

**CITY COUNCIL AGENDA**  
**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.**  
**50 Payson Ave., 2ndflr meeting area**  
**ALSO, remote meeting as allowed per Senate Bill 2475 through July 15, 2022**

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/pxj-tawa-myx>  
  
 Or dial: (US) +1 713-489-2014  
 PIN: 108 862 601#

Action  
Required

Information

- 1. Roll Call.
- 2. Pledge of Allegiance.
- 3. Approval of Minutes: March 16, 2022 meeting
- 4. Public Speak Time.

5. Public Hearings (starting at 6:15 p.m):

- a. Interdepartmental Transfer:  
\$3,000 for computer, radio & battery recycling
- b. Supplemental Appropriations:
  - \$137,500 from CPA funds for 17 Ward Ave. Rail Trail land acquisition
  - \$39,354 for pedestrian safety improvements on Holyoke St.
  - \$10,000 for funding of the EV Charging stations & Valley Bike Share program
  - \$25,000 for consulting services for NPDES Permit Compliance
  - \$32,500 for structural evaluation - WWTP Headworks Bldg. & storage compliance
  - \$58,000 for repairs/upgrades at the Lovefield St. Waste Water Pumping Station
  - \$108,000 for a replacement dump truck – Highway Division
  - \$120,000 for pump inspection/repair at the Hendrick St. Water Treatment Facility
  - \$150,000 to fund an addition to the Sewer Division garage

- 6. Communications from elected officials, boards and committees:
- 7. Mayor Communications:

8. Correspondence, Announcements & President/Vice-President Communications:

9. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

**(First date after item = date referred to sub-committee, Second date = action deadline):**

a. FINANCE:

- Quarterly fiscal reports from the City Auditor (8-5-20)
- Quarterly reports on COVID-19 grant funding and spending (4-7-21)
- Charter required review of elected officials/board & committee stipends (1-19-22) (4-19-22)

Interdepartmental Transfer:

- \$3,000 for computer, radio & battery recycling (3-16-22) (6-14-22)

Supplemental Appropriations:

- \$39,354 for pedestrian safety improvements on Holyoke St. (3-16-22) (6-14-22)
- \$10,000 for funding of the EV Charging stations & Valley Bike Share program(3-16-22) (6-14-22)
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- \$108,000 for a replacement dump truck – Highway Division(3-16-22) (6-14-22)
- \$120,000 for pump inspection/repair at Hendrick St. Water Treatment Facility(3-16-22) (6-14-22)
- \$150,000 to fund an addition to the Sewer Division garage (3-16-22) (6-14-22)
- \$137,500 from CPA funds for 17 Ward Ave. Rail Trail land acquisition(3-16-22) (6-14-22)

**Public hearings – April 6, 2022**

b. PUBLIC SAFETY:

- Quarterly review of Public Safety departments (2-2-22)
- Ordinance Review Committee’s final report (10-6-21) (7-3-22)
- Request to review safety of the sidewalk on South Street @ Main St. intersection (7-7-21) (7-2-22)
- Review of South/Main St. 4-way traffic light (2-16-22) (5-17-22)
- Review use of electric speed monitoring signs (2-16-22) (5-17-22)

c. APPOINTMENTS:

- Mayoral appointments (2) (3-16-22) (6-14-22)

d. ORDINANCE:

- Ordinance Review Committee’s final report (10-6-21) (4-4-22)

City Ordinance amendments:

- Vacant Storefront Ordinance (11-17-21) (5-16-22)
- Request to amend Pay Plan – adding position of Executive Assistant to the Mayor (2-16-22) (5-17-22)

Zoning amendments:

- Affordable housing – in Smart Growth District & Planned Res. Developments (8-4-21) (5-1-22)

e. PROPERTY:

f. **RULES & GOVERNMENT RELATIONS:**

- Resolution from Councilors Zaret & Riley: Gender Neutral Designation (3-16-22) (6-14-22)

g. **Ad Hoc Committees:**

- Senior Tax Work-Off Committee (established 6/17/2020; expires 4/30/2022)

10. **Old Business/Pending:**

11. **New Business (To be referred to council committees for review):**

- |  |                                     |                          |
|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Resolution in support of Municipal Aggregation for the City of Easthampton  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Discussion of Narcan Boxes in the City of Easthampton                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. <u>Interdepartmental Transfer:</u>  |                                     |                          |
| - \$15,250.00 for Police Academy expenses, public safety supplies & ammunition | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING – MARCH 16, 2022**  
**Meeting held remotely due to COVID 19 Pandemic Restrictions**  
**6:00 p.m.**

**Members Present:** President Homar Gomez, Vice-President Salem Derby, Daniel Rist, Owen Zaret, Lindsey Rothschild, Thomas Peake, Brad Riley and James Kwiecinski. Koni Denham arrived during the third public hearing.

**Pledge of Allegiance.**

**Approval of Minutes:** On motion made by Councilor Rist and seconded by Councilor Derby it was unanimously voted (by roll call) to approve the minutes of the March 2, 2022 meeting.

**Public Speak Time Summary:**

- ***Joan Kurtz, 359 Main Street*** – She is the president of the Easthampton Dog Park group and asked the councilors for their support of the creation of a dog park in the city. She said there are currently 80 families and businesses on their email list (including one city councilor).
- ***Maureen Pasquale, 51 Florence Road*** – She also spoke in support of a dog park. She said the group is looking for suitable land for the park.
- ***Jackie Brousseau-Pereira, 39 Garfield Avenue*** - She spoke in support of the Debt-Free Future Act Resolution. She said she has many stories of students and their financial situations.

