The greater part of the meeting was devoted to a presentation, discussion and questions regarding the City-initiated study to determine the feasibility and investments necessary to achieve 100 percent renewable-energy sources for electricity delivered to LADWP customers. The effort is entitled LA100 and the study is being performed by NREL, the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, headquartered in Golden, Colorado. The effort includes a large and diverse advisory group representing interests from what can reasonably claimed to be all concerned parties. Preliminary study results are scheduled to be available in December 2019 and will eventually compare 12 study scenarios to the previously approved 2017 Final Strategic Long-Term Resource Plan (SLTRP). Scenarios include that of State legislation, SB100, that has a 2045 goal for 100 percent and the City LA-Leads goal of 2035. Use of the SLTRP for base comparison was hotly contested by a representative from the Food and Water Watch organization who even claimed that using such a measure was illegal! (This study, need I add, is very contentious and emotion-provoking.) A repository of information on this effort is available at ladwp.com/cleanenergyfuture.

Executive Director of the Office of Public Accountability and Ratepayer Advocate, Fred Pickel, explained his organization’s opposition to the LADWP Boards’ recent approval of a Feed In Tariff (FiT) program expansion. Per his report: “The program’s proposed price of 14.5 cents per kwh is many multiples (5.8) above that needed to supply desert solar or reduce carbon. It siphons away resources better spent fixing this program so it can grow, without relying on retail prices for wholesale procurement. No one OPA knows of is following DWP’s “leadership” in over-compensating wholesale power, and the program thus reflects poorly on the City.”

Pickel also gave an overview of the mayor’s recent initiative, following FBI raids of DWP offices, to create an Inspector General to oversee the DWP, this effort being in addition to the Ratepayer Advocate whose job is restricted to rate review and equity among rate types, residential, commercial and industrial. Former chairman of the California Fair Political Practices Committee, Dan Schnur, has been hired to establish how the particulars of the IG office will be organized and its purview. At his time little of substance if any is known.