



NOTICE OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TOWN OF OPHIR, CO 81426

THURSDAY 7:00 PM, MARCH 19, 2024

OPHIR TOWN HALL 36 PORPHYRY ST.

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 867 0143 8435 Passcode: 373146

+16699006833,,86701438435#,,,,*373146# US (San Jose)

AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. ADOPTION & SIGNATURE OF FEBRUARY 20, 2024 MEETING MINUTES
3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
4. BUSINESS ITEMS
 - a. VOTE- Approval of letter to SMPA to conduct Microgrid Feasibility Study
 - b. Release and Summary of SGM 2024 Ophir Water System Report
5. STAFF REPORTS
 - a. Town Manager
 - i. First donation to Peter Harrelson Memorial Fund (thanks John Humphries!)
 - ii. Lead and Copper Inventory (due October, 2024)
 - iii. Any questions?
6. NEW BUSINESS
7. ADJOURN

General Assembly Meeting Memorandum

To: Ophir General Assembly

From: John Wontrobski, Ophir Town Manager

Date: March 15, 2024 for March 19, 2024 GA meeting

4a. N.B: This memo item was written by Ophir Resident and EcoAction Energy Specialist Kim Wheels:

In light of Ophir's November GA vote to not allow SMPA access to town-owned land for the purposes of conducting a microgrid study, SMPA and Ophir staff have been considering how to honor our DOLA planning grant commitment, continue to explore mechanisms for meeting electricity reliability needs for the town, and obtain the necessary analysis to understand our town's options for meeting our renewable energy goals. Based on requests from Ophir community members in previous meetings to further explore rooftop solar potential, SMPA is proposing to shift the focus of a feasibility study toward analyzing the potential of using existing and projected rooftop solar. SMPA has also been considering the viability of locating a battery storage system on "SMPA-managed easement property" (instead of town-owned property), with rooftop solar as the source of additional battery charging to extend the outage coverage of the microgrid battery, and to possibly be dispatched during SMPA system peak to improve the project economics and reduce GHG emissions. This mechanism would financially support rooftop system installations, as homeowners would benefit through net-metering credit provided during normal system operations and during battery charging time periods.

DOLA's Microgrid for Community Resilience (MCR) Program Director supports this pivot to a different technical approach as being within the bounds of the planning grant scope, as it continues to explore solutions to solve a resilience problem for a town beset with known and verifiable infrastructure vulnerabilities. Ophir's letter of support for the MCR grant states in reference to power outages:

"In response to these problems, Ophir has begun working with SMPA to pursue the initial planning around various solutions. We expect the planning grant will allow us to further pursue the appropriate locations for a solar array, storage/microgrid controls, as well as other feasibility issues concerning system development, ownership, and financing."

With Ophir's support of this redirection, potential microgrid construction grant opportunities would not incorporate NEW solar power generation. This redirected

approach would qualify for a different grant focus that could result in achieving the primary goal of community resilience. With the microgrid storage and grid-tie infrastructure in place and using local rooftop solar charging supplementation during outage conditions, Ophir could revisit a community solar array down the road if desired by the community.

If Ophir would like to have the land next to the New Dominion mine included as a potential microgrid location in this redirected feasibility study, as a high level analysis done without accessing the land, in order to support continued exploration of a special use permit with USFS, then SMPA is open to considering inclusion of that analysis in the report. Given that we need to replace water storage tanks in this area, and that the land will be disturbed in order to do so, Ophir town staff believes that this would be a wise use of grant funding and would like to glean direction from the GA on this item.

SMPA is highly sensitive to supporting the will of its communities. In partnership with SMPA, we have a unique opportunity to leverage State funds to explore ways to improve the reliability of power delivery to our town. If we can achieve that and other town goals in the process, then we are succeeding to support Ophir's community needs and desires. A grant-funded feasibility study is a unique opportunity to explore these possibilities. The results do not infer a commitment to proceed with any identified solution but they serve as a valuable tool to help inform us of what is possible.