**Communications:**

- ***Joe McCoy, Chair of the Elementary School Re-use Committee*** was in attendance to give councilors an update on the work of the committee, as the time nears when the three elementary schools will become vacant. He said the committee will soon give a report to the council. They have been doing groundwork ahead of the council’s actions which will determine the future use of the buildings.

City Planner Jeff Bagg said a Request for Proposals (RFP) is being prepared with assistance from consultants and will be given to the School Committee in April. The RFP and committee report should come to the council in May or June, he said. Affordable housing is a primary goal, with other high priorities being community benefits such as public parking, maintaining the gym at Pepin School and including a playground or park.

On motion made by Councilor Derby and seconded by Councilor Rist it was unanimously voted (by roll call) to open the public hearings.

<b>PUBLIC HEARINGS – STARTING AT 6:15 p.m.</b>
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1. **Interdepartmental Transfer – PEG Access Account:** Second reading by Councilor Rist on the request to transfer funds to the PEG Access Account for cable related purposes. Recommended 3 to 0 by the Finance Committee.

On motion made by Councilor Rist and seconded by Councilor Kwiecinski it was **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED** (by roll call) to transfer the sum of \$53,117.85 from the PEG Access Account (#027.1210.4399.2833) to the PEG Access Account (#027.1210.5400.2833) to give approval to spend from the PEG Access Receipts Reserved Account for cable related purposes consistent with the franchise agreement.

2. **Supplemental Appropriation – OPEB Benefits/Actuarial Study – FY '22:** Second reading by Councilor Rist on the request to appropriate funds from Free Cash to cover a shortfall in the Actuarial Study Account. Recommended 3 to 0 by the Finance Committee.

On motion made by Councilor Rist and seconded by Councilor Kwiecinski it was **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED** (by roll call) to transfer the sum of \$6,900.00 from Free Cash to Actuarial Study Account (#001.1520.5739) to cover unanticipated expenses in FY 2022 budgeting for valuation of city OPEB benefits.

3. **Supplemental Appropriation – Property Liability FY '22 Shortfall:** Second reading by Councilor Rist on the request to appropriate funds from Free Cash to cover a shortfall in the FY '22 Property Liability budget. Recommended 3 to 0 by the Finance Committee.

On motion made by Councilor Rist and seconded by Councilor Zaret it was **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED** (by roll call) to transfer the sum of \$20,464.00 from Free Cash to the following:

School Liability Account (#001.9450.5600):	\$ 8,390.00
City Liability Account (#001.9540.5742):	\$12,074.00

to cover unanticipated expenses in FY 2022 budgeting for property liability.

On motion made by Councilor Rist and seconded by Councilor Zaret it was unanimously voted (by roll call) to close the public hearings.

**Mayor Communications:** Mayor LaChapelle was not in attendance at the meeting.

**Correspondence, Announcements & President/Vice-President Communications:**

Councilor Zaret spoke about the following:

- The upcoming Riverside Industries Auction – both on-line and in-person (April 8<sup>th</sup>).
- Pascommuck Conservation Trust's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year. They are looking for officers.
- Ongoing prayers for the people of Ukraine.

Councilor Rothschild reminded councilors there would be a board/committee table at the Farmer's Market on March 27<sup>th</sup> (last market before the outdoor market begins in May).

Discussion was held at this time on upcoming council meetings and whether it was time to move back to in-person meetings. All councilors voiced support of going back to council chambers. President Gomez said Easthampton Media and IT Director Karin Camihort had been working on the technical aspects of a hybrid meeting. Councilor Peake suggested a "trial meeting" be held

before an actual meeting. President Gomez said this has already been done. Councilor Peake also commented that anyone should feel free to wear masks (even though they are not required). Councilor Kwiecinski thanked him for that comment. President Gomez suggested April 1<sup>st</sup> for the City Council in person, following with other city committees in May. No formal vote was taken, but it was agreed the council would meet in person at 50 Payson Avenue on April 6<sup>th</sup>.

**FY '23 City Council budget:** President Gomez asked for a vote to be taken tonight on the proposed FY '23 City Council budget. He proposed that \$900.00 be added in FY '23 for councilor training. There has never been funding for training and he thought \$900.00 would be a good place to start.

On motion made by Councilor Rist and seconded by Councilor Zaret it was **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED** (by roll call) to approve a 3% increase in the budget from FY '22, adding \$900 for councilor training and approving a bottom line figure of \$44,010.63.

### **Reports of Standing Committees:**

**FINANCE:** Councilor Rist said the Finance Committee will meet next on March 23<sup>rd</sup> at 5 p.m.

**Retirement COLA Base Increase:** Councilor Rist reported the Contributory Retirement Board has requested that the council approve an increase in the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) base by \$2,000 to \$16,000.00. According to the board's request, the current COLA base is \$14,000.00 which means that the retiree's COLA is calculated on the first \$14,000 for a maximum COLA benefit of \$425.00. The council approved the increase to \$14,000 in 2015. Councilor Rist said the retirement system is in good shape financially – it is 74.9% funded and should be fully funded by 2035.

