

APPROVED
Hartford Energy Commission Minutes
September 27, 2018
Town Hall, 171 Bridge St, WRJ

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

Martha called the meeting to order at 6:34.

Agenda additions:

CROH has asked HEC to name a liaison for the two committees. CROH meets on Wednesdays at 4:30, once a month. Niki volunteered with Lynn as a backup.

The Advance Transit newsletter was passed around with commissioners asked to note progress on emissions.

Niki asked to cancel the showing of “Tomorrow” that she was organizing in Quechee. All agreed.

Minutes:

Minor typos were pointed out. Erik moved and Martha, Fred and Niki seconded that the August minutes be approved as amended.

Municipal Energy Projects:

Wilder Well/ Olcott Falls Solar Project: The Selectboard approved of the construction of the project. The work will start in the middle of October. Work continues on the development of a program to share the benefits with the community at Olcott Falls Mobile Home Park. The town will keep the renewable energy certificates (RECs) and can either retire them on behalf of the town or sell them. There is a time constraint on how long the RECs can be held before they expire. The HEC agreed that it should prepare a one page data sheet about RECs, with either Cathy or Fred taking the lead.

Electric Vehicle for Town Fleet: The Selectboard approved of the purchase of an electric vehicle to serve as the Town Manager’s car, and also to be utilized by other town staff for business trips. Geoff is pricing the Nissan LEAF and Chevy Volt, and will release a RFP soon. Erik expressed concern about adding a vehicle to the Town fleet. Alan clarified that the fleet size will remain the same.

Electric Vehicle Charging Station: The state announced a new grant program for electric vehicle charging stations, funded through the VW Settlement Fund. The Town plans to submit an application, due November 30. Available funding for each project selected through the program is capped at \$150,000. Installing two fast chargers can cost up to \$250,000, so the Town will need to find a developer willing to invest money in order to get a fast charger built. Geoff will work on the RFP after a bit more research.

HEC has discussed this grant before. Funding will prioritize charging stations built in public locations, and further prioritize locations close to major highways and downtown locations.

South Main Street Parking Lot Charging Station: Work on the charging station will begin on October 2 and should be finished quickly. Once operational, the Town will be paying for the electricity consumed at the charging station, but will charge a fee for the use of the station.

Energy Future Initiative: Geoff joined this new initiative, organized by the Energy Action Network (EAN), which brings together energy leaders to develop powerful ideas to ensure that the state will meet its climate and energy goals. There will be four all-day meetings per year. The purpose is to develop action items which can then be implemented.

Bugbee: Len and Geoff are working to finalize and submit numbers for the CIP. They are planning to include a request to sheetrock and air seal/insulate the ceiling. The USDA grant application that could help fund the insulation work is due by the end of December.

Public Safety Building: Geoff is working with Chris Hebb of Dynamic Integrations, which worked on the energy audit of the PSB, to develop a ventilation plan and get a quote for installation.

Education work group:

There are two upcoming events that the group needs help running.

Warm Up/Button Up: On Saturday, October 20, there will be a combination of Warm Up White River Junction/Hartford and Button Up kick-off at the HACTC from 10:00 AM until noon. Frans will speak at 10:05 and there will be a DIY demonstration by Efficiency Vermont at 11:00 AM. The focus will be on the villages of White River Jct and Hartford, but the whole town is welcome. Volunteers are needed to set up the room, bring food and coffee, bring the banner and yard signs, and to welcome guests and answer their questions. Geoff, Lynn and Martha volunteered.

Trunk or Treat: Saturday, October 27 from 4:00 to 6:00 PM at the Town Hall/Lyman Point Park. It is mainly an event for children, with not much chance for conversation, but still a good opportunity to spread the word about HEC/Button Up. Items needed include the ¼ page information sheet, outlet gaskets, and candy. HEC will again decorate a car as a coffin and dress as vampires. Niki, Peg and Alan volunteered.

Town Plan Work Group: The group is focusing now on developing ideas that will make a big enough impact on the town's energy consumption to meet the town/state goals. They are close to having a solid first draft completed. The entire Town Plan is due next spring. The Town Plan Steering Committee is emphasizing the importance of making the plan more readable, with more pictures and graphs. The energy section will likely be finished first.

Upcoming events:

Thursday, October 4: “Grid 101” at 7:00 PM at the Norwich Library. Discussion on utilities, the grid, and how renewable projects, both big and small, fit in with David Farnsworth of the Regulatory Assistance Project

Thursday, October 11: “Energy Efficiency Tools and Resources” presentation at the Quechee Club from 4:30 to 6:00 PM. Martha, Geoff, and others will discuss state/town energy and climate goals, and how Quechee residents can help meet them. Lynn will help publicize.

Thursday, October 18 and 19: Renewable Energy Vermont (REV) all-day conference in Burlington. REV has its annual convention. Geoff will attend.

Other:

HEC has been collecting names and emails of people attending HEC events. Commissioners discussed whether or not to use the list to send out information on HEC events, Hartford’s energy usage and goals, etc. It was stressed that if the HEC chose to use the emails, there must be an “opt out” method available. No decisions were made.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Bohi, Clerk