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City Aggregation Plan Approved in an Energy Market in Disarray

FITCHBURG - In 2019 Mayor Stephen L. DiNatale initiated developing a municipal aggregation plan and on May 7th the Fitchburg City Council voted to accept the provisions of MGL C 164, S 134 and publicly declared its intent to become an aggregator of electric power on behalf of its residential and business electric customers. On December 31, 2020 the City's municipal aggregation plan was submitted to the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) and on September 30, 2022 it was finally approved.

Mayor DiNatale and other city officials have worked diligently during the last year and nine months with aggregation consultant, Good Energy, L.P., to advance Fitchburg's Community Electricity Aggregation (CEA) plan through the DPU approval process. When implemented CEA will provide Fitchburg residents and small businesses with more competitive electricity choices, longer term, stable electric rates, potentially lower electric rates (although savings cannot be guaranteed), more renewable energy options and increased consumer protection.

Unfortunately, the overall energy market nationally and in Massachusetts are currently in disarray due to a number of international and national factors. On the international level, the war in Ukraine, stoppages in the production and flow of oil and natural gas, damage to pipelines and other political unrest have contributed greatly to global energy price increases. Nationally, energy policy that does not address immediate energy needs, including limits on the production of oil and natural gas, the cancellation of important pipeline facilities and discouragement of investment in the exploration and development of new oil and natural gas reserves, have increased the price of all retail petroleum products and has resulted in high electric prices.

In New England, the electricity is primarily generated by natural gas facilities. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, New England has the highest residential electricity prices in the continental United States and, as of July 2022, Massachusetts ranks as the most expensive.

Due to current energy market conditions, and although Mayor DiNatale is impatient to provide Fitchburg residents and small businesses with the benefits of this program, Good Energy has advised the City not to launch the Community Electricity Aggregation (CEA) until conditions in the market have settled.

For information about the electric industry visit: <https://www.mass.gov/information-for-consumers-about-the-electric-industry>

For information about competitive suppliers please visit Energy Switch Massachusetts at: <https://www.energyswitchma.gov/>



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