

APPROVED
Hartford Energy Commission Minutes
August 23, 2018
Town Hall, 171 Bridge St, WRJ

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

Martha called the meeting to order at 6:31.

New member:

Fred gave his background. His interests are energy, the environment, and sustainability. He is in his second year at Vermont Law School and will graduate with a J.D. and a Masters in Energy Law and Regulation. He said that he is excited to join the HEC because Hartford is a great place to experiment in the energy field – Vermont is the nation’s energy lab. His hobbies are hammocking and hiking.

Agenda:

Niki wanted to add an item to the event checklist. Martha proposed discussing it during the education subcommittee report.

Minutes:

A few typos were noted. Erik moved the June minutes be approved as amended. Ryan seconded the motion, which passed.

Ryan will post Cathy’s event checklist on the intranet.

Fred needs a password to the intranet.

Martha needs to sign up with Portfolio Manager. She will request this through Geoff.

Municipal Energy Projects:

Energy Star Portfolio Manager: The electric meters of major town buildings/facilities are tied into Portfolio Manager, automatically recording usage. Fuel oil usage cannot be automatically pulled. Geoff is currently getting the information from the fuel dealers. He will look into the suggestions given by Commissioners to work with the Finance Department to streamline the process.

Wilder Well/Olcott Falls Solar: Green Mountain Power (GMP) initially wanted the net-metering credits to only go to the well and did not want to add off-takers. After negotiations, they are now willing to allow up to 50% of the credits to go to park residents. The Housing Foundation, Inc., the owner of the park, is working on how to parcel out the credits, potentially using income as a criterion for participation.

Public Safety Building:

The police station suffers from poor air quality, and more mechanical ventilation is needed. An exhaust fan recently installed in the evidence room is ineffective. Chris Hebb, part of the audit team, will prepare a ventilation plan. Air sealing will take place after air quality problems are solved.

Regional Bio-Gas Production Facility:

A new technology, known as an anaerobic digester, will accept food waste and scraps, farm waste, and sludge. It converts the waste to bio gas/bio diesel via a dry anaerobic digestion process, which is more efficient and less smelly than the wet processes. The technology is from Finland, and a representative from the company BioGTS will be in Vermont on October 11. Representatives from the Vermont Agencies of Agriculture and Natural Resources have been invited, as well as from the Woodstock Foundation. In addition to Hartford, other towns such as Woodstock, Norwich, and Hartland may be interested in participating. Another suggested attendee was someone from the Vermont Technical College, because they have a digester.

VW Funds for Electric Buses:

The grant requires that buses must be older than 2009 in order to be considered for replacement. Advanced Transit does not have any buses older than 2009. However, Butler's Bus Service, which provides buses for the schools, has older buses. The timing for the release of the grant opportunity is not clear.

Legion Parking Lot Charging Station:

The contract with the electrician for the installation is signed. The install must be completed and the station operational by November.

Charging Stations on Town Land:

The grant program for charging stations through the state has been postponed.

Electric Mower:

There is a company making electric lawnmowers. The Town will look into buying one in 2019.

Education Work Group:

Warm Up Quechee had around 20 attendees, most of whom signed up for a walk through. There has already been a signed contract as a result of the event. Efficiency Vermont is planning to run the 2018 Button Up Vermont program from October through November. The work group plans to sponsor two events: one in West Hartford and one combining White River Junction and Hartford Village. Geoff is in discussions with the HACTC about them hosting a hands-on demonstration workshop for Button Up. Martha asked the group to write up a summary of the Warm Up series that she can include in the Town

Meeting Report. Ryan will write up a summary for Quechee. The Commission agreed that a column should be added on all event sign-in sheets asking how attendees heard about the event.

Town Plan Work Group:

Fred will join this group. The group has a format for the plan and will write a draft of the Energy Chapter very soon. There are three areas of concentration: transportation, renewable electricity generation, and building efficiency. The work groups researching each of these areas are close to finalizing their recommendations.

Transportation: The work group urges the Town to review the purchasing policy for new equipment, and will recommend that life cycle costing be part of the process. They recommend that the Town continue to provide funding for Advanced Transit. They are looking at how to promote ride sharing, biking, and walking, and are discussing building a network of mini park and rides on privately owned land. Finally, the work group is discussing the use of ride share software (similar to WAZE).

Generation: The generation work group researched wind, mini-hydro, solar, digesters, and bio-mass, and are exploring all options. They plan to prioritize the top 5 to 6 ideas for promoting these technologies.

Building Efficiency: Recommendations from the building efficiency work group include continuing to educate residents about weatherization/efficiency, partnering with existing organizations like COVER and Vital Communities to promote their efforts, building weatherization into curricula in the Hartford schools and creating a curriculum for adults at the HACTC, and designing creative financing opportunities for residents looking to weatherize.

October 9 QLLA Event:

Linda Labriola is organizing an event for QLLA on October 9 from 4:00 to 6:30 at the Quechee Club. Topics will include Vermont/Hartford energy goals, home efficiency, and renewable energy systems for homes. Geoff and Martha will present, as well as Efficiency Vermont and GMP.

FERC Rule 841:

All RTOs and ISOs must accommodate sale and purchase of electricity for owners of batteries over 100 kWh. Geoff will look into whether or not the town can benefit from the ruling.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55.

Respectfully submitted, Lynn Bohi, Clerk