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Government

Town Expects 'Green' Returns From New Electricity Supplier

Mayor: Reliant Energy will provide \$250K savings, 50% renewable energy over 24 months.

By [John Dunphy](#) | [Email the author](#) | January 11, 2012

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It was an auction held much like eBay—except the prices were going down, not up, during the last frantic minutes of bidding.

Town officials participated in an "energy auction" on Tuesday, seeking to contract a new supplier for the electricity used in town-owned and managed properties and interests, including town buildings and street lights. A number of bids came in, but ultimately, it was [Reliant Energy Northeast LLC](#), that came ready to negotiate.

Town Council voted to approve the contract, which will lock Reliant into a \$.07425 per kilowatt hour cost for 24 months, effective Feb. 1. The projected cost for electricity through JCP&L—which had sourced supply from a number of sources, was expected to be \$.10714 over the same time frame, Business Administrator Michael Rogers said. This will lead to a taxpayer savings of \$250,000 of those 24 months, or just over one tax-point, Mayor Tim Dougherty said.

Paul Miller, with Morristown Office of Sustainability, said there was currently a 10-year low costs on energy, which meant, "it's a great time to lock them in."

Rogers said five of the top six bids were from Reliant. However, it was not just about the lowest cost this time around.

"We're trying to incorporate 'green,'" Dougherty said at the Tuesday Town Council meeting. "You have the opportunity tonight to decide to save \$250,000 for taxpayers and give 50 percent renewable energy. It's a huge step forward to helping make our planet better. This is real 'green' energy. It's unbelievable."

Reliant, part of the NRG Company, supplies electricity to several markets in the U.S., including New Jersey, Texas, Illinois, Pennsylvania and

Maryland. According to [its website](#), "the combination of NRG's commitment to sustainability, renewable energy and innovation along with Reliant's heritage of service since competition began, innovation and community involvement uniquely positions us to create value for our customers, employees, shareholders and enhance our commitment to preserving the environment."

JCP&L remains the distributor of electricity. Rogers said the town had been receiving its supply of electricity from JCP&L, which had sourced the product from multiple sources.

Councilwoman Alison Deeb asked the administration if they could have more time to review the energy auction and its findings. Given the constantly-fluctuating energy market, however, if the town was to get the 24-month contract at the desired rate, they only had 24 hours to decide.

While she seemed a little off-put by being asked to make a decision on something she just received, Deeb said, "I think the savings speak for themselves."

The chosen contract, however, was not the highest in taxpayers savings.

Another bid had come in during the energy auction that was projected to save taxpayers \$267,000 over the same 24-month period. That one, however, did not include energy from any renewable sources.

Miller said, with Morristown's energy supplier supplying half of its electricity through renewable sources, a number of financial opportunities will open up for things such as grants through organizations like Sustainable Jersey.

Overall, "I think the community will be excited to see the cost savings, and good policy," Dougherty said.

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