

## APPROVED

September 15, 2009

### Energy Committee Meeting Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jack Harrod (Chairman), Mike Meller, Russ Aney, Bob Crane, Peter Stanley (Zoning Board Administrator), Bill Spear, Dave Harris

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

The first item Jack wanted to go over was the minutes from the July 6, 2009 meeting. There were no comments or corrections, and so Jack asked for a motion.

**IT WAS MOVED**, (Bill Spear), **AND SECONDED**, (Bob Crane), **to accept the minutes of the July 6, 2009 Energy Committee Meeting as circulated. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Jack noted that he attended the New Hampshire Municipal Energy Committee meeting on August 20, 2009, organized by the New Hampshire Municipal Association (NHMA). People from all over the state attended, and they were able to set up a steering committee of about six people. Harrod wondered if the Clean Air/Cool Planet group would be able to work together with this new steering committee, as it seemed that both groups were moving in the same direction. He opined that energy committees can work better together than apart, and have more of an impact on the state government when they cooperate. Harrod said that it was nice to be able to meet people from other towns and organizations at the meeting. He shared the news that Joanne Morin was now in charge of the state Office of Energy and Planning.

Harrod commented on HB 189, which is a Local Energy Commission bill put in place to allow local municipalities to enact energy “commissions”. He noted that New London’s Energy Committee was created two years ago through approval of a warrant article at Town Meeting. He said that the new legislation now makes it clear to the towns that such committees are legal under state law. Harrod had some question as to what the legislation was truly implying, as it uses the word “shall” with regards to things that the commissions would be doing. He noted that Jessie Levine, Town Administrator, agreed with this notion, and found the word “shall” to be ambiguous. Peter Stanley, Zoning Board Administrator said that, in legal terms, “shall” means “will.”

Harrod said that he and Ms. Levine were somewhat taken aback by the new legislation, but it didn’t seem to have much effect on what New London already had in place.

Bill Spear asked about the position on the legislation from the Clean Air/Cool Planet group. It was noted that the group seemed to be in favor of it.

Harrod noted that he and Dave Sauerwein and committee member Joan Cobb attended a meeting on September 9, 2009 on wind power and the Lempster wind farm, and were very impressed with the presentation that was given. Mike Meller noted that Ed Cherian, the Iberdrola project head, had also given that same presentation at the library in the past. He opined that Cherian was not only a good manager but also a great spokesperson. Harrod said that some of the information presented at the meeting may have caused Dave Sauerwein to think again about the college’s plans. They learned that it was a significant amount of work to put up just one windmill, and the return would not come as quickly. It was more efficient, but more costly, to put up more of them, which is why Iberdrola invested in the Lempster project.

Harrod said that Dave Sauerwein told him that there will soon be a new sustainability person at the college who might be interested in being his alternate or an additional representative from the college to the Energy Committee. Mike Meller asked if this person would be teaching at the college. Bill Spear indicated that it would be a dual role; he or she would be teaching a couple of courses and would also be working to make the campus more sustainable. Harrod liked the idea of having another person from the college to attend and/or fill in at the Energy Committee meetings, in the absence of Mr. Sauerwein.

Chairman Harrod noted that the League of Women Voters was planning to host an energy lecture series, beginning, added Russ Aney, on October 15<sup>th</sup> [ed. note: date now changed to Oct. 22]. They are interested in having Joanne Morin as the kick-off speaker. Mike Meller said that he had been asked to moderate the session on nuclear power due to his knowledge regarding that subject. Harrod indicated that he wouldn’t be able to attend the initial meeting due to a commitment that would take him out of town at that time.

Harrod noted that Mark Vernon had sent around an email regarding two issues from the previous Energy Committee meeting. The first issue had to do with Hospital Days next summer. He was proposing to suggest a theme for the event. His idea was to replace gasoline power with muscle power. It was Mark’s thought that if they propose something to the hospital about conserving energy, it could help to further spread the idea within the Town. Mike Meller opined that muscle power vs. gasoline had been preempted over and over by bicyclists, et al. Dave Harris said that when he first saw the idea it sounded negative to him. He thought it would be better for them to promote

what people “should” do, instead of what they “shouldn’t.” Harrod said that they could suggest energy conservation and could even have a float in the parade. He also indicated that JL Tonner of the League of Women Voters had asked him to try to contact Joanne Morin to see if she would like to participate in the lecture series. The committee agreed that they would be happy to co-sponsor the series.