Retirement Director Kymme Wood said the COLA base increase would increase the \$425.00 maximum benefit to \$480.00. It will not affect the FY '23 budget and will have a low impact on the FY '24 budget, she said.

On motion made by Councilor Rist and seconded by Councilor Kwiecinski it was **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED** (by roll call) to approve the acceptance of the amended section 103(j) of chapter 32 pertaining to an increase in the maximum base amount on which the cost-of-living adjustment is calculated increasing this amount by \$2,000.00 to \$16,000.00 as voted on by the Easthampton Contributory Retirement Board.

**PUBLIC SAFETY:** Councilor Zaret said the Public Safety Committee has not met since the last council meeting. They will meet next on March 24<sup>th</sup> and then again on April 5<sup>th</sup>.

**APPOINTMENTS:** Councilor Rothschild said the Appointments Committee had met on March 9<sup>th</sup> to review the pending appointments.

All appointments were approved 3 to 0 by the Appointments Committee.

On motion made by Councilor Rothschild and seconded by Councilor Rist it was **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED** (by roll call) to approve the following City Council re-appointments:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Term Expires</b>
Barbara LaBombard	City Clerk	March 31, 2025
Mary Ann Giza	Asst. City Clerk	March 31, 2025

On motion made by Councilor Rothschild and seconded by Councilor Rist it was **VOTED** (by roll call) to confirm the following Mayoral appointments (Councilor Zaret abstained from voting on this motion):

<b>Name</b>	<b>Board/Committee</b>	<b>Term Expiration</b>
Kiam Jamrog-McQuaid	Affordable & Fair Housing Partnership	Dec. 31, 2023
Kate Banigan-White	Affordable & Fair Housing Partnership	Dec. 31, 2023
Marla Solomon	Community Relations Committee	Dec. 31, 2022
Ruth Jennison	Housing Authority	Dec. 31, 2022
Mary Church	Housing Authority	Dec. 31, 2026
James Ramsey	Parks & Recreation Commission	Dec. 31, 2023
James Hickson	Veterans Council	Dec. 31, 2023

The Appointments Committee will meet next on March 23rd at 4 p.m.

**ORDINANCE:** Councilor Derby said the Ordinance Committee had met with the EDIC to discuss the vacant storefront ordinance.

They had also met with the Planning Board to continue the public hearing on the housing zoning overlay – that public hearing was continued to March 29<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m.

The Ordinance Committee will meet next on March 22<sup>nd</sup> to discuss the Mayor’s proposal to add the position of Executive Assistant to the Mayor to the Pay Plan.

**PROPERTY:**

No report

**RULES & GOVERNMENT RELATIONS:**

No report.

**Ad Hoc Committees:**

**Senior Tax Work-Off Committee:** Councilor Kwiecinski said the Sr. Tax Work-Off Committee will meet next on March 21<sup>st</sup>.

**New Business:**

- a. On motion made by Councilor Derby and seconded by Councilor Zaret it was unanimously voted (by roll call) to refer two Mayoral appointments to the Appointments Committee.
- b. **Debt-Free Future Resolution:** Councilor Rist asked for council action on this resolution tonight as it relates to pending legislative action. The resolution was co-sponsored by Councilors Rist and Denham.

Councilor Denham presented the resolution, which is in support of an Act currently before the Joint Committee on Higher Education in Boston. It would expand access to affordable higher education and give opportunity to students who might otherwise face insurmountable financial obstacles. The Debt Free Future Act (H.1339/S.829) provides free public education to all residents in Massachusetts. Additionally, it provides grants to eligible students for cost of living expenses, including food, housing and books. Councilor Denham said that 41% of Easthampton youth are considered economically disadvantaged.

Councilors voiced support of this resolution and Act. It is currently in committee, Councilor Denham said.

On motion made by Councilor Rist and seconded by Councilor Zaret it was **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED** (by roll call) that the City council approve a resolution supporting H.1339/S.829, “An Act to Guarantee Debt-Free Public Higher Education” as follows:

**“WHEREAS:** it has come to the attention of the City Council that the Joint Committee on Higher Education is considering H.1339/S.829, [An Act to Guarantee Debt-Free Public Higher Education](#); and

**WHEREAS,** while the federal government has the authority to cancel all outstanding debts, state legislatures have the ability to prevent future debts; and

**WHEREAS:** since FY01, per-student spending on public higher education has been [cut by](#) 32% and state scholarship spending has also been [cut by](#) 32%, increasing the burden on students and their families who now pay more than 50% of total public college revenue across the Commonwealth’s community colleges, state universities, and UMass campuses; and

**WHEREAS,** student debt in Massachusetts is disproportionately a public college problem as public college students graduate with almost equivalent dollars of student debt as private college graduates and more public college students graduate with debt in MA than private college students; and

**WHEREAS,** in Massachusetts in 2017, the average Cost of Attendance at public colleges accounts for an average of only 21% of white household income, but accounts for 38% of Black household income and 43% of Latinx household income; and

**WHEREAS:** women hold nearly two-thirds of the country’s student loan debt, which totals \$1.7 trillion dollars, and women are often forced to pay back their student loans at a slower rate than men due to the gender pay gap, which can result in women paying more than men overall for their right to learn; and



**WHEREAS**, that the City Council go on record in enthusiastic support of H.1339/S.829, An Act to Guarantee Debt-Free Public Higher Education, and in urging the Joint Committee on Higher Education to advance the bill as quickly as possible; The Act is a systemic solution to the related crises of college unaffordability and student loan debt which will guarantee tuition-and- fees free public college and award additional cost-of-living grant money to low-income families to eliminate the need to borrow for housing, transportation, child care, etc;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** that the Easthampton City Council offers its support for H.1339/S.829 An Act to Guarantee Debt-Free Public Higher Education and that we continue to elevate the voices of students and families living with the burden of student debt.”


