

**New London Energy Committee
October 6, 2009
APPROVED**

Members present: Jack Harrod, Russ Aney, Peter Stanley, Mark Vernon, Bill Spear

Jack Harrod began the meeting by noting that the minutes from the September 15th meeting needed to be approved. He noted that Russ Aney had submitted some elaborations to the minutes regarding his portion, conveying the EESE information. There were no other changes.

**IT WAS MOVED (Jack Harrod) AND SECONDED (Bill Spear) to approve the minutes from the September 15, 2009 Energy Committee meeting, as amended.
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Energy Chapter Review for the Master Plan

Harrod had some information to share regarding the review of an Energy chapter within the Master Plan schedule. He noted that Peter Stanley had forwarded an email saying that there would be a draft written by Ken McWilliams (Town Planner) about energy issues for the Master Plan work session, to be held by the Planning Board on November 10th. Harrod indicated that the energy committee should meet to review the draft on November 2nd before the Planning Board meets to discuss it. Stanley strongly urged those on the Energy Committee to be at the Planning Board meeting on Nov. 10th to give their thoughts, ideas and suggestions to the board.

Municipal Energy Assistance Program (NHMEAP): Harrod indicated that this was a competitive program that would pay for an energy audit for one municipal building. He said that Jessie Levine (Town Administrator) filled out the application for inclusion in the program, and Board of Selectmen Chair Larry Ballin signed off on it. He indicated that they have since received a notice from the program thanking the town for submitting the application. Harrod opined that New London was the hub of a multi-town region, and thought that they would have a good chance of getting the grant. The town hopes to be among the 48 towns in the state to receive funding.

Aney added that the NHMEAP would recruit some people from the town to work with them. They will serve as a liaison between the town and NHMEAP to guide the town through a process of inventorying the consumption of energy over the last 10 years. They will inventory electricity consumption, building fuel oil, propane and natural gas consumption, as well as gasoline and diesel fuels, to find the town's carbon footprint as well as the expense of the energy expenditures that the town has. They want to find out what is used and what is costing the most. In addition, six communities will have a policy audit conducted by Jeff Taylor and Associates. He would come in and look to see that there was a good chapter in the Master Plan to show the importance of energy planning, and would also look at policy documents regarding zoning and land use, etc. Aney opined that they could make a good case for the town of New London due to the fact that the town is in the midst of creating a new master plan and this information could be incorporated into the text. Harrod said that they started a similar project several years ago and so it would be good to compare the two studies.

Aney added that they would also work with the town to try to generate awareness within the community, including the Selectboard, to reduce climate change emissions, and try to find ways

of reaching out within the community to engage more citizens in energy conservation. He commented that the Clean Air/Cool Planet people would help put these initiatives into gear.

Aney said they will look at socioeconomic qualifiers, as it is their goal to cover every demographic, including rich and poor. They are looking for diversity. Aney further noted that they are trying to come up with examples that any community could look towards as a model for replication in their towns.

Schedule of “Energy Matters” Articles

Annette (Vogel) from the InterTown Record said that 500 words was the target length. Aney said that the League of Women Voters meeting would be a good topic to cover in an upcoming article. Each meeting would have its own topic and so several articles could be written. Mark Vernon said he would be willing to write an article for the paper. Aney suggested that the NHenergy.org website could also be a place to publish the articles that are written for the InterTown Record. He also suggested mentioning the outreach via these articles when applying for things such as grants. Aney said that the committee could do an article on the energy rebate program to follow up on the prior solar article. Harrod said that he had mentioned these items in the second solar article that he wrote. Aney said he would talk about home energy metering and some of the tools and technologies available. He noted that some of these tools are free or available at a small cost so that people can monitor their energy consumption.

Harrod said that the articles should be sent to him, and he would then forward them to Annette at the InterTown Record.

League of Women Voters Energy Lecture Series

Harrod said he met with JL Tonner at a dinner party recently. She was appreciative about having the Energy Committee approve of the series as well as endorse it. Aney said he would definitely be at the lecture on the 22nd of October. Harrod mentioned that JL had approached the previous chairman of the Energy Committee last year about sponsoring the series but it was never followed through. Harrod felt it was important to attend the lectures.

Vernon noted that if Mike Meller was chairing the lecture session on nuclear energy, he thought they should discuss where the committee stood on nuclear power, as he believed Meller would be favorable to its use, as a representative of the committee. He wasn't sure he wanted to advocate the use of nuclear power. Harrod indicated that there would be people from Seabrook and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission at the lectures. Vernon said that he had gotten a sense that Meller was an advocate of nuclear power. Harrod explained that Mike Meller had been asked to chair the discussion about nuclear power, not to advocate the use of it. Also, he was not chairing it as a representative of the Energy Committee.

Peter Stanley commented that the problem with nuclear power had to do with what to do with the waste. He wasn't sure what they did in France. Harrod indicated that in France, they get about 90% of their electricity from nuclear power.

More “no idling” Signs

Harrod indicated that the new “no idling” sign was now in place at the post office. They put it on a metal stake as one enters the parking lot. He wasn't sure how many people would notice it. Vernon suggested moving the sign. Harrod said there wasn't anything wrong with where it is, but thought that they may not have wanted to attach it directly to the building. Russ Aney said he didn't find the sign at the transfer station to be very visible either. He opined that the goal should

be to put the signs where people can't avoid seeing them. Jessie Levine had told Harrod that the plan was to order another sign to put near the recycling area of the Transfer Station. Vernon showed the other committee members three new "no idling" signs. One will be posted at Tracy Library and one will hopefully go to Colonial Plaza. The third might be posted at Ellie's Deli, but someone will have to ask the owner. Peter Stanley said he would ask the owner, as he knows him well.

Liaison with Tracy Library

Harrod said that Alice Sprickman (who has recently left the committee) had been the one to keep the file of energy-related material up to speed at the library. Russ Aney said that he went over to talk with Sandra Licks (library director) at the library. He said that he would have no problem updating the files. Ms. Licks offered to let the committee put up a sign to draw interest to the materials. This would be located where the DVDs and computers that are available to the public are. The Energy Committee's folders are located up against the wall in this area and Aney said that Ms. Licks told him that the committee could even set up a book display in that area if it wanted. She was very agreeable to book selections that Aney suggested. He indicated that the library did an audit to see what books they had in the library that would be useful.

Overall, Aney felt that the library was very supportive with regards to spreading the word about energy conservation and working with the Energy Committee. He indicated that the wattage meters donated by the committee were still being used by the library patrons. Aney asked if the committee would like to sponsor some type of book discussion. If so, he said that he would be willing to lead a couple of them, where it isn't just about the book but engages the community in a discussion about energy. Another thought that he had was that they may be able to have some energy information reside on part of the library's website. In this area, they could share facts and tidbits that are interesting, or to have a link to the "Energy Matters" articles.

Harrod said that they used to have a book display at the library and that they also had information materials on the bulletin boards there. Aney said they have cut back on the bulletin board displays, but are open to putting up a sign. He also said he never got to know Ms. Sprickman, but knew that she would periodically forward articles to the Committee, regarding energy topics. Aney said that he gets daily clippings of things that are energy-related, and could forward those that were interesting to the committee.

Harrod noted that the committee has a page on the Town's website. Interesting articles might also be posted there. Aney responded that the committee could also create its own blog. NHenergy.org encourages towns to establish their own pages there. That is something the Energy Committee hasn't used, but he thought that this website was meant more for sharing information between the different Energy Committees in New Hampshire. Aney added that he would investigate this website to see if it was a possibility.

