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## Giving a lesson in power

**Company urges county to consider energy systems** DAVE DECAIRE,(left), of Oswego, Dan Randolph, of Montezuma, and Lew Springer, of Owasco, listen to a presentation Monday by Bob Mount, president of the Utah energy corporation Power Innovations, about energy independence. **BOB MOUNT gives his presentation to the local officials.**

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**By Beth Beer Cuddy**  
Staff writer

Auburn and Cayuga County have the resources to become the first energy-independent community in the country, the president of a Utah-based power technology company said Monday at a meeting of county and city officials in Auburn.

Bob Mount, president of Power Innovations and a former Auburn resident, spoke to 50 county and city officials and residents on ways to manage, generate and store power. His PowerPoint presentation was spliced with marketing video clips of the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City.

Mount's company provided power during the games. The Olympics occasionally cropped up during the presentation as a metaphor for what could happen in Cayuga County.

"Every Olympic medal starts with some person dreaming about that," said David Colegrove, president of Auburn-Cayuga Development Corp., or A-CDC. He coordinated the meeting between the company and government officials.

He asked the audience to think about whether it wanted to take the steps to make the area "a great place again."

He said energy independence will happen if people are willing to take the risks.

"If everyone goes home with just questions, doubts and concerns, it won't," Colegrove said.

Colegrove said A-CDC has been researching energy issues for the last 10 months and discovered that the city and county pay \$400 million to \$500 million annually in energy bills, money that does not stay in the community.

Mount listed energy resources that the community could take advantage of, including hydropower, solar, wind, thermal and natural gas.

He said within five years, the community could be taken off the power grid if it sustained itself with alternative energy. He said residents and businesses could see lower energy bills even sooner.

The Auburn Municipal Power Agency, approved in a citywide referendum Nov. 2, could help put the energy infrastructure into place, Mount said.

Mount said that if Power Innovations wins a contract with the city and county, it would manage the projects and seek grant money.

In return, the city and county would make a commitment, provide potential seed money and offer property for generation sites, he said. No official decisions were made Monday night, although Auburn Mayor Timothy C. Lattimore publicly expressed support for the proposal.

Lattimore said others needed to say aloud that they wanted to move forward.

"We have to be like (William) Seward and make a commitment - even if it might be foolish - to do this," Lattimore said.