

APPROVED
Hartford Energy Commission Minutes
June 27, 2019

Present: Ryan Scelza, Erik Krauss, Paige Greenfield, Martha McDaniel, Niki Thran, Fred Randall (by phone); Geoff Martin, staff; Alan Johnson, Selectboard liaison

Erik called the meeting to order at 6:31.

Additions/Changes to the Agenda:

Fred proposed discussing the conference he went to in Washington, D.C. Erik suggested moving that discussion to the “Misc. Reports” section of the meeting. The Commissioners agreed. No other changes were made.

Minutes:

The HEC first discussed the minutes from the April 25th meeting. Erik commented that Lynn had suggested the minutes should note if and when someone leaves the meeting. Fred had called in during this meeting, and his call was dropped. It will be noted in the minutes when Fred’s call was dropped. Martha moved and Niki seconded that the minutes pass as amended. The motion passed.

The HEC then discussed the May 23rd minutes. Paige commented that the minutes stated no Commissioners attended the Energy Roundtable, but Paige had attended the Roundtable. Ryan moved and Martha seconded that the minutes pass as amended. The motion passed.

Transportation Work Group Update:

Martha attended the Upper Valley Transportation Management Association (UVTMA) meeting. She heard about Dartmouth’s carpooling efforts from Patrick O’Neil. Dan Dahman from DHMC was also there. Both are very interested in working with the HEC to promote carpooling. Martha noted that there are only 80 designated spots for carpoolers at DHMC, and of those only 50 are in use. DHMC can pull the zip codes of where their employees live, so that the HEC can target the appropriate people in future efforts. The workgroup will try the “meet your carpooler” idea at Dartmouth and DHMC, and also utilize the daily email sent to employees and the annual mailing about parking to try to promote carpooling.

Erik asked why people do not want to carpool. It was suggested that there is an anxiety about losing flexibility by not having a car. Ryan mentioned that some people liked the fact that carpooling forces them to leave work at a designated time. It would be useful for the workgroup to come up with counterarguments to any barriers that people perceive to carpooling.

Erik met Ross McDonald at VECAN, who is running a pilot program for microtransit in Montpelier. He suggested seeing if we can learn anything from that pilot.

Martha noted that Go! VT is officially launching, and Commute Smart NH has as well. She also said that Bethany Fleishman thinks that the community energy listserv may be a good way to connect with other energy committees, and the work group will be working with Hartland, Norwich, and potentially Woodstock on communication around transportation. Finally, the work group will be working with Van Chestnut of Advance Transit (AT) to strategize on how to get more funding for AT.

Building Integrity/Renewables Work Group:

The building performance campaigns are close to being finalized. The first will be at Hemlock Ridge on July 27th from 9:30-11:00. Geoff will share the flyer with HEC once it's finalized. All Commissioners are welcome to attend. The second event is at Coach Road on August 26th from 4:30 – 6:00.

The work group is working with Town staff on a net-zero new construction standard. They have reached a deeper understanding of the issue. The next steps are first to figure out if the standard should be an amendment to the zoning regulations, or a standalone ordinance. Paige said that TRORC can be a resource.

The second step is to hold stakeholder discussions on the standard. There is a one-pager describing the need for the standard on the Sharepoint. The work group is thinking that there should be a voluntary phase before making the standard mandatory to work through any issues and make sure people, including builders, are comfortable with the process. The stakeholder discussions would be with builders, both those that are building to net-zero currently, and those that are unfamiliar with this type of construction. Erik noted this is intentional in order to hear both sides of the issue. Martha noted that High Meadow builders in Lebanon might be a builder to invite to the meetings.

The final step is to research the standard and determine the best way to enforce it. Erik pointed out that the standard should be very clear about the goal (net-zero) without putting many restrictions on how that goal can be achieved. Paige asked if the work group was aware of any data on how such a standard might negatively impact on development. Erik said that there is not much data available in the U.S., because it's not being done in many places. Martha mentioned that Twin Pines is very energy savvy and may be a good stakeholder to meet with. Alan also suggested meeting with developers like Matt Bucy and others, as well as architects. He also pointed out that having multiple builders in the room together may encourage those that don't already build to net-zero to figure out how to do so. Martha suggested that the work group hold stakeholder meetings first, and then seeing if Rebecca Sanborn Stone could facilitate a public hearing on the issue.

Misc Reports:

Resilient Hartford Liaison Report: Niki gave an overview of the CROH meeting. The meeting included a discussion of the Resilient VT conference, the Block Party and the potato fest, the community workshop on disaster scenarios, and the importance of swales. Erik noted that there may be potential synergies between HEC and CROH on the hazard mitigation planning, including working on microgrids/islanding.

Vital Quest for Energy Sites Update: Paige found out that Beth Roy is now in charge of Valley Quest. The HEC is responsible for putting the Quest together, and then Vital Communities will include it as one of their Quests. Niki offered to help Paige put it together.

Update from Fred: Fred mentioned that he talked to some of the RTOs about compliance with FERC Order 841. Fred will put together a summary of the Order and what Hartford can do to take advantage of the program.

Fred left the meeting at 7:47.

Extinction Rebellion: Erik went to a meeting of the Extinction Rebellion, which is an apolitical group using non-violent protest to demand urgent action on climate change. Demands include getting to carbon neutrality by 2025, and using citizen assemblies to develop plans to do so. The next general assembly meeting of the Upper Valley chapter is on July 7th, possibly at the Bugbee Senior Center, and Erik encouraged Commissioners to attend.

Municipal Projects Update:

- **Community solar array at the Fire Department:** The Town is working with HFI instead of Twin Pines Housing Trust, because Twin Pines does not have enough electricity demand to use the credits from this array.
- **Solar for condo associations workshop with Vermont Law School (VLS):** Partnering with VLS to present on common issues and opportunities that condo associations may have for going solar. Planning to invite as many associations in Hartford as possible.
- **GridThink storage technology:** Geoff spoke with someone at a startup called GridThink that is developing a technology that can store excess electricity in a gaseous form that can be burned when electricity is not available for various functions. Green Mountain Power would provide Hartford with technical support should the Town decide to pursue a pilot project.
- **2019 EVCE grant update:** The Town was not awarded funding for the proposed project at the Wilder Park and Ride. The State has not yet announced whether or not the UVAC project will be funded.

Paige mentioned that Efficiency Vermont is giving money to all Regional Planning Commissions to work with Towns on implementation of energy projects. There will likely be \$50,000 available in total. Erik asked Paige to keep the HEC posted and to add a discussion on how the money could be used to the July HEC agenda.

HEC Mission and Bylaws:

Erik read a new mission statement that he developed based on the last conversation the HEC had on the issue. Paige suggested using “wise” instead of “prudent”. Erik explained that he included a “just transition” to mean not only lowering the energy burden, but also to reflect equity at the global/intergenerational level. Martha asked if the HEC would scrap the other mission statement and just use the new one. She suggested the HEC start with the statement Erik developed, and then describe

the basics of what HEC does below. Erik said he will share the statement on the Sharepoint and HEC can make changes there.

Final thoughts:

Paige talked to CATV, and learned that they produce an energy show out of Rutland. CATV said that the HEC can use their space to produce a show on energy.

Martha suggested the HEC purchase a tablecloth with the HEC logo for events. Commissioners agreed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:29.

Respectfully submitted,

Geoff Martin, Energy Coordinator