

APPROVED
Hartford Energy Commission Minutes
November 21, 2019

Present: Niki Thran, Martha McDaniel, Lynn Bohi, Erik Krauss; Jon Alvin, guest; Alan Johnson, Selectboard liaison; Geoff Martin, staff

Erik called the meeting to order at 6:29.

Addition to agenda: Discussion on creating social media accounts for HEC; reviewing the HEC meeting schedule for 2020.

Minutes: After some spelling corrections, Niki moved and Martha seconded that the October minutes pass as amended. The motion passed.

Election of Officers: Martha moved a slate consisting of Chair-Erik, Vice Chair-Niki, and Clerk- Lynn. Niki seconded and the motion passed.

Calendar: Geoff passed out a potential calendar, which HEC will vote on next meeting.

Transportation Work Group: The work group has been working with Vital Communities on promoting ride share, mini-Park and Rides, and how to protect employee privacy while trying to set up ride sharing. Unfortunately, the DHMC connection has been not communicating. It is very challenging to get people to participate in a ride share. Perhaps one incentive might be to remove parking spaces by installing a solar array where there is currently a parking lot. The credits from the array could go to those who carpool. There is an app called WAZE that now schedules ridesharing. Is it possible to schedule Lyft and Uber rides on WAZE?

Building Integrity Work Group:

- Button Up: Five people attended. However, Geoff has been posting on the listserve with results.
- Net Zero (NZ) Building Code: The work group spoke at a Planning Commission meeting, and the Planning Commission was concerned about people being able to get mortgages for the additional upfront cost, and also about the lack of contractors with needed skill sets. The Stakeholder meeting was held with a reasonable number of attendees and much information exchanged. The work group and town staff had specific questions of the participants, which were answered. Some topics raised at the stakeholder meeting or tonight were: Efficiency Vermont (EVT) will come to Hartford and, for free, train people in green skills; Vermont Technical College (VTC) has programs in green architecture and green construction management; there is a dearth of people who know how to perform green deep retrofits; training carpenters on site with hands on training is needed; and this is a culture change. It was suggested that HACTC and EVT work closer to give the next generation the skills they will need. If there was a carbon offset program, money could be raised in order to train workers in green

new and retrofit construction techniques. It is currently unclear how long the pilot program will be or how to measure it: in years or number of buildings.

- Monthly article: The work group is writing a five or six part series. Part one, about a tight home, is on the website. The upcoming article revolves around the home's mechanicals, including heating, cooling, refrigeration, water heating, and more. It was noted that the link to the article on the HEC page should be more obvious. Geoff will ask if it is possible to include a note on the Town home page pushing readers to the HEC page.

Updates:

- Resilient Hartford is not meeting until early December, thus, no update.
- Climate Advisory Committee: The committee is writing a climate emergency declaration to send to the Selectboard and School Board and, if approved by both boards, recommendations for language to put before voters about a Climate Emergency. The committee has a draft, which they will review and vote on in December and then send to the two boards for approval. After the recommendations have been voted on by the public, the next step would be for the Selectboard to change ordinances to comply with the specific percentages and dates set out.

VLITE: There is grant money available for transformative energy projects. The Town hosted a brainstorming session to develop ideas to submit to VLITE. Vital Communities, Advance Transit, Vermont Law School, COVER, Efficiency Vermont, HEC, Resilient Hartford, Select and School boards, Norwich Energy Committee, and Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission were invited to the brainstorm. After brainstorming ideas, the group did an impact-feasibility analysis looking at which ideas will have the greatest impact, and which will be most fit the grant parameters. Top ideas were:

- Add 1% to the property tax to pay for grants or loans for weatherizing homes
- Train people for energy jobs
- Help tenants convince landlords to improve weatherization in apartment buildings
- Find a technical solution to prevent pipes under mobile homes from freezing
- Develop a ride share program for when Advance Transit isn't running
- Divert money from building a parking garage to supporting alternative forms of transportation
- Cash for clunkers to replace inefficient cars with electric vehicles

The next steps: rank and prune ideas, and find a group to write the grants. Niki and Jon volunteered to participate in this process.

Municipal projects:

- Performance contracting: Johnson Controls will look at all town owned buildings for possible upgrades or changes that would save energy. The company would guarantee savings from the projects.
- EC Fiber is interested in having a hub outside Town Hall. They need backup power and have offered to pay installation costs for batteries for Town Hall if the Town paid for the batteries.
- The Green Fleets Policy has stalled.

- Town Budget: Two police cruisers will be replaced. Perhaps electric? There will be no parking garage between the VFW and former American Legion. Parking meters may be installed on main streets. Money is in the budget for work at Bugbee on the shell and to air seal. There is a community health coordinator position in the budget.

Announcements:

VECAN: Saturday, December 7. Carpool will leave Wilder Park and Ride at 8:15.

Vital Communities Mobile Home project: Volunteers are needed. There is a doodle poll to schedule a training event.

Legislative Climate Solutions Caucus: They will be meeting regionally to listen to concerns. There is a meeting on Monday, November 25 at Hartford Town Hall from 6:00 to 7:30. It was suggested the bill called The Global Warming Solutions Act be urged to pass.

Representative Christie hopes to introduce a bill to increase the net metering cap to 1 MW for municipalities only. Last year, the smaller utilities objected to the cost of the mandated payout for solar given how much they pay normally. It was suggested that rather than setting a cap, utilities could have the right to accept or deny a project based on the specifics of each project. Erik will connect with Kevin.

Social Media: Resilient Hartford has a facebook page. Could HEC? Niki volunteered to create one. Geoff will talk to Paula and see if there are any rules about what is acceptable. It would be a good place for the monthly articles.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Bohj, Clerk