 26, 2008, 3:00-4:00 p.m.  
Meeting Minutes**



<http://web.co.merced.ca.us/wi/wib/wib.html>

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**Members Present:** Andrea Baker, Don Bergman, Peter Fluetsch, Robert Harmon, Albert Montejano (Chair), Mike Souza

**Members Absent:** Jesse Brown, John Fowler, Scott McBride, Frank Quintero

**Others Present:** Brian Cutler, Rick Garcia – PG&E, Dee Knight, Steve Newvine – PG&E, Joanne Presnell, Thomas Smith – PG&E

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**1. Call to Order:** The Chair, Mr. Albert Montejano, called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. The Chair asked everyone to introduce themselves.

**2. Reviewing Meeting Notes (February 20, 2008):** The Chair gave an overview of the Feb 20<sup>th</sup> presentation and discussion.

**3. Presentation – PG&E Renewable/Alternative Energy/Q & A:** Mr. Thomas Smith, Account Executive of Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E), gave the following PowerPoint presentation on PG&E's Environmental Leadership:

- a. History of PG&E and its programs
- b. Energy Mix—Natural Gas, Nuclear, Large Hydro and Renewable
- c. Renewable Contracts in California and Oregon
- d. PG&E Goals
- e. Terms of Renewable Contracts
- f. Transmission Investments with Renewable Resources
- g. ClimateSmart Program
- h. Advanced Metering/Smart Meter—This program will do away with the meter reader position.
- i. Demand Response—In summertime, large businesses get financial incentives to shut down during peak demands.

Mr. Smith noted that the PG&E website [www.pge.com](http://www.pge.com) has more extensive information on renewable energy. Type in "renewable" in the search block.

Q: Does PG&E have any training or workshops on contract bidding?

A: Yes, they have everything on how to bid on any type of contract on their website. Usually, the contract seminars are given in San Francisco. Regarding solar and renewable technology, PG&E has many educational opportunities. They are having a Dairy Seminar on April 9, 2008. These events are on the website under "current events".

Q: Are the types of training PG&E does done on a more regional basis?

A: They have seminars in Stockton, Tulare and Fresno. The Energy Watch Program and also the Stockton Energy Center would be willing to take a course on the road if enough people were interested.—signups would have to be 25 or more.

Q: What information do you have on Carbon Credits?

A: PG&E does not have an official stance on whether it supports capital trade or not. Right now, enrolling in the ClimateSmart Program does not count as a Renewable Energy Credit (REC), but PG&E is working hard to see that it does.

Q: What type of entry-level/mid-level jobs would someone in this area most likely seek employment?

A: All PG&E projects are done through third party companies that do their own hiring. There is a lot of opportunity for entry-level positions in this field. One of the main draw is these projects have no infrastructure, which means construction, assembling, etc. You don't have to go to school or have a degree to perform these jobs. Energy Conservation is another area where there would be entry-level positions.

Q: Are nurseries involved in growing trees for the ClimateSmart Program?

A: To participate in the ClimateSmart Program, you must have at least 40 acres designated to grow the trees. There are very specific rules for this program, and it is closely monitored.

Q: Regarding solar energy, does PG&E have a rating on the types of panels, and what is or is not working?

A: There are several different types of technology used for solar energy. Currently, it's really all about the look, because they all have the same efficiency. There is no energy "star" rating for solar paneling. Homeowners make the decision on what looks better on their house. PG&E administers the incentive for all solar panels. They require an audit of the facility after installation to make sure everything is connected and working correctly before the incentive is paid.

Q: When you talk about reforestation, are there specific trees that do a better job than others?

A: Yes, younger trees are used because they absorb more than older trees. In older forests, all the old growth must be removed in order for the forest to be regenerated and work properly. Best trees to use are your conifers—Douglas fir, pine and evergreen.

Q: Within PG&E, are there any jobs being created for this new technology?

A: Not really, because PG&E relies on the third party company to do the hiring. PG&E does have a career pathway program for promoting from within the company, and there is a diversity of opportunity.

Q: Since PG&E contracts with third party companies, what local companies does PG&E contract with?

A: The one that is based in Fresno is Richard Heath & Associates, and Mr. Tony Nush can give you information on the types of skills they need. The PG&E website has a list of its participating vendors, and you can call them to find out the types of skills needed for their positions.

Mr. Smith provided everyone his business card, and noted that if there were any more questions to give him a call. The Chair thanked Messrs. Smith, Garcia and Newvine for their time and information.

#### **4. Review Targeted Industry Clusters:**

After discussion, the following was determined:

- Renewal Energy is coming, and the Governor is pushing it.
- These presentations are to gather information to better understand what Renewable Energy is all about, and what occupations/skills are needed.
- Invite the various Chambers of Commerce Economic Development Committee Chairs to the meeting to discuss and collaborate on what is important regarding Renewable Energy.
- Staff will contact those on the PG&E vendor list to find out the skills they need.

- After collecting all the data regarding Renewable Energy, the Workforce Investment Board will make a recommendation to Merced College, the Regional Occupational Program and Merced Adult School as to the types of courses that are needed to develop a workforce that will fulfill the needs of local businesses.

The overall consensus of the members was not to change the industry clusters.

**5. Information Agenda:**

a. Renewable Energy Press Release – Staff provided everyone a press release regarding Marin County Workforce Investment Board’s efforts in preparing its workforce for Renewable Energy positions and meeting the demands of the business community.

b. Stanislaus County 5-Year Strategic Plan – Staff provided everyone a copy of the plan, and noted it would be e-mailed to anyone who requested.

**6. Chair Comments:** The Chair thanked everyone for attending the meeting. He noted today’s meeting was very productive, and there are several items to be developed for the next meeting.

**7. Next Meeting:** TBA, Dept of Workforce Investment, Small Conf Rm., 1880 W. Wardrobe Ave, Merced.

**8. Adjourn:** Meeting was adjourned at 4:52 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Devilla D. Knight