

Subj: FPL SolarNow Program

BACKGROUND

FPL SolarNow is a voluntary program that customers can join for \$9 per month. Over 461 Charlotte County residents are enrolled in this program where funds contribute toward construction of solar energy projects in host public places. FPL offered Charlotte County the opportunity to be a host site. As a host, FPL will install solar “trees” and/or a solar canopy on County property at no cost to the County. The County needs to determine potential locations and equipment type, and execute lease agreements prior to installing these structures on County property.

DISCUSSION

- Program Benefits
 - No cost to County, FPL pays all capital costs and installs, operates, and maintains project
 - County viewed as an environmental steward, promoting clean, renewable energy
 - Neighboring local governments participating include Ft. Myers, Punta Gorda, and Collier. In addition, North Port and Manatee are under review.
- Program Obligations
 - Long-term commitment (trees 10 years, canopy 15 years)
 - FPL rights: 24/7 access to equipment, access/use electrical systems to power computer equipment to monitor power generated, use of County’s public internet services
 - Potential vandalism to equipment (repairs by FPL)
 - BCC approval required for lease agreement(s)
- Solar “Trees”
 - Ability for customers to plug in and charge devices (curved trees only)
 - Generate 1.5 kw (curved) – 3 kw (lift) installed downstream of County meter
 - Energy produced is used by the County facility and billed at existing rate
 - No rent or electric offset received from FPL
 - Commitment (up to 12-month construction term + 10-year term)
 - Cost for County to Terminate at Will = \$20,000 per tree (estimated)
- Solar Canopy
 - Generate 100 kw; independent meter not connected to County facility
 - Annual rent paid to County - \$20/kw/year
 - Commitment (up to 24-month construction term + 15-year term, with (3) 5-year renewals optional)
 - Cost for County to Terminate at Will = \$500,000 per canopy (estimated).

RECOMMENDATIONS

County staff recommends Board consider all factors relating to hosting the SolarNow program including benefits, obligations, terms, and financial risks of terminating at will. Pending consensus to proceed, draft agreements may be presented at a future Board meeting.