

## **San Anselmo reaffirms vows to Marin Energy Authority**

*[Brent Ainsworth](#), 01/06/2010*

Jeff Kroot emphasized that he is a supporter of sustainability efforts - even saying he owns a hybrid vehicle - but then said he would vote to opt out of San Anselmo's commitment to the upstart Marin Energy Authority.

The two other members of the San Anselmo Town Council in attendance Tuesday did not second his motion, and with that inaction the town reaffirmed its vows with the joint powers authority that plans to provide electricity from renewable resources to Marin residents starting in June.

The move comes two days after San Rafael and Mill Valley confirmed their loyalty to MEA, which is set up to provide an alternative to Pacific Gas and Electric Co. for ratepayers.

Mayor Barbara Thornton and Councilman Ford Greene were silent when Kroot, seeking a wait-and-see approach, asked for support. The recently elected Kroot said that on the fall campaign trail he consistently heard people urge him not to support MEA. Most of the people urging him to support it were e-mailers from other towns, he said.

Council members Tom McInerney and Kay Coleman recused themselves and were not in attendance at the 3 1/2 hour meeting; McInerney's law firm has worked with PG&E, as has the company that employs Coleman's husband.

The non-vote came after one hour and 47 minutes of public comment in which 20 people urged support for MEA and 13 urged opting out. One of the 13 was former state Assemblyman Joe Nation, who works on behalf of PG&E. contract committee, said the authority "has been well thought-out through the years. The steps they wanted to take, starting with preliminary review, have been validated before taking another step." She added that she got into San Anselmo politics specifically because of her concerns about global warming.

Greene said human beings have been "fouling their nests really well" when it comes to saving the planet. "Something's got to change, and that is us," he said. "The vehicle for change, whether it's ultimately a smart decision or a dumb one, is MEA.

"Most people who know me and love me - as well as those who know me and hate me - realize that I have a substantial David and Goliath complex. And when I found out that PG&E was going to fund an attempt to stop this choice, that's what took over."

The MEA would compete with PG&E by purchasing power from a utility that would supply more energy from renewable sources in an effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Nation called MEA "a fantasy, a fiction" and a "massive expansion of government" that should only be taken if the public has the right to vote on it.

The authority, which consists of the county of Marin and all of Marin's cities except Novato, Larkspur and Corte Madera, was formed last year. The MEA board voted unanimously in November to approve a five-year draft contract for green power. Shell Energy North America, a subsidiary of Royal Dutch Shell, is the lead bidder for the contract.

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