- c. On motion made by Councilor Derby and seconded by Councilor Rist it was unanimously voted (by roll call) to refer the following resolution to the Rules & Govt. Relations Committee:
- Gender Neutral Designation Resolution
- d. First readings by Councilor Rist on the following interdepartmental transfer and supplemental appropriation requests:
- \$3,000 for computer, radio & battery recycling
  - \$39,354 for pedestrian safety improvements on Holyoke St.
  - \$10,000 for funding of the EV Charging stations & Valley Bike Share program
  - \$25,000 for consulting services for NPDES Permit Compliance
  - \$32,500 for structural evaluation - WWTP Headworks Bldg. & storage compliance
  - \$58,000 for repairs/upgrades at the Lovefield St. Waste Water Pumping Station
  - \$108,000 for a replacement dump truck – Highway Division
  - \$120,000 for pump inspection/repair at Hendrick St. Water Treatment Facility
  - \$150,000 to fund an addition to the Sewer Division garage
  - \$137,500 from CPA funds for land acquisition at 17 Ward Ave. – rail trail connection to Park St.

On motion made by Councilor Rist and seconded by Councilor Zaret it was unanimously voted (by roll call) to refer these requests to the *Finance Committee* and to schedule public hearings for the April 6th council meeting.

On motion made by Councilor Kwiecinski and seconded by Councilor Zaret it was unanimously voted (by roll call) that this meeting **ADJOURN**.

**TIME: 7:34 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Barbara L. LaBombard, Clerk to the City Council



***CITY OF EASTHAMPTON***  
**OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

Easthampton Municipal Building  
50 Payson Ave., Ste. 100  
Easthampton, Massachusetts 01027-2260  
Telephone #: (413) 529-1460  
Fax #: (413) 529-1417

Members of the Council,

Attached is a resolution authorizing the mayor to contract for community electricity aggregation, also known as municipal aggregation, along with supplementary materials. Municipal aggregation allows for the city to offer competitive rates for electricity through the municipality's purchase of bulk electricity supply. Participation for residents is voluntary, with the rates obtainable through a municipal aggregation program likely being more competitive and stable than what they may find as individual subscribers.

At least 164 municipalities in the Commonwealth have approved municipal aggregation programs. These programs can be specific to a single municipality, or in cooperation with multiple cities or towns. This proposal has been developed at the recommendation of the Energy Advisory Committee, who have provided the necessary support, guidance, and consensus to develop the attached resolution. We appreciate your consideration and feel that this would be a good direction for our city.

Respectfully submitted,

Koni Denham, Councilor At-Large  
Thomas Peake, Councilor Precinct Three  
Owen Zaret, Councilor At-Large



***CITY OF EASTHAMPTON***  
**OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

Easthampton Municipal Building  
50 Payson Ave., Ste. 100  
Easthampton, Massachusetts 01027-2260  
Telephone #: (413) 529-1460  
Fax #: (413) 529-1417

**A Resolution in Support of Municipal Aggregation for the City of Easthampton**

Sponsors: Koni Denham, Councilor At-Large  
Thomas Peake, Councilor Precinct Three  
Owen Zaret, Councilor At-Large

Whereas MGL chapter 164 section 134 allows a municipality to “aggregate the electrical load of interested electricity consumers within its boundaries”; and

Whereas, Municipal Electric Aggregation, also known as Community Choice Aggregation (CCA), allows private residents and businesses to access the benefits of electricity deregulation, and obtain electricity options and rates that would otherwise not be available to those consumers as individual customers, and;

Whereas Municipal aggregation allows a municipality to contract for competitive rates and, in doing so, offer better rate protection to consumers of energy, while recognizing that savings and rates cannot be guaranteed; and,

Whereas Municipal aggregation allows for broader choices of purchasing energy that is derived from renewable sources, higher than the Massachusetts Renewable Portfolio Standard, and.

Whereas a municipal aggregation program is entirely voluntary for energy consumers, and there is no penalty for individual opt out; and,

Whereas 164 municipalities in the Commonwealth have approved municipal aggregation programs; now therefore be it resolved,

That on this date \_\_\_\_\_ the Easthampton City Council authorizes the Mayor and the appropriate departments to research, develop, and participate in a contract or contracts to aggregate the electricity load of the residents and businesses in the City and for other related services independently, or in joint action with other municipalities, and authorize the mayor or their designee to execute all documents necessary to accomplish the same.

## What is Community Electricity Aggregation?

Community Electricity Aggregation (CEA) is a mechanism by which a City or a Town can procure electricity supply in bulk for residents and businesses, with the goals of controlling costs through competitive, stable rates and increasing the renewable energy content. While savings cannot be guaranteed, Good Energy's expert procurement team uses strategic procurement to deliver competitive rates.

