

## Winnetka Future Energy Coalition

### **Suggested Questions for IMEA**

*Prepared in advance of Feb. 11, 2025 Study Session*

#### **Contract Costs & Terms**

1. Can IMEA provide independently sourced projections or models showing potential savings or costs compared to other energy suppliers? Can IMEA share projections or models about the energy mix compared to other Illinois energy suppliers?
2. IMEA documents suggest that rates are projected to significantly decrease by roughly 25% when bonds are paid off in 2035. What risks are factored into these projections? What risk factors could negatively affect this projection? Are there going to be additional capital investments planned that might require new bonds?
3. Winnetka may want more than the 10% local generation. If we do renew the contract, how would that be achieved? What is the process?
4. If Naperville or St. Charles does not sign the contract in April, what will be the consequences for Winnetka?

#### **IMEA Governance & Transparency<sup>1</sup>**

5. Since IMEA last presented, have you changed your stance on committing to an Integrated Resource Plan (IRP)? If yes, will IMEA Board members have a role in approving the IRP consultant? Is there a timeframe for when the IRP will be completed?
6. Would IMEA be willing to share reports about IMEA's lobbying efforts and expenses so we can evaluate whether IMEA's lobbying is aligned with Winnetka's interests?

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<sup>1</sup> **Note on transparency & governance:** IMEA, a joint action agency, is not subject to the regulations and oversight the state mandates for investor-owned utilities. It is not required to conduct industry standard resource planning. Pending state legislation (the Municipal and Cooperative Electric Utility Planning and Transparency Act) would address this problem. In the meantime, it is up to Winnetka Trustees to ensure it engages in oversight and requires transparency.

## Coal Plant Ownership Risk<sup>2</sup>

7. Will IMEA commit to providing Winnetka information about major projects anticipated at Prairie State? IMEA and the eight other agency-owners of Prairie State are exploring a major carbon capture project but use the Prairie State Energy Campus confidentiality agreement to block transparency about that effort. Winnetka Trustees have not received a presentation about a carbon capture project and have not directed the IMEA Board on its position regarding carbon capture at Prairie State.
8. If Prairie State fails to reduce emissions because - for instance - a carbon capture effort underperforms expectations, what protections does Winnetka have to protect ratepayers and taxpayers from high legal or litigation costs?
9. After 2035, when member communities have paid off their bonds, will Winnetka be at risk for ongoing ownership costs or liabilities of Prairie State or Trimble?
10. If/when energy prices from Prairie State or Trimble County become uncompetitive relative to market prices for other energy sources, can IMEA end its offtake contracts and switch sources? If IMEA cannot do this, what other options will IMEA have to protect its members from high Prairie State and Trimble County energy prices?
11. Has IMEA done scenario planning about the ownership risks of the two coal plants? If so, will IMEA share these documents? (Some risks might include plant failure, regulation risks, legal penalties from current litigation, lawsuits from pollution, public health, workplace issues, or emissions, or bankruptcy)
12. Do IMEA's ownership stakes and offtake commitments to Prairie State and Trimble County power plants impact its ability to take advantage of technological advancements in energy production and management, which could lead to a more cost-effective energy source?

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<sup>2</sup> **Note on Coal Plant Ownership Risk:** The 2007 Winnetka Trustee vote to invest in Prairie State was based on cost and clean technology promises that were not met. Prairie State campus cost double what was projected and has never been "clean:" the plant operates without a Title V permit, required under the Clean Air Act, a permit required because its emissions exceed federal limits. Indeed, Prairie State is subject to an [ongoing lawsuit](#), which may have consequences for future rates. As Prairie State faces mandates to get to Net Zero, plans for carbon capture and any consideration of renewable energy alternatives are largely hidden from the citizens and ratepayers. IMEA board meetings provide very limited information.