

MINUTES Town of Exeter Energy Committee

Wednesday Oct 13th, 2021 at 3:30 pm. Wheelwright Room

Betsy Stevens, Amy Farnham, Lew Hitzrot, Renay Allen, Camille Webber Julie Gilman Members of the public: none

Abenaki Tribal Land Acknowledgment read in honor of Indigenous People's Day

ONGOING BUSINESS:

Last month's minutes: approved

Exeter Community Power Cmte (ECPAC) : Lew reports the public education campaign is about to begin. Will include filmed panel w experts, including a rep from Unitil, letters to the editor and a tri-fold brochure, and more. Julie asks to be sure to mention a timeline, and that the public will have a chance to vote on this in March. Stephanie Marshall has joined this spin-off cmte, the ECPAC. Julie has become an alternate to the Board of Directors at CPCNH, the new non-profit formed last week, and Nick Devonshire has become treasurer for the BOD at CPCNH. Don Kreis, of the Office of the Consumer Advocate of NH in Concord (advocates for the ratepayer) was quoted as saying " this (Community Choice legislation) is the best thing to happen to ratepayers in 25 years" as it effectively removes the monopoly.

Sustainability Officer Update: Dave was at a conference in VT, he sent this email from Ned Reynolds of ReVision - "...Wanted to share this recent column by the state's Consumer Advocate, Don Kreis: <http://indepthnh.org/2021/10/03/coming-soon-dramatic-rate-increases-for-electricity-and-natural-gas/> As you surely appreciate by now, it's the unfortunate reality of NH policy that the value of solar energy, it's economic return, is entirely a function of utility rates (all other things being equal). And as you know, the historically low default energy rates of the past several years, driven by a glut of fracked natural gas in the Northeast and nationally, has posed a continuing challenge to justifying solar projects of all types. Prior to spring of this year, we at least had continuously declining costs per watt (via improvements in panel efficiency) on our side. 2021's Inflation in panel prices, along with those for copper, steel, aluminum, and even labor changed that, leading to our somewhat nervous discussion this summer. So the end of the natural gas glut and resulting default electricity rates <\$0.07/kWh is welcome, from that standpoint. Thanks to your leadership, and the Energy Committee's advocacy, the Town of Exeter is perfectly positioned to capitalize on its landfill resource with a solar project that will save the Town Millions \$\$ over the long run – in fact you and the Select Board are going to be viewed as prescient and "on top of it" as you are putting this project in place just as dramatically higher rates hit everyone, including the Town, early next year....We submitted the Interconnection Application to Unitil and it will be back by Nov 15th."

Cmte Field trips: LES Conference in Nashua Oct 8th was very forward-looking, informative and inspirational. Lew suggests we try to get the keynote speaker, Dr. Elizabeth Wilson, of Dartmouth's' Irving Institute for Energy to speak at the Exeter Town Hall. UPCOMING: The Oct 28th ISO-NE Zoom tour will be held in the Nowak Room and filmed by Exeter TV.

Student Liaison Update: Camille has written her first article this year for EHS, on Community Choice Power. They are fundraising for a new domain. She is co-hosting a Zoom with the regional HS energy club with Belmont High, topic is animals.

Town Hall attic insulation: Amy reports one quote is in, second one viewing next week. She also viewed the proposed Parks & Rec building near Churchills. Greg Bisson is ordering an energy audit. We will assist if needed to help efficiency.

3rd annual NDEW EV Day recap: 25 local owners, 2 dealerships, 30 test-drives. Excellent press coverage. Lots of fun! After covid delay, Renay finally back in talks with Chargepoint, etc. Working with Jackson Kaspari, Resilience Coordinator of Dover, on EVC research project. Jon Flewelling, Exeter citizen, may work on this project too, as a "friend" of the Energy Cmte.

Energy "Ambassador" Partnerships: Renay reports she is working with Natural Resources Planner, Kristen Murphy, on reestablishing the Alewife festival. Many other town cmtes are involved. Possibly a Saturday in mid-May at Founder's Park, as well as inside the public library. This will be about viewing the fish, as well as environmental tables and children's activities.

Adjourned 4:45 pm

Next meeting Nov 10th, upstairs filmed in Nowak Room

ACTION ITEMS:

Betsy: Look into Dr Liz as a collaborative speaker with us/ PEA speaker series. **Amy:** insulation quotes

Camille: Send web link to Renay for EHS co-hosted Zoom, to put on Energy Facebook page.

Renay: Work on EVC with Chargepoint, Kaspari, etc. **Lew & Cliff:** ECPAC media campaign.