

Climate Change Council

Draft Meeting Minutes: 2021-03-18

Committee Members:

Kent Hartlage
Susan Edwards
Renee D'Argento
Jason Veysey
Beth Faxon
Jessica Veysey Powell
Jim Scarsdale
Chuck Walkovich (Arrived ~ 8:00)

Members of the Public

Tony Beattie
Deb Fountain

Welcome

Started at 7:08

Ken: Welcome

1st on Agenda

Review and approval of minutes

Sue moved to approve, Jason seconded (for minutes of 24 February 2021)

Motion passes (7-0)

Tonight's Agenda

Reports from work groups

Energy Production Team

Jason reporting; Other members: Bob, and Sue

1. **Sol Smart designation**
Bob trying to try to find out how to get Bronze Certification, Silver and Gold later
2. **Pursue a signature project**
Solar Power on Landfill – Bob is taking lead, Sue assisting
Will notify Andrew MacClean (town administrator) and Tony Beattie
3. **Consider retrofitting community facilities with roof-top solar projects**
Jason is reaching out to Andrew MacClean
4. **Lower Priorities** – investigating outreach & education

- a. **Biofuel production** and others
- b. **Outreach to existing renewable energy facilities in town**
 - i. **Hydro power plant on Nashua River**
 - Paula Terassi may have information
 - Town of Reading is purchasing the energy
 - Current owner refurbished and modernized plant and doubled output
 - Have supported a Canoe launch
 - Is there a fish ladder? Yes (Deb)
 - ii. **Solar farm on Route 111**

Energy & Efficiency Group

Renee reporting. Members: Renee, Jim, Beth

1. **Early adoption of updated Stretch Code**
2. **Tree Preservation** – investigating model bylaws from other towns
 - General Law Chapter 87 for Shade Trees
3. **Investigating bylaw on scenic roads, stone walls, etc** – Beth & Renee
4. **Net-zero building code bylaw**
 - Ken following Senate debate
 - Will forward highlights
 - Solar siting, net metering changes, etc.
5. **Look at energy consumption in town** by sector – town, residential, commercial, industrial
 - Information gathering underway
 - Provide ways to help people learn how to reduce consumption
 - Ken to request town audit info from Andrew (Town Administrator)
 - Jim – get data from National Grid
6. **Research:** Webinars, etc.

Q: (Deb) Has there been an attempt to discuss rolling potential bylaws into Planning Board?

- Discuss with Chuck (on PB)
- 5-6 areas being discussed
- PB has contracted out the work on zoning bylaws to NMCOG

C: (Deb) When referring to trees, make it “native trees”

Energy Procurement Team

Sue is reporting. Members: Jason, Sue, Renee

1. **Municipal Electricity Aggregation Program**
 - Master Plan Recommendation (8.15)
 - Statement: “Building on Green Community Designation ...”
 - Renee to contact NMCOG
 - Sue – investigate Pepperell Electricity Demand
 - Jason – to contact Good Energy group about presentation
 - Try to get Aggregation on Fall Town Warrant?

- DOER doc on how to do Municipal Aggregation
- Link on Sue's Google Drive with resources
- Ken: Other towns who have done Municipal Aggregation – we should talk to them
 - Who have they chosen and why?
 - Programs: (a) all green, (b) hybrid, (c) whatever the provider offers
 - What pros & cons have the communities weighed?
 - What challenges have the towns gone thru?
- Jason – Explanation – Mass DOER guidelines for municipal aggregation
 - Early in process – go to town meeting and approve
 - 3 tiers
 - Requires a consultant (leaders: Good Energy, Colonial Power Group)
 - masscea.com (Good Energy) – prebuilt program of 25 towns to opt
 - Some towns have opted NOT to renew the aggregation env
 - Maybe invite to meeting
- Initial preference is a “hybrid model” – better than state, and have a “higher level” than others could buy into.
- Goal – don't raise electricity bills – competitive with National Grid rates.

- Master Plan has recommendation, but no details – leaving implementors the latitude to pursue as seems correct.

Question: are we asking NMCOG for consulting? Recommendation is to wait until we're sure what we want. NMCOG is a budget item.

Carbon Sequestration, Education, and Outreach

Sue presenting, Members: Sue, Beth, and Ken

1. **Outreach program unfolding: Climate change, reducing pesticides, fertilizers**
2. **Lawrence Library** – keen in partnering with CCC on programs that we're doing
3. **Arranged a talk with Mark Richardson** – “Cut your lawn down to size”
 - Who should be targeted for outreach? In-town contractors: Babin, Pepperell Garden Club, others?
 - (7.13) Improve soil conditioning and health
 - Talk by Connor Steadman
 - Using soil for carbon sequestration
4. **Met with Library:** One of the staff has a background in climate studies – interested in what we're doing
 - Monthly Series: “Conservation Conversations”
 - biochar, etc.
 - Podcasts to distribute to town
5. **Individuals and organizations to reach out to and participate with**
6. **Possibility of creating a brochure**

Question: (Renee) What about what our municipality is doing? Do we need to work on what needs to be done?

Answer: Sue – definitely talk to town about deicing, herbicide, pesticide, fertilizer, etc usage by the town

7. Chuck also interested in outreach

OSRD

Hasn't met yet

Frequency of Meetings?

Renee:

Workgroups: every two weeks

Full group: monthly or 6 weeks

Sue:

Workgroups: some 2 weeks, some monthly

Valuable having Ken to remind everyone to fulfill commitments

Recommended shared Google Docs as repository of information.

Jason:

Full group: monthly

Jim:

Proposed asynchronous organic conversations managed via a WIKI, with meetings that are arranged as they become necessary.

Consensus:

Full group:

Next meeting: April 8

Subsequent: 2nd Thursday of every month

Toolkit to Use for Information Sharing

- Google Docs
- Wiki
- Website
- Sue has volunteered her corp Zoom account for subgroup meetings

Other Communications

1. Tony Beattie – Just came from a meeting with New England Energy – group with standing with energy commissions in every New England state

Utility companies have been good at keeping doors closed to public input.

Can we maintain centralized power and get to green energy?

Tony advocated for legislation to allow farms to be dual-use, opening communications to a state admin, Pat Woodcock, who sent a reply.

2. Conversation with U.S. Congressional Rep Lori Trahan

Interested in sharing our model of the Climate Change Council with all towns in her district.

Additional Topics

Sue – interested in identifying what communications are available.

Motion to adjourn: Renee, Second: Susan – Approved (8-0).