

Corte Madera says 'no' to Marin Clean Energy initiative

Jennifer Upshaw, 05/06/2009

The Corte Madera Town Council has passed up participation in the Marin Clean Energy initiative, saying joining at this time would be too costly.

The council on Tuesday voted 4-1, with Councilwoman Alexandra Cock voting to join the initiative - a joint powers authority to provide green energy as an alternative to Pacific Gas and Electric Co. - as a way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, Town Manager David Bracken said. Cock could not be reached for comment.

"My problem with Marin Clean Energy, with approving the ordinance and signing the agreement, is mainly financial," said Bracken, who urged the council on Tuesday to reject the offer.

"I see the potential cost to the town's general fund," he said. "My interpretation of the business plan leads me to believe that it's a gamble. Let me also say it's a gamble to enter into any business right now given the state of the whole global economy. It's not personal."

Mayor John Dupar said there was too much uncertainty.

"It's not so much what we can't afford, it's what would be the obligation of the town in the future and it's totally unknown," he said, saying the estimated cost to the town appeared to be more than \$9 million.

"Does a new government agency need to get into the energy business?" he said. "We felt at this time it's just not in our interest to join."

Dawn Weisz, interim director of Marin Clean Energy, could not be reached for comment.

All Marin cities and towns have joined with the exception of Novato, which voted no, and Larkspur, which is set to take up the issue in the coming weeks. The deadline to join is June 16.

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