
Beach Haven Residents May Get Electricity Price Break

Involves Enrollment With Alternate Energy Supplier

Jan 31, 2018

Beach Haven homeowners could be seeing lower numbers on portions of their electric bills by summer as the borough is looking to join an energy aggregation program in which the municipality would purchase electricity in bulk from a competitive supplier on behalf of the residents in the community.

The borough council plans to introduce an ordinance authorizing the move at its next meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 13, 7 p.m. There will also be a presentation by Stacia Scaduto of Commercial Utilities Consultants Inc.

Scaduto said customer participation is voluntary.

“The municipality will provide customers an opportunity to opt-out of participating in a municipal aggregation program,” she said. “Customers who do not opt out will be automatically enrolled in the aggregation program, but may opt out at any time after that.”

She said Beach Haven’s utility, Atlantic City Electric, would continue to provide electric transmission and distribution service to participating customers.

“The local utility will continue to handle the account, addressing any outages and maintaining service,” said Scaduto. “The only change is the billing and cost of the energy provided.”

Scaduto said Commercial Utilities has worked with approximately 50 New Jersey communities in developing aggregation programs.

“Homeowners saved between 10 to 18 percent on the electric bills,” she said.

Scaduto said that if Beach Haven adopts an aggregation ordinance in March, the borough would likely have an agreement with the third party supplier by April.

“By June, I would think that people begin realizing savings,” she said.

Mayor Nancy Davis said the proposal is a “no-brainer.”

“I think we all would like to have some savings on our electric bills,” she said. “I’m also going to talk to other Island mayors and see if they would be interested. I’m sure there will be a lot of questions from the public. And hopefully we can do what’s best for the people of Beach Haven.”

Barnegat Expressed Reservations

In 2012, Barnegat Township expressed an interest in an electrical aggregate program, but got cold feet when officials felt the plan might be a little intrusive for residents. They were looking to partner with the Colonial Power group, a Massachusetts-based company that said the township and residents could save an average combined total \$50,000 in energy costs per month. It would have given the town and homeowners another option besides Jersey Central Power and Light or Atlantic City Electric.

Barnegat Township Committeeman Alfonso Cirulli, who was mayor at the time, said a sticking point was the fact that while enrolling would not be mandatory, residents and businesses would be automatically enrolled, unless they chose to “opt out” of the arrangement and remain with JCP&L.

“We thought it would be better with an ‘opt-in’ arrangement,” said Cirulli. “What we wanted to do was first determine if we should try it with the township utility bills, and see if it did save money. If it worked out, then we could offer it as an option for our residents.”

Barnegat Township Committeeman Albert Bille, deputy mayor at the time, said numerous residents were apprehensive about a townwide enrollment program, believing they were forced to sign up with a yet-to-be determined power supplier.

“I didn't think it was government’s place to impose on its residents what type of utility to sign with,” he said. “They should have their own individual choices.”

Eric Englund



Comments (0)
