



2020/21 Term

Renewable*Connect Contract Extension

Primary Proposal Contact(s)

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Collaboration

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Project Abstract

Within the spring of 2020, Xcel Energy Key Account Manager Oscar Brandser reached out to the Student Office of Sustainability regarding an immediate, no cost, renewable energy growth opportunity through the extension of our current Renewable*Connect subscription.

Through the Student Office of Sustainability, the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire participates in Xcel Energy's Renewable*Connect (R*C) program annually and has since FY 2013/14 in which the program was known as "Windsorce". This means that the S.O.S. has annually renewed our contract for seven years on a month-to-month program. The impact of that is outlined below through a quote from Manager Brandser:

"R*C provides an easy, affordable path to renewable power enabling customers to utilize a blend of clean wind and solar energy without the need to invest in equipment. Customers pay a premium for the R*C blocks. Each block is 100 kWhs. On the month-to-month R*C program the current R*C price is \$0.94 per block (\$0.0094 per kWh). On the 5-year agreement the current R*C price is \$0.59 per block (\$0.0059 per kWh). UWEC is on the month-to-month R*C program. The \$0.0094 per kWh is a line item on UWEC's statement, see below. I suggest UWEC considers changing from the month-to-month to the 5-year agreement R*C program. By doing this UWEC will increase their R*C energy by 59% by staying at the same budget amount. Also, UWEC's annual energy use with R*C will go from 10% to over 16%, a 59% increase." – Oscar Brandser

Pursuing further information surrounding this recommendation, Lauren Becker reached out to advisor Dr. Jim Boulter, Director of Budget and Resource Planning Tracy Drier, and subsequently Purchasing and Accounts Payable. From these conversations, Lauren discovered that the act of signing on is warranted due to precedent. However, this decision would need to be passed through all levels of our shared governance. Although this change would warrant no immediate cost to our students, any long-term contracts expressing the commitment to allocating future funds is a gray area and should be discussed by the General Assembly body as well as the wider Student Senate body.

Narrative

Sustainability Area(s) Addressed

Outline which areas of sustainability your proposal addresses (i.e. transportation, energy, waste management, climate change, food systems, campus ecology, etc.).

Sustainability Outcomes

Sustainability is valuing the interdependence of our economic, environmental, and social systems. Please explain how your project addresses these three components of sustainability.

1. Economic Responsibilities

Strategic planning efforts such as this optimize the use of student segregated fees, demonstrating fiscal responsibility as our office pursues renewable energy strategies.

2. Environmental Responsibilities

The offsetting of carbon within the Davies Student Center has a direct ecological impact on the health and wellbeing of our student communities.

3. Social Responsibilities

The offsetting of carbon within the Davies Student Center sends a clear message of support for the just transition away from fossil fuels. This was true from the perspective of our students in the 2015/16 Fiscal Year, and remains so today.

Project Timeline

Student segregated fees follow the same policies as the rest of our University. We can enter into long term contracts, but we are only allowed to pay one year at a time. If we enter into this 5 year contract and agreed on annual payments, we would make 5 separate payments (1 per year) over the course of the contract.

If this proposal were to pass through the body, I would reach out to Key Account Manager Brandser, as well as Purchasing Director Melissa Allen who would review and sign the contract when it's established. The timeline of change following our potential decision to enter a 5 year contract is likely one billing cycle, dependent on the University's action following being sent an agreement to review, sign, and return.

Assessment

A routine report will be provided through communications with Facilities and future sustainability staff, reviewing this fiscal relationship.

Maintenance

N/A

Communication

Communication regarding the Student Office of Sustainability's fiscal commitment to offsetting the energy usage of the Davies Student Center is in need of strengthening. Increased communication from the University will be requested following regardless of the passage of this proposal. Increased communication by our current Executive Board on the hand of student dollars in the energy efficiency of the institution will be pursued regardless of the passage of this proposal.

Project Budget

Please include a detailed project budget and budget narrative that clearly explains all line items associated with the project.

There is no immediate cost to this initiative. However, to fully understand the significance of a five year contract, evaluate the attachment below.

UWEC Main Electric				
02/02/20 - 03/01/20 (28 Days)				
ELECTRICITY charges RATE: Large time-of-day				
DESCRIPTION	USAGE	UNITS	RATE	CHARGE
Customer charge				\$180.00
On-Peak energy	652800	kWh	\$0.074686	\$48,755.02
Off-Peak energy	868800	kWh	\$0.048824	\$42,418.29
2017 TCJA credit	1521600	kWh	\$0.00301	\$4,580.02 CR
WI fuel refund credit	1521600	kWh	\$0.00077	\$1,171.64 CR
Renewable*Connect	168300	kWh	\$0.0094	\$1,582.02
Energy chg credit	387096	kWh	\$0.015	\$5,806.44 CR
Customer demand	4440	kW	\$1.50	\$6,660.00
On-Peak demand	3048	kW	\$10.78	\$32,857.44
			total	\$120,894.67
Current UWEC R*C on month-to-month agreement				
per month	168300 kWh		\$0.0094	\$1,582.02
per year	2019600 kWh		\$0.0094	\$18,984.24
Proposed UWEC R*C on 5-year agreement				
per month	268139 kWh		\$0.0059	\$1,582.02
per year	3217668 kWh		\$0.0059	\$18,984.24
<i>This represents a 59% R*C increase with the same budget.</i>				
<i>Based on 2019 campus kWh use, over 16% of the campus electric energy would be R*C.</i>				
<i>Combined with Xcel's renewable generation, over 45% of the campus kWh use would be served by renewable generation.</i>				
UWEC 2019 energy use	19,526,400 kWhs			
ann R*C now	2,019,600 kWhs			
tot % R*C now	10.3%			
ann R*C w/5-yr	3,217,668 kWhs			
tot % R*C w/5-yr	16.5%			
annual R*C budget	\$19,000	same, no change		