

DRAFT
Hartford Energy Commission Minutes
November 15, 2018
Town Hall, 171 Bridge Street, WRJ

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

Martha called the meeting to order at 6:35.

Agenda Changes:

Lynn asked to add a discussion of VECAN and carpooling for the event.

Minutes:

After one correction, Niki moved that the October minutes be passed as amended. Ryan seconded and the motion passed.

Officers:

HEC bylaws require that officers be elected in November. For Clerk, Erik nominated Lynn. The motion passed. For Chair, Niki nominated Martha. Martha nominated Erik and Lynn seconded. The motion passed. For Vice Chair, Ryan nominated Niki. Niki nominated Ryan. Erik seconded the nomination of Niki. The motion passed.

Event reports:

Trunk or Treat: the light rain and change of date probably cut attendance. However, the lower attendance meant that there was more time to talk to people. Several people said they would sign up for a Button Up walk through. People were happy to receive weather stripping. There are currently 12 residents signed up for walk throughs.

Chamber of Commerce breakfast: there were 12-15 people at the event, which is normal attendance. The Efficiency Vermont (EVT) presentation was informative and centered on how small and medium size businesses can improve efficiency. EVT offered walk throughs to business owners. Geoff met landlord Nick Tsunakis, who owns 24 apartments. It is important that HEC keep connected to PJ Skehan and the Chamber of Commerce. Marcus Stafne, the Executive Director of the Montshire Museum, offered the space for events and said he could be available for presentations about the success the Montshire has experienced with efficiency upgrades. It would be good to collect success stories of businesses that have gone through energy retrofits. Chippers hopes to have a success story to share.

Municipal projects:

Wilder Well Solar: the contract for the project was signed November 15. Work should begin the week of November 26. Geoff met with the Tim Palmer (Housing Foundation), Paul Markowitz (EVT), and Paige Heverly (Vital Communities) to discuss how to create an energy efficiency program for Olcott Falls.

Public Safety: the locker rooms are being renovated and the lighting will be addressed at the same time. The ventilation project is on hold while contract issues are worked out with the company that worked on the 2015 audit.

South Main St Parking Lot Charging Station: the station is open and working, with 10 charging sessions recorded as of November 13. Directional and regulatory signs have been ordered. The charging station has been announced on Facebook, the town website, Drive Electric Vermont's database, and Plug Share.

Go! Vermont: the ridesharing/public transportation app has been updated. HEC should look at all the new things it can assist with.

RFP for Charging Stations: The Town released an RFP for developers to own and operate charging stations on town property using funding from the VW settlement. Hartford did not receive any responses. The problem most likely is that owning/operating the stations is not the business model of the charging station companies. There are too few EVs on the road currently for that model to be profitable. For the next round, Hartford will propose owning the stations. Additionally, the Upper Valley Aquatic Center wants a charging station and will pay for installation. Perhaps there are other businesses that might be interested in doing the same. HEC could ask PJ Skehan to send information on the VW Settlement funding opportunity in the Chamber newsletter.

Town Manager's Car: the Town received one bid for the EV RFP. It is a lease for a 2019 LEAF with a quick charge package.

Energy Star Portfolio Manager: EVT is no longer automatically uploading electricity data into Energy Star Portfolio Manager. Geoff will have to load it manually, as he does for oil and propane.

Education work group:

Button Up: EVT has money for towns for direct mail or advertising. HEC should advertise on the listserv that this is the last chance for a free walk through. Lynn will write a letter to the editor with a similar message. Another way to get the information out is to go to events scheduled before the December 15th deadline. The HEC brainstormed events, but did not come to a conclusion on whether or not it made sense to attend an event. A joint newspaper ad with Norwich and Hartland was suggested. Geoff will connect with Karl and Linda about the idea and then get back to Paul Markowitz.

Warm Up Campaign: West Hartford is the only village that has not had a Warm Up event. Geoff has a list of how many walk throughs have been requested through the Warm Up events, but needs to compile information on jobs completed as a result. Alternatively, EVT tracks the number of rebates requested and HEC could request that data annually.

Town Plan Energy Chapter:

Last week the Energy Chapter Work group gave Matt and Lori the whole draft with all three parts (transportation, renewables, and buildings) for review. HEC can find the document on the intranet. The Energy Chapter should be finalized sometime in November or December. There will be public meetings for review of the changes. Next, Two Rivers Ottawaquechee Regional Commission (TRORC) will review to insure that all mandated issues have been addressed. Draft two will be on the intranet early in the week of November 19. Draft one will not be substantially different from the first draft.

Specifics about the three topics:

Transportation: there are no surprises. The focus is to reduce emissions.

Buildings: there may be some controversy about the suggestion that all new construction be net-zero. The work group will need to talk to Lori about the process and timeline for adding this requirement as it relates to other planning/zoning regulations. The work group found that tying the Certificate of Occupancy to achieving net-zero could not be done, unless there is a charter change.

Renewables: There is a suggestion to set up a revolving loan fund for energy improvements. Another suggestion is to use town properties for community solar.

Future work and work groups:

This will be a topic for discussion in December, but HEC should start thinking about changes that might come. HEC needs to prioritize its goals. One idea is that the work groups could be changed so that the groups are smaller. Outside advisors could be added. Bethany Fleishmann will continue to work with HEC on transportation. What other people might HEC ask to help work on the other topics? Where does HEC want to have an impact? One of the energy goals in the TRORC plan is to have 25% of Hartford's 5,000 houses weatherized by 2020. Are there different incentives or penalties that could come into play? HEC should read the actions recommended in the draft energy chapter and think about how they might relate to HEC's work plan. Remember that HEC will need to track results of projects.

VECAN:

Lynn, Niki, Erik, Alan, Martha and possibly Ryan will attend. Brenda will register everyone. Attendees should let Geoff know which workshops they would like to attend. They will meet at Wilder Park and Ride on December 1 at 8:15am.

Next meeting is December 20th, 2018.

The meeting adjourned at 8:01.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Bohi, Clerk