

Published October 16th, 2019

## Moraga rejects switch to "Deep Green"

By Vera Kochan



MCE Solar One in Richmond, the Bay Area's largest public-private solar partnership powers 3,900 homes annually Photo provided

option. According to MCE, the town would pay an additional \$5,666 per year, or \$472 per month. This switch from "Light Green" 60% renewable resource energy to 100% renewable resource energy is expected to result in a 29 metric ton reduction of carbon dioxide emissions or the equivalent of removing six cars off of Moraga roads.

The town's annual budget for electricity costs is \$205,000. Sixty percent of the town's electricity costs are attributed to streetlights and are paid for from Fund 500 - Lighting Assessment District and Fund 140 - Property Tax Lighting Assessment District. There is sufficient funding in both accounts to cover the additional cost.

The remaining 40% of electricity costs are charged to Street Maintenance for traffic signals, town offices, chamber/corporate yard, Hacienda, library and parks/open space. There is a projected \$2,350 annual increase to the General Fund's electricity costs, which could be offset in the future if the town decides to pursue additional energy efficient upgrades resulting in approximate annual savings of \$11,000.

The public comment portion of the meeting drew many impassioned pleas in favor of the Deep Green switch. However, members of the council could not be convinced to opt for Deep Green when statistically less than 2% of residents themselves have made the move.

Additionally, the town council felt that Moraga is not comfortable fiscally to warrant the extra costs when the Deep Green impressions would not be substantial, suggesting instead a less expensive solution such as LED lighting. The motion failed 2-2, with Council Members Mike McCluer and Renata Sos voting yes, and Steve Woehleke and Vice Mayor Kimberleigh Korpuz voting no. Mayor Roger Wykle recused.

Reach the reporter at: [vera@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:vera@lamorindaweekly.com)

In August the town council asked staff to research the possibility of enrolling Moraga's electricity accounts with MCE's 100 percent renewable energy option known as "Deep Green," thereby attempting to reduce the town's carbon footprint.

During the Oct. 10 town council meeting, members reviewed a staff report by Planning Director Derek Farmer and Senior Planner Steve Kowalski. In compliance with the town's 2014 Climate Action Plan, previous projects included the installation of new water bottle refilling station/water fountains at the town offices and council chambers; lighting and HVAC systems received energy efficient upgrades throughout town-owned buildings and soon to be installed electric vehicle charging stations at Moraga Commons Park.

MCE was contacted to provide estimated costs to the town for enrolling in the "Deep Green" plan

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA