

Energy Committee Meeting Minutes of September 13, 2010

Members Present: Jack Harrod (Chair), Mark Vernon (Vice Chair), Dave Harris, Joan Cobb, Bill Spear, Mike Meller, Dave Sauerwein

Members Absent: Russell Aney, Margie Weathers

Others Present: Peter Stanley (Zoning Board Administrator)

Jack Harrod called the **MEETING TO ORDER at 7:05pm.**

1. Minutes of August 2, 2010 Meeting

Harrod asked if the minutes from the last meeting were acceptable to those committee members who were present. Not hearing any suggestions for amendments, he asked for a motion.

IT WAS MOVED (Mark Vernon) AND SECONDED (Dave Harris) to approve the minutes of the August 2, 2010 Energy Committee meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

2. Master Plan Schedule/Energy Chapter

Russ Aney was not present to comment on this.

3. EECBG Grants

Harrod said that he thought that the grants were going very slowly through the system.

4. NHMEAP Update

Harrod said that they will have to pass on this, as it is something Aney is working on.

5. Colby-Sawyer College Developments

Harrod said that on Oct. 9, CSC President Tom Galligan would be speaking at a meeting of the town's Citizens Advisory Committee, of which Harrod is a member. He said that he plans to compliment Galligan on the sustainability effort exhibited by the college, and on the college's cooperation with the Energy Committee.

Dave Sauerwein said that Jennifer White has started an educational campaign about sustainability and that they now have stickers for campus lighting that say "flip the switch" and for the computers that say "turn off the monitors." They have worked to cut down the list of things that students are to bring with them to campus. He said that he speaks to parents at convocation and tells them about them trying to be more sustainable. Sauerwein said that they will follow up with a newsletter which will include suggestions on things they could send their kids that were more sustainable. Additionally, the college provides CFL bulbs to students who bring their own lamps, which replace the standard bulbs they have brought.

Bill Spear said that one thing they have already implemented at the college is the use of reusable cups in the dining hall, instead of paper cups. There are over 1,000 of these cups available and students are welcomed to take them out of the dining hall if need be and are asked to bring them back to be used again. The cups are in the design of a travel mug and have the slogan "Walk the Talk" on them. It was noted that this idea originated from student requests; they didn't want paper cups to be available in an effort to reduce waste. Sauerwein said that he was impressed to see this happen. He added that the Windy Hill LEED-certified building was now in full operation.

Spear commented that SIFE (Students in Free Enterprise) was working more with recycling and sustainability. He is currently teaching a course on sustainability and will be helping the college to calculate its carbon footprint. They will learn about the social, economic and environmental parts of sustainability and will research Cape Wind to understand the positive and negative impacts of wind power. They will have a debate on the subject matter and he has faculty from their political science department coming in to talk about the politics of sustainability, another professor coming in to talk about peer review writing, and another coming to observe and manage the debate. They will go to Concord to the NH Society for Forests and to the wind farm in Lempster.

It was questioned if the town offices could provide real cups instead of using paper cups for large gatherings. Stanley noted that there was neither the space nor washing capabilities available that would be necessary for

providing non-disposable cups. He added that the only meeting that provides coffee is the once-a-month Citizens Advisory Committee, as it is held at 7:30am.

Stanley said that in his experience with the college, while with the fire department, he found that anything that could be turned on in dorm rooms was on. He asked what the electricity expense for the college amounted to. Spear thought it was about \$100,000 per year, which included housing on Main Street and Seamans Road. Sauerwein said they bought the green energy offset which was 42% of their carbon footprint. This green energy was purchased from TransCanada.

6. Green Fair Update

Harris said the fair would be postponed until October of 2011. They will discuss whether to do anything between now and then. There was some talk about doing something around Earth Day. Harris said he needed to talk with someone from Mountain Spirit Institute. If they can work with them to be a subcommittee of that group, it would be beneficial to them for dealing with revenue. He referenced Sun Fest at Sunapee and noted that they have had a lot of requests to do another one but no one to staff and organize it. Harrod said that it is also a problem with financing such an event. Harris said they weren't anticipating how to handle the funds this year, which was a problem. Harrod said that they had Jennifer White and Debbie Cross to work with the subcommittee on the Green Fair and it might be better for the Green Fair to be organized by some body other than the New London Energy Committee. It was noted that it takes a long time to obtain a 501-3c authorization from the IRS.

7. Strategic Plan

Vernon said he asked for feedback from all NLEC members and assumed they were on board. He heard back from Weathers and Harrod. He took the history out of it and said it was pretty brief. Vernon suggested they bless it and consider it done. Spear said he liked the vision statement. Vernon felt it was ambitious.

IT WAS MOVED (Jack Harrod) AND SECONDED (Mike Meller) to approve Mark Vernon's paper as the strategic plan for the Energy Committee, moving forward.

THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Vernon said that in the strategic plan, he suggests something called "member minutes" which is a time where each member gets to have one minute to share something energy-related. People can pass if they choose.

Harrod asked Vernon to send the strategic plan to Linda Jackman to post online and to let her know that it was approved at the meeting.

8. Encouraging the use of reusable shopping bags

Nick Ourusoff drafted a letter intended to be sent to the president of Hannaford. Many felt the letter was too long. Vernon asked if they could get feedback to Ourusoff before the next meeting so he could re-work it. Vernon agreed to resend the letter to the committee so that everyone who may not have seen it could do so. Harrod summarized that the letter was meant to ask the president of Hannaford to use the New London Hannaford as a test case for giving away reusable bags and charging people for disposable ones.

Harrod said that it is not just a Hannaford idea, but should be extended to other businesses in New London as well. It would be helpful if area businesses could give a monetary discount to customers who use their own bags. He noted that Weathers is their link to the Chamber of Commerce and that they couldn't pursue this matter without her.

Stanley said he has noticed that people are looked at strangely if they don't take a bag for their purchases. He noted that if they change the view of the merchant that customers may be able to manage without a bag, it would be better for the environment. Spear said they've done studies on recycling and how it becomes a habit. Like recycling, once the use of reusable bags becomes a habit, it will be easier for people to remember to use their own bags. Harris said Ourusoff's letter also talks about bottled water and he didn't think they could get a retailer to stop selling bottled water. Harrod said that the letter should focus on one issue and not two.

Mike Meller said that he has experienced resistance from baggers at grocery stores when he has brought his own bags, as it is easier to bag groceries in a plastic bag.

9. Atlantic Energy info

Harrod explained that this company was going to try to bundle towns' electronic consumption to get the lowest possible bid. Originally, what was supposed to happen was that they would initially want the Town to do a contract until the end of the year and at the beginning of the following year do another contract for another full year. To his surprise, in a recent Board of Selectmen meeting, Selectman Mark Kaplan pushed for a one-year contract off the bat to try to lock in a good rate. The Town now has a fixed rate per kilowatt until September 2011. This rate was better than what the Town was paying and the advantage is that it is a fixed rate for the whole year.

10. Next Meeting: Monday October 4th?

Harrod explained that the Board of Selectmen is having a meeting the same night as the next Energy Committee meeting. The NLEC has permission to use Peter Stanley's office for its meeting. With two meetings on the same night, there was also a problem with the recording secretary being able to take minutes. This will also be a problem for the November Energy meeting. Harrod said that there was the option of moving their meeting to Tuesday, Oct. 5th instead. The members of the Energy Committee opted to keep the meeting for Monday, Oct. 4th and will hold it in Peter Stanley's office. The meeting will be recorded and Ms. Heath will transcribe the minutes from the recording. The committee members agreed to decide on how to go forward with the November meeting later on.

11. Other Business

Meller opined that people around town don't know what the Energy Committee does. Last year, the League of Women Voters had a series of meetings on energy related matters, which were well-attended at the library, and a lot of information got out to citizens. He thought the committee should consider one or two public meetings to talk about the subject of what people can do to save energy in their own homes. He recalled attending one such meeting last year and found he was doing about 70% of what was suggested. Meller felt it would be good to provide the information for people so that the next time they get a chance, they can make changes to save energy. He remembered a great speaker from PSNH who he believed has since retired. Meller thought it was important that the committee members don't just "preach to the choir," which is what they do seem to be doing at their meetings. He added that the Green Fair wasn't happening, so now they need to give folks in town an idea of what the Energy Committee is accomplishing and to provide information that the citizens could use.

