

APPROVED
Hartford Energy Commission Minutes
May 23, 2019

Present: Erik Krauss, Martha McDaniel, Lynn Bohi, Niki Thran, Fred Randall (phone); Alan Johnson, Selectboard Liaison; Geoff Martin, Staff

Erik called the meeting to order at 6:34.

Minutes: The Commission first reviewed the draft minutes of the special meeting on April 15. After a wording change, Martha moved the minutes of the special meeting pass as amended. Niki seconded and the motion passed.

The draft minutes for the regular meeting on April 25 were postponed awaiting comments from other members.

Block Party: Martha and Geoff will set up and work the early shift with Erik, Paige, and Ryan working the later shift and breaking down. Niki has been asking businesses in town for donations so that HEC can purchase LED bulbs. HEC could share its table with Efficiency Vermont (EVT). In addition to the display items mentioned in April, information about the Heat Saver Loan and the charts that Martha prepared for Town Meeting Day will be displayed. The focus for the day will be on transportation: Go! Vermont, Advance Transit, and e-bikes. Geoff will ask Advance Transit about sharing the table. Martha will think about sewing the HEC logo on a table cloth.

HEC Mission Statement: Several members and staff worked on this. Members walked through the draft. Discussion revolved around wording for low income citizens and energy sufficiency. Members were asked to think about wording. A decision on the final wording was postponed until Ryan and Paige have had time to discuss.

Transportation Work Group: The Green Drinks meeting in Woodstock was underwhelming. The group will re-think how and where to connect Hartford, Hartland, and Woodstock drivers who are commuting to Hanover and Lebanon. Erik pointed out that one of the best things HEC can do to reduce transportation emissions is to support increasing funding for Advance Transit. The discussion included: getting a petition on the ballot, expenses of ride sharing services, saving CO₂, determining the tipping point when the car is more expensive than carpooling, and the cost per mile of a ride share.

Building Integrity/ Renewables Work Group:

- Building Performance Campaigns: Building Integrity is scheduling public events at two condo associations in June/July (Hemlock Ridge) and July/August (Coach Road). Hemlock

Ridge will concentrate on solar panels and heat pumps, because weatherization is difficult there and their current heating systems are beginning to fail. Coach Road will concentrate on insulating garages because there are water pipes running through the garages and the association requires garages to be kept above 55 degrees. The construction of both association buildings makes normal insulation very difficult.

- **Revolving loan fund program:** The Vermont State Employees Credit Union (VSECU) has a very good program that is cheaper than anything HEC could design. They are happy to have HEC send them up to 30 customers per month. VSECU has a loan loss reserve built into their program. The Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program is no longer accepting applications. There was discussion about whether the town could run PACE with VSECU underwriting the PACE. Peter Adamczech may still be at VEIC and could answer the question.
- **Net Zero:** The work group talked to Efficiency Vermont about their net-zero certification program. They advised against requiring the use of their program in the zoning regulations, since the program may disappear someday. The EVT representative suggested a couple of building standards that would the town could include in its zoning regulations that would meet net-zero standards. The Town would need to either have a building inspector ensure the new buildings were built to the code, or continue to accept self certification.

Miscellaneous Updates:

- **Energy Chapter of Master Plan:** The Selectboard held the first public hearing on May 21st. There were no comments from members of the public. The Selectboard had no objections and liked the environmental justice definition, and added a request to track greenhouse gas emissions. The second Selectboard public hearing is June 4. After that, the Plan goes to the Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission for final approval.
- **Vital Communities Roundtable:** Paige attended the Roundtable. She will report on it at a future meeting.
- **Valley Quest for Energy Sites:** Paige was not available to present, thus discussion on this item was postponed.

Municipal Projects:

- **Quechee Wastewater Treatment Plant:** The facility will be installing timers for the pumps to run less often during peak hours. EVT has estimated how much money will be saved and is looking into whether that will count in the curtailed load.
- **Fire Department Community Solar:** See April minutes for the description of this project. The Selectboard has approved the project. The credits will go either to Twin Pines or to the Vermont State Housing Authority.

- **Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility Conference:** Geoff presented on a panel about equity and energy innovation projects in Hartford.
- **Letters of Support:** Geoff wrote a letter supporting Advance Transit's (AT) application for a federal grant for four electric busses. These would be additional to AT's existing fleet. He also wrote a letter to support the Energy Action Network's grant application to re-do the Atlas and to help facilitate the hiring of energy coordinators for other towns. Additionally, Geoff wrote a letter to the Public Utilities Commission (PUC). The PUC is considering elimination of the "joint letter" provision in the definition of preferred sites. If an application for a new renewable development involves a site that is not preferred, a Town and Regional Planning Commission can write a letter in support of designating the site as preferred.

HEC will need a temporary Clerk for June.

FERC Order Number 841: There was a recent hearing. FERC ruled that states are not permitted to opt out of the rule about 100 KW batteries. The ISOs and RTOs did not like the rule that they must buy battery power at wholesale rates. This expands the wholesale market to anyone with a large enough storage device.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Bohi, Clerk