CEA is also known as municipal aggregation, Community Choice Aggregation or Community Choice Energy. Good Energy manages over 40 active CEA programs in Massachusetts and is set to launch the first of their kind aggregation programs in Rhode Island and New Hampshire.

## What changes with CEA?

For electricity customers in communities that implement CEA, few visible changes take place: they continue to receive only one bill for electricity from the utility, and the utility continues to repair outages and deliver the electricity. For those who choose to participate in the program, only the supply portion of the electricity bill changes to the supplier chosen by the City or Town.

## Who participates in CEA programs?

The program is open to electricity customers in the municipality - whether they are a resident, a business, a renter or an owner. The programs are designed with voluntary participation and automatic enrollment.

- Voluntary participation: customers can leave the program at any time - either before the program starts or during - without penalty.
- Automatic enrollment for most: In your community, most residential and some business customers are receiving their electricity supply from the utility's Basic Service. For these customers, the entry into the program is simple and easy. They are given a 30-day period during which they have the opportunity to opt out (i.e. not participate) or choose one of the program's optional products. Those who do not opt out are automatically enrolled in the program.

Prior to program launch, Good Energy, guided by your municipality, will conduct **extensive education and outreach to notify the community about the program.**

- Opt-in required for some: Those residents and businesses who have already chosen an electricity supplier other than utility Basic Service are not automatically enrolled in the program, though they can voluntarily join the program at any time. The Department of Public Utilities advises all customers of third party suppliers to check their contract terms as their supplier may charge them a fee or a penalty to leave before the end of their contract with their supplier.

## How much does it cost?

Community Electricity Aggregation programs can be implemented without cost to the City or Town and require only intermittent staff time for oversight and guidance. As the program's consultant, Good Energy takes care of all the drafting, planning, outreach, development and customer service aspects of program management, guided by the decision makers' input. Our services are paid for by a fee included in the supply rate. The community benefits from the program with steady and predictable electricity supply rates, competitive pricing (although future savings cannot be guaranteed), and increased options with additional renewable energy.

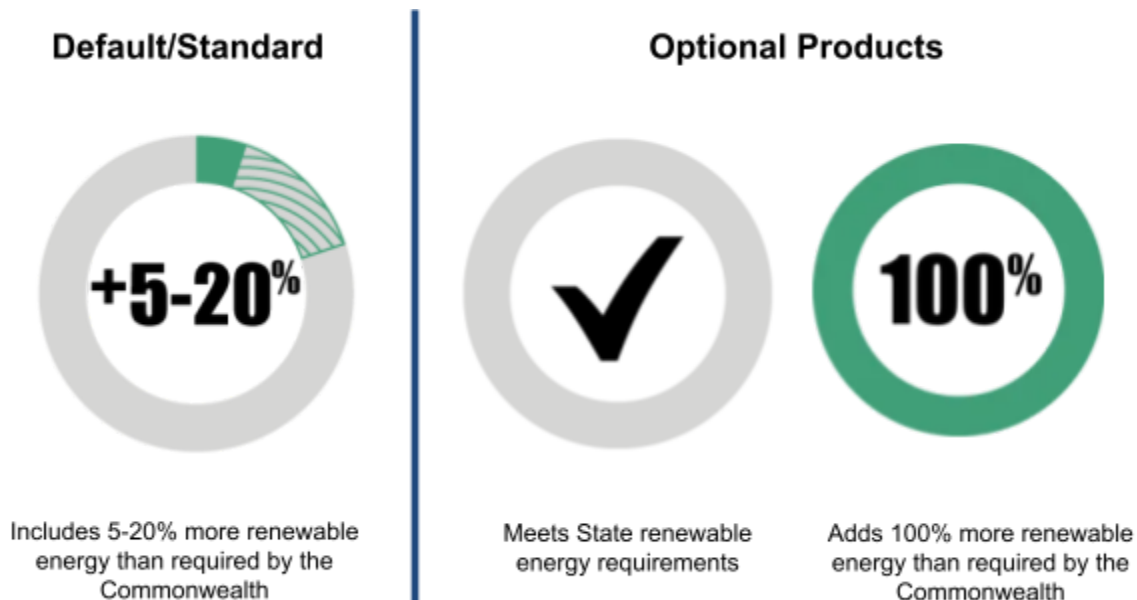
## What choices are offered?

CEA programs can include several options with different amounts of renewable energy content to provide an option for everyone to meet their considerations for cost and climate impact.

The municipality selects a standard or default product for automatic enrollment, and the program can offer other optional products, too. Participants can elect to switch between products at any time: during enrollment or once the program is operating.

The default product must contain at least the state-mandated minimum renewable energy. Many municipalities have "green" aggregations in which their default includes additional renewable energy. Good Energy's experience shows that "green" aggregations can still remain competitive and affordable (recognizing that savings compared to utility Basic Service cannot be guaranteed).

Sample electricity supply products in a "green" aggregation:



***For additional information, contact Patrick Roche at (617) 710-0615***



# Start a Community Choice Aggregation Program

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Community choice aggregation (CCA), also known as municipal electric aggregation, is a way for one or a group of cities and towns currently served by investor-owned utilities to use bulk purchasing power to negotiate electric supply on behalf of their residents and small businesses currently on basic service. Typically in Massachusetts, residents and businesses receive their utility's basic service supply by default. Communities with CCA can contract for rates and renewable energy content with competitive suppliers and obtain funds to provide energy efficiency services to residents. This strategy outlines how to initiate a community choice aggregation program.