SMPA is asking that Ophir provide formal clarity that we are collectively proceeding to look at other solutions, and that we would like SMPA to continue to use the DOLA grant funds to explore alternative microgrid technical approaches that do not require the use of Town Owned land for a community scale solar array.

February 21, 2023

Microgrids for Community Resilience Planning Grant
Colorado Department of Local Affairs
1313 Sherman Street, Room 521, Denver, CO 80203

To Whom it may Concern,

I am Judah Kuper, the chairperson for the Town of Ophir, Colorado Planning and Zoning Committee. I am writing this letter on behalf of the residents of Ophir, Colorado to show our town's support to SMPA in the application for the DOLA Microgrid Community Resilience Planning Grant with an effort to plan and eventually build the Ophir Community Microgrid Project.

Ophir, Colorado is nestled at the bottom of a narrow valley at 9,695 ft elevation in the San Juan Mountains of Southwest Colorado and surrounded by towering peaks. We are situated in the east end of rural San Miguel County with a current population of 200 people living in 87 houses.

Ophir experiences several power outages a year, mostly due extreme weather events. Avalanche activity has caused outages in 2004, 2009, 2019, and as recently as January 18, 2023. Despite SMPA's best efforts to quickly resolve the cause of the outage, many outage conditions can leave residents with no ability to communicate and no ability to heat their homes for undetermined periods of time. Ophir's municipal water system is also unable to produce water during outages, which threatens water supply and local fire response. Extreme wind and storm events also put Ophir at risk of power outages.

In response to these problems, Ophir has begun working with SMPA to pursue the initial planning around various solutions. We expect the planning grant will allow us to further pursue the appropriate locations for a solar array, storage/microgrid controls, as well as other feasibility issues concerning system development, ownership, and financing.

Ophir's recently updated Master Plan includes goals of promoting sustainability and pursuing self-sustaining renewable energy sources. The residents of Ophir are strongly engaged in developing resilience for our community. 82% of residents supported a community solar project when responding to a Master Plan survey.

Thank you very much for your consideration of SMPA's application for the planning grant on behalf of the Town of Ophir.

Sincerely,

Judah Kuper, Planning and Zoning Committee Chair, Town of Ophir



March 19, 2024

San Miguel Power Association
Attn: Wiley Freeman
P.O. Box 1150
Ridgway, CO 81432

Dear Wiley,

The Town of Ophir would like to express gratitude for SMPA's efforts thus far regarding applying for and implementing the DOLA Microgrid Community Resilience (MCR) Planning Grant to fund a plan for a microgrid project to provide electric resiliency for the Town and support us in our goal to become powered by 100% GHG-free electricity. We appreciate SMPA's support and flexibility as we navigate town discussions to incorporate input from our community into direction of the study, and agree with SMPA's new proposal to focus on the following priorities:

1. Explore the viability of locating a community scale battery storage system on "SMPA-managed easement property" with rooftop solar as the source of additional load consumption and battery charging to extend the outage coverage of the microgrid battery and meet the resiliency objectives outlined in the planning grant application.
2. Shift the focus of the solar component of the feasibility study toward analyzing the potential of using existing and projected rooftop solar to achieve town goals of increased local generation- as well as additional outage battery charging.
3. Perform a high level community scale solar system analysis on USFS property that Ophir projects needing to disturb within the next couple of years in order to expand water storage capacity for the town. The potential property boundaries are located within the following GPS coordinates: XXXX. Ophir's understanding is that this high-level study can be performed without SMPA physically accessing the land, and wishes to understand the solar production capacity of this property to support the Town's continued exploration of a special use permit with USFS for the potential use of locating a community scale solar system.

With this letter and the focus priorities above, the Town of Ophir provides formal approval and support to SMPA to move forward with the DOLA MCR grant-funded feasibility study on behalf of the Town.

Sincerely,

Andy Ward, Town of Ophir Mayor