

Introduced by Buffaloe

First Reading 10-16-23

Second Reading 11-6-23

Ordinance No. 025494

Council Bill No. B 255-23

AN ORDINANCE

amending Chapter 27 of the City Code to repeal Sec. 27-169 relating to the Solar One Utility Program and adopting in lieu thereof a new section establishing a Community Solar Program; and fixing the time when this ordinance shall become effective.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBIA, MISSOURI, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Chapter 27 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, Missouri, is hereby amended by repealing Sec. 27-169 and adopting in lieu thereof a new section to read as follows:

Sec. 27-169. Community Solar Program.

(a) The Community Solar Program set forth in this section is hereby established for qualified residential electric customers, subject to the availability of funds and the availability of solar energy for such purposes.

(b) The purpose of the Community Solar Program is to provide electric utility customers an opportunity to receive a utility bill credit for solar energy production. The program allows residential utility customers to voluntarily subscribe, at a cost, to offset a portion of their energy consumption with credit derived from energy production from solar fields. In this way, customers may participate in and foster solar energy efforts without the customer's purchase or installation of solar energy equipment at the customer's residence.

(c) Solar energy block availability shall be conditioned on the electric utility having adequate blocks of solar energy available and uncommitted to other subscribing customers.

(d) Subscriptions shall be for one (1) block of solar energy. Each block of solar energy represents one- and one-half kilowatts of (1½ kW) electrical capacity. A customer may subscribe to more than one (1) block of solar energy pursuant to program rules and regulations approved by the utility director.

(e) Subscription costs shall include the following deposit and monthly rate charges:

- (1) The one-time non-refundable subscription registration fee to participate in the program shall be twenty-seven dollars (\$27.00) per account subscribed.
- (2) The monthly subscription rate charge shall be set by the utility director and shall consist of the combined cost of the solar subscription fee (SSF) and utility operations fee (UOF).
 - a. The SSF shall remain the same for the subscriber's subscription.
 - b. The UOF may change during the subscriber's subscription. The UOF is based on program costs including solar field maintenance, solar field component replacement, energy transmission and distribution costs, and program administration. The UOF may contemplate blended costs from multiple solar fields.
- (3) Subscriber may terminate their subscription at any time by providing written notice to the electric utility in writing. Such termination shall be effective on the billing cycle following the first full billing cycle which occurs after notice is provided.
- (4) Subscription costs, including registration fee, SSF and UOF, shall not be refunded.

(f) Customers seeking a subscription to the program shall submit an application to the utility department. The utility director, or designee, may approve, deny, or seek additional information regarding the application at the sole discretion of the director. Approvals shall include the length of the subscription term. The following program terms shall be clearly stated on the program application:

The subscription to blocks of solar energy is not an investment opportunity or an investment contract, and the purpose of the program is to provide the customer with the ability to offset a portion of the customer's energy consumption with credit derived from solar energy production.

(g) Credit to the monthly utility bill of a subscriber shall be set by the utility director within the following parameters:

- (1) The bill of a subscriber will be credited based on the amount of solar production in kilowatts from solar fields for one block (1½ kW) of solar energy capacity. The associated amount of energy production shall be credited at the current lowest tier of the effective residential rate. This credit will be applied to the electrical energy usage at the subscriber's residence and any

solar credit beyond the monthly energy usage will be credited to the subscriber for future electrical energy usage at the residence.

- (2) The utility shall measure the electricity consumed by each subscriber according to the utility's metering procedures set forth in chapter 27 of this code. The utility shall calculate the kilowatt hours of solar energy generated from each block of subscribed capacity in the program and reflect a credit for the value of the kilowatt hours from the program.
- (3) If the cost of electricity supplied by the utility exceeds the credit for solar electricity generated by and attributable to the subscriber's capacity in the program during a billing period, the subscriber shall be billed for the net energy usage cost by the utility.
- (4) If the credit from the subscriber's capacity in the program exceeds the energy usage cost for electricity supplied by the utility during a billing period, the subscriber shall be billed for the subscriber's charges for that billing period and a credit of the value of the excess kilowatt-hours generated during the billing period shall be applied to the subscriber's utility bill balance.
- (5) All solar energy production shall be credited against a subscriber's energy usage at the current lowest tier of the effective residential rate. Credit shall only be applied to the subscriber's utility bill balance for the subscriber's electric energy usage at the residence.
- (6) Program solar energy credits shall not be applied to subscriber's non-electric utility bill charges or to any fees.
- (7) The subscriber shall not be entitled to obtain currency or other compensation in lieu of the energy credit. Credits granted by this section shall expire without any compensation or other benefit to the subscriber at the earlier of either:
 - a. Twelve (12) months after issuance of the credit;
 - b. The date subscriber's electric service is disconnected or terminated;
 - c. The date the subscriber terminates their relationship with the utility; or
 - d. The effective date of subscriber's termination of their subscription in the program.
- (8) The subscriber's program cost and credit shall be reflected on the subscriber's monthly utility bill.

(h) The utility director shall designate the number and size of blocks of solar energy available for the program consistent with this section.

(i) The utility director shall designate the term of the subscription, which may be annual, and may be the time at which the amount of program blocks, costs and credits for subsequent subscription terms are adjusted.

(j) The program's blocks of solar energy shall only be available through the program's monthly billed subscription.

(k) All electricity provided by the electric utility through the program shall come from solar production facilities that have signed agreements with the city and are connected to the electric utility distribution system or are city-owned.

(l) If a subscriber moves within the electric utility service area, the subscriber may transfer their program subscription, including blocks of solar energy subscribed, applicable program costs and credits, and the subscription term, to the subscriber's new residence.

(m) Except as otherwise provided in this section, subscribers shall not directly or indirectly transfer, sell, convey, offer, exchange, tender, assign, pledge, or encumber program subscription, blocks of solar energy, capacity or credits. When the account of a deceased or divorced individual is transferred to or assumed by a surviving or divorced spouse or other adult member of the decedent's household, a program subscription on the account may also be transferred or assumed by the same individual.

(n) The city shall retain ownership of program blocks of solar energy and capacity. The city shall retain ownership of program solar energy credits to subscriber's utility bill until and to the extent such credit is applied toward a balance due on subscriber's monthly electric utility bill.

(o) The utility director is authorized to adopt policies, guidelines, and forms to implement and maintain the program.

(p) Progress on implementation, maintenance, and scope of the program shall be reported to the water and light advisory board.

SECTION 2. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after January 1, 2024.

PASSED this 6th day of November, 2023.

ATTEST:



City Clerk


Mayor and Presiding Officer
^ Pro Tem

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



City Counselor