## Advantages and Disadvantages of CCA

Note: Some of the following benefits of CCA may not be able to be realized at the same time, such as lower rates and higher renewable energy content.

### Possible advantages of CCA include:

- **Lower rates** – CCA rates can be lower than basic service rates depending on when rates are locked in and the bids are received. When deregulation occurred in Massachusetts in 1997, initial contracted rates were required to be lower than the investor-owned utility's standard offer. Since the standard offer expired in 2005, this restriction no longer applies.
- **Consumer education** – Public meetings, posted notices, press releases, newspaper articles and notifications enclosed in electric bills can lead to greater consumer awareness of where their electricity comes from and what other suppliers exist, in addition to informing consumers of their ability to opt out of the aggregation by choosing basic service or a competitive supplier.
- **Consumer protection** – As more energy brokers enter the deregulated market, consumers are increasingly approached by brokers attempting to sell them energy contracts. CCAs offer municipalities a way to vet brokers and suppliers for residents through government procurement procedures.

- **Increased renewable portfolio** – CCAs give communities the opportunity to purchase energy with a higher renewable content than the Massachusetts [Renewable Portfolio Standard](#), which requires electric suppliers to obtain a designated percentage of their energy content from renewable sources each year. Through 2013, the state RPS requires that eight percent of electricity sales to end-users come from new (built after December 31, 1997) renewable energy sources, increasing by one percent each year with no mandated expiration date.
- **Reserve fund** – A municipality can choose to receive a fee from the supplier that can be dedicated to funding energy efficiency or renewable projects, such as the purchase and installation of high-efficiency streetlights or solar photovoltaic panels.
- **Energy efficiency funds** – If a municipality chooses to collect the systems benefit charge for energy efficiency (0.25 cents/kWh), it will gain control of the funds to run its own energy efficiency programs. To date, only the Cape Light Compact has done so in Massachusetts – likely due to the economies of scale available to a large regional aggregation.
- **Electric consumption information** – By forming a CCA, communities are able to more easily obtain data on their residents’ aggregate energy use. This data, which is extremely useful for energy reduction and climate change planning purposes, can otherwise be difficult to acquire from investor-owned utilities (IOUs).
- **Rate stability** – CCAs can choose longer-term contracts (a year or more) in order to buffer customers from the volatility of the electricity market.

**Possible disadvantages of CCA include:**

- **Higher rates** – After the contract has been executed, the utility’s basic service rates could drop below the CCA rates. Note that as of November 27, 2013, the DPU has decided that aggregations cannot be temporarily suspended. If an aggregation puts its customers back on the utility’s basic service, it will need to go through the plan approval process again in order to return them to competitive supply.
- **Political fallout** – Some residents and small businesses may be upset that the program is opt-out rather than opt-in. Additionally, there could be backlash if basic service rates drop below the CCA rates or the program is disbanded.
- **Administrative costs** – While brokers who are paid by the supplier rather than the municipality do much of the research and paperwork for the CCA, municipal employees must monitor the brokers and deal with public response.

## Program Overview

Implementation Steps	Objectives	Key Implementers	Estimated Time Frame
<b>Initial research</b>	Learn about CCA and the potential role it could play in your community.	Town Administrator or Relevant Municipal Staff	
<b>Authorize CCA</b>	Authorize development of an aggregation plan by majority vote in city council or town meeting.	City Council or Town Meeting	1 month
<b>Issue RFP for energy broker (optional)</b>	Hire a broker for assistance in the design, implementation, and ongoing monitoring of the aggregation plan.	Town Administrator or Energy Planner	2 months
<b>Develop aggregation plan with DOER</b>	Draft a plan with the input of DOER that meets the goals of the community and the requirements of the DPU.	Broker, Town Administrator or Energy Planner	2 months
<b>Approve aggregation plan</b>	Authorize plan to be filed with the DPU.	City Council or Board of Selectmen	1 month
<b>Submit aggregation plan to DPU</b>	Petition the DPU to authorize the CCA.	Broker	6 months
<b>Issue RFP for competitive supplier</b>	Solicit competitive bids for the CCA contract.	Broker	1 month
<b>Execute contract with supplier</b>	Choose supplier for the CCA.	Town Administrator or Energy Planner	
<b>Notify customers</b>	Inform customers about the CCA and the opt-out period.	Broker	2 months
<b>Begin automatic enrollment</b>	Enroll basic service customers who have not opted out.	Utility	1 month

## Program Implementation Steps

### 1. Initial Research.

- Conduct feasibility study** – Consider conducting independent research, as well as meeting with multiple energy brokers for expertise and guidance. Although the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) aggregation guide recommends feasibility studies, which outline potential savings, analyze power supply information and provide engineering evaluations of the distribution network, they are not required. However, brokers often include this information in their formal bid to the municipality or in informational sessions prior to release of the broker RFP. Therefore, paying for a formal feasibility study may be an unnecessary expense.



- **Contact DOER** – Municipalities should reach out to the DOER as early in the process as possible through the Green Communities Regional Coordinator for their region, even if the community has not received a Green Community designation.