Bill Spear said that he works with students at Colby-Sawyer College in a program called "SIFE" who may be able to help with these projects involving the library and online resources. Aney said that they could employ one of the students to work with the people running the NHMEAP program, as they would be involved mostly with spreadsheet work. He indicated that records of energy expenditures from the town could be obtained from PSNH with authorization from Ms. Levine. He also said that he was familiar with the various programs used to track the energy and could coach the student(s) through the process. Mark Vernon said he liked the idea to gather all of this information about energy consumption, but what would they do with it? Aney said the idea is to get an overall view of the energy consumption pie to see where the most energy dollars are being spent. Spear said that at the college library, a student from SIFE could help set up the

displays or research books. Aney said he would love to work with someone to do things such as create a logo or brand that they could use on their articles/stickers, etc. Perhaps they could also be useful in brainstorming on ways to engage the community in energy conservation. Harrod said that Alice Sprickman had created a logo for the Energy Matters articles. Aney thought that perhaps the student could set up the blog.

Other business

Aney noted that with his EECBG – EESE board involvement, he had access to a summary of their plans, which included links to more information. He said he would email this to the committee. He said that the competitive grant process was to kick off in December. The administrator of the program would be chosen and approved by mid-December. On Sept. 10, the OEP's proposal for the grant was approved. They now have six months to give away all the money. They currently had an open RFP for the person or organization whom they would employ as the grant administrator and were looking for submissions by the end of next week. In parallel, they will be creating some scoring criteria and templates on how to form good projects. Money will be given in the form of competitive grants. In short, there is \$6.5 million dollars out there looking for good ideas. He said that he would gladly assist the Town to create a winning proposal.

Vernon said there was an energy audit of Tracy Library that produced some recommendations which were never fulfilled. He suggested fulfilling them using this grant money. Aney noted that the grant would pay up to 100% of the project cost, depending largely on the energy savings generated. He opined that the committee could make a grant request to carry out the recommendations that haven't been fulfilled yet for Tracy Library. He noted that the grant makers are more likely to step up and match towns. He said that he would also encourage the committee to think beyond doing audits and insulating buildings. He believed they would love to see a proposal for an innovative program to reach out to the community or to market what they were doing in New London to serve as a beacon for other communities and to spread the word about energy conservation and help the market transform. Aney believed that the library project was a tremendous opportunity for spreading this type of information, given its location and visibility. He noted that the grants can also be used for schools, other town buildings, and any municipal assets, and he believes that the committee needs to strategize and come up with some ideas.

Aney said he would talk with Margaret Dillon (who performed the library audit) about that audit and the results that were found.

Aney also brought up the "PSNH Smart Start Program." It involves an on-bill financing program where PSNH will provide all up front capital for cost effective electric energy efficiency measures. The amount used will then be paid back on the regular utility bills. The financing for the loan is offset by the energy savings. It has been popular with lighting retrofits. Aney shared the info that PSNH will give a 50% lighting rebate off the retrofit. He doesn't know how good the bulbs being used in the town offices are, or the ones in the exit signs, street lights, etc. The program includes a free lighting audit from PSNH and a 50% rebate. It is up to the town to come up with a strategy on what the opportunity is, and he said that he could help find ways to come up with financing for these projects. Peter Stanley said there would still be an impact on the town's budget because any amount over and above the regular budget would be clearly identifiable. Aney said that he understood this, but felt it was worthwhile to investigate the town's opportunities and options.. Harrod said in the long run they get a pay back. He also reminded the committee that the streetlight changeover three years ago went through at Town Meeting because PSNH had given them an analysis to show that money would be saved down the line.

Vernon asked about the availability of bike racks throughout the town. He said that he would be happy to donate some of his own money to have some available. Vernon said he would talk with Chad Denning (Recreation Department) about possible funding for bike racks. He thought maybe one should go in at the town offices, and it was noted that there was one at the library already. Aney thought that the bases of some of the hiking trails in town would be good places to put bike racks. Vernon said he would talk to Dan Allen about this possibility.

The next meeting was scheduled for Monday, November 2nd at 7:00pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London

Reviewed by

Jack Harrod
Chairman, New London Energy Committee