



PUBLIC COMMENTS / QUESTIONS SUMMARY

DEFAULT PLAN CONCERNS

DEFAULT SET AT MAXIMUM RENEWABLE ENERGY

- **COMMENT:** "I am advocating for the default plan with 100% renewable energy sources."
- **COMMENT:** "I'd like to convey my strong opinion that our town should not set the default so low. We need to set our sights on using the maximum renewable energy possible."
- **COMMENT:** "While I am pleased with the efforts to obtain more favorable power rates for the town, I hope that we can at the same time use the process to encourage clean renewable energy by selecting at least 62% clean energy for the town."
- **COMMENT:** "I spoke with Southboro's Community Power Choice administrator. They report that in most communities, only 1 to 2 percent of municipal power choice program enrollees will opt up from default to 100% renewable. In their words, "from a renewables perspective, the real power of the program lies in a default as most people will stick with what they get so most participants stay with the default option".

DEFAULT SET AT LOWEST RATE

- **COMMENT:** "So it's important that the lowest rate be the DEFAULT choice. The increased demand is from new uses such as EV cars and heat pumps. To get the money to increase the capacity, National Grid will increase customer rates! Please remember that many residents in town are on fixed income.

AGGREGATE SUPPLIER CONCERNS

- **QUESTION:** "Looks like Marlboro's electric aggregate contract with Inspire Energy is up and they are in the process of a change. I don't know how long these contracts go for –2-3 years?? I was told that the price had increased from .9 cents to .14 plus cents per kilowatt-hour. (We can't win). The Rhode Island company First Point Power may be the new supplier. Marlboro has a different broker (supplier) than that of Northboro, so I don't know how that works."
"The City of Marlboro has gone through this process, and we have members in our Men's Club from Marlboro that informed us that they had found the Inspire Company to be the cheapest."
RESPONSE: Once the Town's program is approved by the state, we will conduct a competitive procurement seeking price bids from the electricity suppliers that supply aggregation programs. The Town will select the bid that is the most advantageous for the Town.

SUPPORT OF THE AGGREGATION PROGRAM

- **COMMENT:** “I think this is a great idea. I come from a town that did this and had rates as low as 10.5 cents per kwh. With people heating and cooling their homes with electricity, the cost of electricity is more important than ever. Can’t wait to see this roll out.”

OPPOSITION TO THE AGGREGATION PROGRAM

- **COMMENT:** “Town government is overstepping its authority by automatically including its citizens in any aggregated electric supply. As consumers, WE get to decide! Period!”
- **QUESTION:** “Massachusetts is an energy choice state already so why is Northborough getting into this business? Also, why would a resident be placed (no opt in, only opt out) in a plan where the price was not advertised? Please consider opt-in, not opt-out for this plan.”
RESPONSE: Before any resident is enrolled in the program, they will receive a letter from the Town explaining the program and providing the prices. We do not know yet when that will happen. First, we need to receive approval from the state which takes many months.
- **QUESTION:** “Can a resident opt out before the establishment of the Municipal Electricity Aggregation? Changing suppliers with National Grid is a time-wasting event and we would like to keep as far away from them as possible.”
RESPONSE: When the program is ready to launch, you will receive a letter from the town explaining the program and the prices and giving you 30 days to opt out before being enrolled.

GENERAL QUESTIONS / COMMENTS

SOLAR

- **QUESTION:** “How does this affect customers who have solar panels?”
RESPONSE: The program does not affect either your use of electricity from your solar panels or the net metering credits or other incentives you receive. All of those will remain the same whether or not you participate in the program.
The program only affects the electricity you purchase from the electric grid when your solar panels are not operating. If you participate in the program, you will receive the program price for that electricity rather than National Grid’s Basic Service price.
- **QUESTION:** “This program sounds great, however I own my solar panels and receive energy credits for my production, if I opt in the program will I still receive my SREC credits. Also, my production reduces my monthly bill. Would that count with new program?”
RESPONSE: The program does not affect either your use of electricity from your solar panels or the net metering credits or other incentives you receive. All of those will remain the same whether or not you participate in the program.
The program only affects the electricity you purchase from the electric grid when your solar panels are not operating. If you participate in the program, you will receive the program price for that electricity rather than National Grid’s Basic Service price.

BILLING

- **QUESTION:** “Will people currently on a budget plan stay on a budget plan or will they have to go back to paying exactly what each month's bill is?”

RESPONSE: You can remain on the budget billing plan if you join the program.

MISC

- **COMMENT:** “BTW - this, (<https://www.greenenergyconsumers.org/>) is who I've had for, I think, decades now, (the 100% wind option) - would mostly be looking at how different your program is from this.”
- **COMMENT:** “Other than the green option, have you considered in town options for increasing renewal energy options?”
- **COMMENT:** “I don't think this is much notice for something of this magnitude.”
- **QUESTION:** “What is the benefit of this program to residents? I see no clear benefit. What is the price difference - now and in the future if residents enroll in power choice? It seems nothing is defined yet. When will residents be mailed notices to opt out? I see no clear timeframe of when this will happen.”

RESPONSE: The benefits of the program are stable prices and the potential for savings compared to National Grid's basic service prices. While most programs like this have provided savings, savings cannot be guaranteed because National Grid's prices change frequently, and their future prices are not known.

The program price and the date of the mailing to customers won't be set until we receive approval of our program from the state, which can take many months.

- **QUESTION:** “I wanted to confirm that proposed changes which would impact the supply charges, but not the delivery rates, would NOT impact eligibility for Mass Saves services? Based upon my research and understanding, Northborough residents would still have access to this valuable program and all its rebates and incentives. I have used the Mass Saves program to install air source heat pumps and think it would be valuable for the town to clarify and confirm that residents would still have access to this valuable program.”

RESPONSE: The program affects only supply rates and does not affect eligibility for MassSave programs.

- **QUESTION:** While the initiative is welcomed, this resident has concerns about the impact on residents with existing supplier contracts and suggestions for reconsidering the funding model for the program's costs, particularly regarding the consultant's fees.

RESPONSE: The fee is a fixed amount per kilowatt-hour which will be multiplied by the number of kilowatt-hours supplied through the program. You are correct that there are other potential fee structures which have their own advantages and disadvantages. In this case, the fee was established as part of the competitive procurement that the Town conducted for a consultant and is the standard fee for these services.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

- **Concerns about National Grid's Notice:**

The email notice from National Grid raises concerns about increasing delivery rates. The delivery rates are set to increase by 3.7% in the first year, followed by a compounded inflation of 1.8% for the next four years, totaling a 9.4% increase over four years. Since 2016, delivery rates have nearly doubled, showing an annual inflation of 8.8%, contributing to Massachusetts having high electricity costs. The increases affect everyone in Northborough, including the town government.

- **Impact on Northborough's Power Choice and Net Metering:**

Inquiry about how net metering calculations are conducted under Northborough Power Choice, specifically whether it occurs at the cycle's end or based on the price difference of power delivered versus received.

- **Net Metering Credit Calculation Queries:**

Whether the net metering credit is based on net kWh or at the end of the billing period.

Scenario exploration: If 1000kWh is generated and 500kWh is used, how is the net credit calculated?

- Option a: Credit based on kWh net, resulting in a net credit of 500kWh at \$0.27kWh or \$135.
- Option b: Credit based on the value of each, resulting in a net credit of \$110 after accounting for the different rates for power received and delivered.
Emphasis on scenario "a" being more favorable for solar panel users.

- **Significance of Net Metering Calculation on Long-term Power Plans:**

How net metering calculations are made can significantly affect the benefits of net metering, especially with long-term power plans that have varying rates across seasons.