

# Southampton Town Moves Ahead on Alternative Power Supplier Plan

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**Update, April 24:** Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, a public hearing scheduled for May 4 will be conducted by video and teleconference. Those planning to watch the proceedings have been asked to go to [lipower.org](http://lipower.org) for more information. Participants wishing to comment during the sessions should send an email to [\[email protected\]](#) indicating their name, organization if any, and which public comment session they will attend (morning or afternoon). They will be called on to speak, one at a time, during the virtual session.

**Originally, April 23:** While the East Hampton Town Board moved on Tuesday to serve notice for a May 21 public hearing on community choice aggregation, its counterparts in Southampton are considerably further along.

C.C.A. is a program by which a town or group of municipalities issues a competitive bid and chooses an electricity supplier on behalf of its residents and small businesses. The aggregation of purchasing power allows the negotiating of lower electricity rates and enables a town or towns to derive its electricity from renewable sources.

Southampton, Brookhaven, and Hempstead are the three municipalities on Long Island that have already passed enabling legislation. To date, only Southampton has taken the next step, issuing a competitive bid and selecting a C.C.A. administrator. Last year, the town chose Joule Assets of Katonah, N.Y., to administer the program, which it has named Choice Community Power.

In order for Southampton to implement a C.C.A. program, the Long Island Power Authority will also have to adopt the rules and regulations of the New York State Public Service Commission's 2016 order authorizing a framework for C.C.A. Six investor-owned utilities in the state adopted a C.C.A. tariff, or terms and conditions, in 2016. LIPA, which is not regulated by the P.S.C., did not. A C.C.A. tariff is a required state prerequisite to launching a program.

LIPA, which posted a C.C.A. tariff in draft form to its website last month, is expected to vote on it at its May 20 board meeting. LIPA will hold a public hearing on the tariff on May 4 at 10 a.m. at the William H. Rogers Building in Smithtown. It is accepting public comments until May 11. Comments can be sent to [\[email protected\]](#), as well as to the Department of Public Service at [\[email protected\]](#).

As part of its effort to urge LIPA to adopt the C.C.A. tariff, the Southampton Town Board is soliciting the public's help. Earlier this month, it launched a two-question survey and explanation of its C.C.A. program at [surveymonkey.com/r/DRRLJFC](http://surveymonkey.com/r/DRRLJFC). At the end of the survey, respondents can sign a letter of support.

Lynn Arthur, energy chair of Southampton's sustainability advisory committee, has also launched Peak Power Long Island, which aims to assist municipalities in navigating the evolving energy industry, and to educate and motivate residents to take action on environmental initiatives. Its website, [peakpowerli.com](http://peakpowerli.com), was unveiled last week. Ms. Arthur has asked East Hampton Town Supervisor Peter Van Scoyoc and Deputy Supervisor Sylvia Overby to join the effort.

"Long Islanders need to understand that we need to fight for what ratepayers outside the LIPA region already have, and that is choice," Ms. Arthur said. "On Long Island we have no choice, hence the program name 'Choice Community Power,' once the C.C.A. program launches."

C.C.A., members of the Southampton Town Board said, will help the town achieve its goal of deriving 100 percent of its electricity needs by 2025. "The key is that C.C.A. is one of the only ways that the town can get access to enough resources to renewable energy in order to meet our 100-percent goal," Deputy Supervisor Frank Zappone said. "There simply aren't enough of those resources within the LIPA region, I don't believe. So C.C.A. allows us to reach beyond and get access to those renewable resources."

As the program's administrator, Joule Assets will craft a request for proposals. "Then it's dependent on the respondents," Mr. Zappone said. "We're open to any resources, from Niagara Falls south — wind farms that might be upstate, other kinds of energy resources around the state. We place no condition, other than it be non-fossil-fuel renewable energy."

Another advantage C.C.A. offers, Councilman John Bouvier said, "is, it incentivizes our constituency to use more alternative energy sourcing. It gives us leverage to put in projects where they have local power sourcing," such as wind, solar, or tidal power.

Ms. Arthur, Mr. Bouvier said, "has been pushing hard for this. I appreciate her work." And Mr. Zappone "has taken a big lead" in implementing a C.C.A. program, he said. "Without them, we'd still be going in circles."