Harrod said that he used to nag people about doing articles for the InterTown Record and didn't get a very good response. In order to do these types of articles, people need to have something to say. Meller said that for these types of forums, it would be good to have help from Colby-Sawyer College, as it would lend more credibility. Harrod asked if it would be good to sponsor an event where Jennifer White from the college could come and explain what they are doing at CSC to save energy on campus. Meller said that this would be good, but he wanted to broaden the focus to educate people in town. He thought by doing this, people would see that the Energy Committee is doing something.

Cobb said she has spoken for the League of Women Voters about cutting down on the use of gasoline-powered motors for mowing and reducing the size of lawns, along with other "greener" options for landscaping. People were interested in that and she thought this would be a good topic to revisit at such a forum. Cobb said she was interested in Colby-Sawyer and whether the college was able to cut down on mowing. Sauerwein noted that a field on the other side of the President's house was targeted by Professor Leon Malan, who was interested in putting in a flower garden there. After they found it too expensive, he and Nancy Teach tore up the land and planted buckwheat. In the spring there is an interested donor who will donate the seeds and hopefully expand it so they won't have to mow it. Cobb offered some wildflower seeds from the State that she has not used. Sauerwein thought that would be nice. Sauerwein said he wasn't sure of the frequency of mowing that was required with such a field comprised of mostly

wild flowers. Stanley said that years ago he reclaimed the field when it was almost gone, with the promise that the college would mow it once a year. He explained that it would be good to have a field of wild flowers and then mow it in the fall. They want to keep it from growing up into woods. Stanley said they could get away with mowing it once every other year, but tree species would propagate and grow rapidly and kill out the flowers. The goal is to maintain open space with minimum use of energy to accomplish it.

Sauerwein said another garden has been started for non-invasive species so they can replace other places around the college. He added that they maintain an herb garden as well. On Fridays this summer, employees exchanged vegetables that they had grown themselves. Harrod felt that this would be good topic for a forum.

Meller said that they need to do some PR for themselves but also something that will get people out and going to the library. Sauerwein asked about the intent of the forums; would they be showcasing the work they do on the committee? Meller said no. He said he picked this idea up on the internet about the many energy-saving steps people could take in their own homes, and he was reminded of the talk he attended at the library.

Vernon suggested having Jennifer White speak on sustainability, and Cobb to speak about gardening. He also suggested having comments or suggestions for forums to come in before the next meeting. Meller suggested they move forward by first reserving the room at the library. He suggested it be a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday night, if possible, and that they should schedule it one week before or after Thanksgiving.

Cobb said she planned to weedwhack the experimental natural garden near the Transfer Station and submit the bill for \$50 to Ms. Levine, as she has done in years past. Harrod said that should be OK.

Spear said that the SIFE group would start that week and that they are focused on sustainability. The students feel that they are at a competitive advantage being a small campus, enabling them to be nimble, move quickly, make adjustments, and try new things. They have ideas of what they'd like to do, and they are also looking for suggestions. Spear opined that this was a very committed group who wants to do well at the National Competition next year. Sauerwein said that what Stanley had talked about, with regard to students not being mindful of the use of electricity, would be great. He said that the students see it as free electricity and they are not aware of the cost and the knowledge that if they would make a change in their energy consumption habits, they could make a big impact on the college. Stanley noted that a lot of his friends have children who are out of college and are wondering what their next moves would be. They are used to living big and spending big and having everything. He assumed that this is similar to what the college is getting for students. They have no connection with where electricity and energy comes from and have no idea how to do without or to manage their consumption.

Vernon asked if each building on campus was metered separately. Spear said they were not. Only the buildings on Main Street were separate.

Harris said he is trying to get a proposal out to the college on a co-generation system. A propane-operated generator would be located downstairs at the Hogan Center. It would generate heat to heat the pool and other hot water demands. It would also generate electricity to feed back into campus. Harris said that he is still looking into it to make sure it could work.

Vernon said he is still working on bike racks in town. The suggested donation didn't happen with the one vendor he spoke with. Sauerwein said they just got three new small bike racks on campus. It was noted that such racks were very expensive.

With no other business, Harrod asked for a motion to adjourn. As previously decided, the next meeting will be on October 4.

IT WAS MOVED (Mike Meller) AND SECONDED (Dave Sauerwein) to adjourn the Energy Committee meeting of September 13, 2010. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 7:57pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London

Reviewed by Jack Harrod
Chairman, New London Energy Committee