## 2. Authorize CCA

- **Vote in city council or town meeting** – Before a municipality can design an aggregation plan, there must be an affirmative vote at city council or town meeting. If two or more municipalities decide to pursue a joint CCA, they must individually authorize it by majority vote.

## 3. Issue RFP for Energy Broker (Optional)

- **Hire a broker** – Massachusetts General Law does not require municipalities to contract with an energy broker to facilitate the CCA process; however, due to the significant time investment and technical knowledge brokers provide, the five individual municipalities that have implemented CCA in Massachusetts as of August 2013, hired a broker for assistance in the design, implementation, and ongoing monitoring of their aggregation. Brokers also assume the majority of the upfront risk for the process, including legal and Department of Public Utilities (DPU) filing fees. They do not receive compensation until after the competitive supplier has been chosen. Brokers are paid by the supplier, and in Massachusetts have historically received \$0.001 (a mil adder) per kWh consumed by the CCA. The broker helps develop the aggregation plan, assists in the DPU approval process, and issues the RFP for a competitive supplier once the aggregation plan has been approved. The broker can also facilitate the customer opt-out notification process (typically paid for by the supplier) and provides ongoing customer support. Additionally, the broker monitors competitive supply and utility rates on an ongoing basis.
- **Bid out contract** – Broker contracts are exempt from standard procurement procedure ([M.G.L. ch. 30B](#)), but procurement may provide transparency and defend the validity of the municipality's ultimate choice if those consulting services are obtained through a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP). Using the competitive process outlined in M.G.L. ch. 30B, even for exempt contracts, is considered a best practice by the Massachusetts Office of the Inspector General.

## 4. Develop Aggregation Plan with DOER

- **Draft plan** – The plan must demonstrate how the CCA will provide universal access, reliability, and equitable treatment of all classes of customers. The broker typically designs the plan based upon the specific needs of the municipality. Each municipality is required to consult with DOER prior to submitting the plan to the DPU. This consultation is intended to help streamline the DPU approval process by identifying areas in the plan that are unclear, that have previously caused delays for other CCAs, or that may otherwise be flagged by the DPU or the Attorney General.

## 5. Approve Aggregation Plan

- **Review and approve** – A municipality must make the plan available for review by its citizens through a public posting or hearing, and the plan must be approved by the board of selectmen or city council.

## 6. Submit Plan to DPU

- **File for DPU review and approval** – The municipality, with the help of the energy broker, must petition the DPU to officially authorize the CCA. This is typically the longest part of the process. It includes an initial filing with DPU, comment periods where other parties may intervene with questions or concerns (such as the Attorney General or the IOU in the service area), information request and discovery periods, and a public hearing. Electronic copies of DPU filings, comments and follow-ups are available on the [DPU website](#), and municipalities should review the proceedings of previous CCA plans to avoid delays caused by questions that have been addressed in prior filings. If a plan is found to be in compliance with regulation, it will be approved by a formal order.

## 7. Issue RFP for Competitive Supplier

- **Set parameter for supply bids** – The RFP for competitive supply should articulate the specific energy needs of the municipality identified in the CCA plan. Suppliers may be asked to bid on multiple supply and term options. For example, if the municipality wants to offer residents an option to buy power that exceeds the Massachusetts RPS, it may request that the supplier provide pricing for both a basic rate and “green” rates with certain percentages of renewable content. Many RFPs ask for 3-, 6-, 9-, 12-, and 24-month options. While longer-term contracts (6-plus months) may offer a certain amount of price stability, several of the approved aggregation plans have chosen to pursue six-month contracts that mirror the six-month timetable that the IOUs are required to follow. The energy broker is typically responsible for issuing the RFP for competitive supply on behalf of the town, evaluating bids according to the specific goals of the municipality, and recommending a supplier.

## 8. Execute Contract with Supplier

- **Choose competitive supplier** – The municipality ultimately chooses the supplier and executes the contract.

## 9. Notify Customers of Opt-Out Period

- **Detail opt-out choices** – The CCA must inform basic service customers by mail at least 30 days prior to automatic enrollment that their electric supply will be switched to the chosen competitive supplier and the new rate. They must also notify affected customers that they have the right to opt out of the CCA within 180 days without an exit charge and anytime thereafter (historically, also without an exit charge). The notification must also disclose the utility’s basic service rate and detail how customers can opt out or choose

another competitive supplier. The customer may also opt out or in at any point by contacting the broker or supplier. For the five individual municipalities that have authorized CCA, the opt-out process was funded by the supplier and administered by the energy broker. Customers could opt out by returning the initial opt-out postcard, by phone, or online by visiting the broker's website.

## **10. Begin Automatic Enrollment**

- **Enroll basic service customers** – All ratepayers on the utility's basic service who do not opt out of the CCA will be automatically enrolled in the plan. They will continue to receive an electricity bill from their utility, which displays separate delivery and supply charges. Delivery charges (distribution, transmission) will remain with the utility, but the supply section (generation charge) will list the new competitive supplier. Customers will pay one bill directly to the utility, and supply charges will be passed through the utility to the supplier.

## **11. Monitor Market (Ongoing)**

- **Watch rates** – The broker continues to monitor the electricity market, secures rates when they are favorable, and notifies the municipality if utility basic service rates have dropped below competitive rates.

## **12. Submit Aggregation Status Report (Annually)**

- **Compile CCA performance data** – Within 30 days of the end of the first year of operation, a CCA must submit an annual aggregation status report to the Director of the Green Communities Division of DOER. The status report should include the number of participants by customer type (residential, commercial, industrial), the number of customers opting out by type, load served, contractor costs, and savings data.

## **13. Pursue Energy Efficiency Systems Benefit Funds (Optional)**

- **Administer energy efficiency programs** – [Massachusetts CCA legislation](#) (M.G.L. Ch. 164 S. 134b) allows a municipality to administer the energy efficiency systems benefit charge currently paid by all ratepayers of IOUs. IOUs administer energy conservation and efficiency programs through MassSave, but municipalities pursuing CCA may choose to take this funding to run their own localized efficiency programming that conforms to MassSave guidelines. Currently, only the regional Cape Light Compact has pursued this option. The burden of administering efficiency programming might be cost-prohibitive for single-municipality CCAs due to economies of scale.
- **Adopt energy plan** – If a municipality decides to seek control of these funds, it must adopt an energy plan through an affirmative vote in city council or town meeting that articulates how the CCA will administer demand-side management programs. The plan must be approved by the DPU. Municipalities interested in administering the energy efficiency systems benefit charge should review the Cape Light Compact DPU filings and consult with the DOER.

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## References

- “Community Choice Aggregation: Municipal Bulk Buying of Electricity in Massachusetts.” Tufts University (2013)  
[http://ase.tufts.edu/uep/degrees/field\\_project\\_reports/2013/Team\\_7\\_Final\\_Report\\_2013.pdf](http://ase.tufts.edu/uep/degrees/field_project_reports/2013/Team_7_Final_Report_2013.pdf)
- “Guide to Municipal Electric Aggregation in Massachusetts.” Department of Energy Resources. (2004)  
<http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/doer/electric-deregulation/agg-guid.pdf>
- “Load Aggregation Programs.” M.G.L. Chapter 164 Section 134.  
<http://www.malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXXII/Chapter164/Section134>
- “Choosing a Competitive Supplier.” Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs.  
<http://www.mass.gov/eea/energy-utilities-clean-tech/electric-power/electric-market-info/competitive-supplier.html>
- “Petition of City of Lowell for approval by the Department of Public Utilities of its municipal aggregation plan pursuant to G.L. c. 164, § 134.” Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities.  
<http://www.env.state.ma.us/dpu/docs/electric/12-124/12-124-Order-6700.pdf>



***CITY OF EASTHAMPTON***  
**OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

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50 Payson Ave., Ste. 100  
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Telephone #: (413) 529-1460  
Fax #: (413) 529-1417

Members of the council,

I would like to introduce an item of new business “Discussion of Narcan Boxes in the City of Easthampton”. This is a project involving collaboration between Hampshire Hope, the Healthy Youth Coalition, the city’s Health, Police and Fire departments, as well as other municipal stakeholders, to place Narcan boxes in strategic locations, both municipal and private, throughout the city. Plans are already in place for a box at city hall, and broader discussions are being held to determine other locations.

This is one tool that at our disposal to address the many harms of the opioid epidemic, and I applaud this initiative. I am requesting this item be sent to the public safety committee for further public discussion.

Respectfully submitted,

Owen Zaret, councilor at-large

# INTERDEPARTMENTAL TRANSFER FY 2022

Date: 3/16/22

Request is hereby made for approval of the following appropriation:

1. Amount requested: **\$ 15,250.00**

DocuSigned by:  
Hetal Patel 3/25/2022  
110980CE404FD49D...  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Auditor's Approval)

2. To be transferred from: # 01.2150.5317 \$ 15,250.00

3. To be transferred to: # 01.2100.5191 \$ 4,500.00  
# 01.2100.5314 \$ 3,000.00  
# 01.2100.5591 \$ 7,750.00

4. The amount requested will be used for the following purpose:

- a. To provide the funding for Police Academy tuition, uniforms, supplies and gear for Officer Abigail Lukasik who will attend in June 2022.
- b. Funds to cover the cost of public safety supplies and ammunition.

DocuSigned by:  
Mayor LaChapelle 3/28/2022  
9363200BA062422...  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Nicole LaChapelle, Mayor

DocuSigned by:  
Robert Alberti 3/23/2022  
11A3C4A3A4EF485...  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Department Head Signature

### Department Release of Appropriation

Date: 3/23/2022

I hereby certify that the amount of \$ 15,250.00 can be released from my departmental appropriation, and that it will not, in any way, interfere with the operation of this department.

DocuSigned by:  
Robert Alberti  
11A3C4A3A4EF485...  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Department Head Signature

I hereby certify that the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ will place a burden on the functions of this department.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Department Head Signature

**City Council Action**

Date of City Council meeting April 6, 2022 First Reading April 6, 2022

Date referred to Committee April 6, 2022 Second Reading \_\_\_\_\_

Public hearing date \_\_\_\_\_

Number present & voting \_\_\_\_\_ Appropriation approved \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Appropriation Disapproved \$ \_\_\_\_\_

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**Mayoral Approval**

Date of City Council approval \_\_\_\_\_

Amount approved \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Department transferred to: \_\_\_\_\_

Pursuant to Section 3-7 of the Easthampton Home Rule Charter, I, Nicole LaChapelle, Mayor of the City of Easthampton, hereby approve the foregoing City Council action.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nicole LaChapelle, Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Approval