Mark Vernon’s other issue was regarding the Master Plan. Harrod said he would probably call Ken McWilliams (the town planner) to talk about the Energy chapter. Peter Stanley shared that each call to Mr. McWilliams costs the town money. He suggested contacting him on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of the month when he will already be here for the regularly scheduled Planning Board meeting. Harrod took the suggestion into account and said he would do that.

Harrod then announced that the “No Idling” signs had finally arrived. He said that two were ordered. One sign is posted at the Transfer Station and one will be offered to the Post Office. The Postmaster had been agreeable to posting the sign as long as it wasn’t against any zoning ordinances. Peter Stanley said that the sign conformed to existing regulations. Mike Meller agreed that the post office parking lot is the worst offender for idling vehicles. Harrod added that there is a state law, which says that if a car is idling and unattended for more than 30 seconds, a ticket can be issued.

Bill Spear asked if the Transfer Station attendants would enforce the sign for no idling. Peter Stanley said that the attendants have enough trouble making sure that non-residents aren’t dropping off their trash at the New London Transfer Station.

Harrod then informed the committee that Alice Sprickman would be leaving the committee and that he was taking this very hard. He said that she was a very active member of the committee. Alice kept the library folder updated with reading materials and resources about energy-related issues. Harrod said that someone else would have to take this on. The other thing that Alice did was serve as the liaison between the InterTown Record and the Energy Committee with regards to the “Energy Matters” articles. She would get the articles from members of the committee, proof them and send them to the paper within the time schedule. Harrod said that doing such an article once per month would be fine with him, which would be a decrease in the current articles’ frequency.

Mike Meller wondered how effective or useful the work that they had been doing in the library or with the InterTown Record was. He said that such things take a lot of work to do and he wondered if people really read the materials or the articles in the paper. Dave Harris said that the InterTown is a good effort and thought it should be continued. Harrod said that he has heard comments about the articles they have submitted. He also indicated that the library was a good place to have a selection of energy-related materials, but that it takes a lot of work to keep it updated. Dave Harris said that he would talk to Sandra Licks, library director, to see if she knew what the popularity of these materials was. He also said that Sandra Licks asked about recommendations on books related to energy. He said that he came up with a few publications that were good, but if anyone had any suggestions, the library would be interested in knowing. Russ Aney said that he would go down to the library and give a list to them regarding some ideas for books they may want to obtain.

Harrod took this time to speak on behalf of the Energy Committee regarding Russ Aney’s addition to the group. He said that with Alice Sprickman leaving and with Russ being interested in the group and having an appropriate background, it would be the consensus of the group to consider him a useful addition. There was only one exception with regards to the fact that he is a private businessman in town, and would need to recuse himself from some discussions that may provide a conflict of interest. Aney said that it is his intention to add insight and thoughts to the group and would be more than willing to recuse himself from discussions that may include a potential conflict of interest. Harrod emphasized that he appreciates the expertise and insight from committee members even if they cannot attend all the meetings.

Harrod noted that there was money available for audits to figure out what needs to be done to update buildings to make them more energy efficient. He said that Whipple Hall could use some updating but that they would have to replace a lot of windows that are historical in nature. Also, he said, they have just recently completed a renovation of the basement of the building. He said that the town offices had some issues with the third floor, and thought perhaps more insulation could be used. Harrod said that unless there are buildings in the town that are in obvious need of updating, there was no point in trying to get the money.

Russ Aney said that he had attended a number of EESE (Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Energy) board meetings. The EESE Board was established by the state and administratively attached to the PUC (Public Utilities Commission). There is something called a “Greenhouse Gas Energy Reduction Fund” which grants money to NH entities that want to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions through energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. Some towns have already received money for projects that they submitted during the initial round of grants this year. Projects will continue to be funded in the coming years; the source of the funds is the RGGI carbon auctions. Upgrades considered include things such as geothermal, windmills, biomass, etc. They even include the upgrading of boilers in a town or energy efficient streetlights. Dave Harris asked if the money was available for public buildings only. Aney answered in the negative and said it was available to anyone in the state of New Hampshire.

Aney went on to explain that there was a separate amount of funds from Washington DC that would be available to municipalities through the DOE's stimulus funding, which is being administered by the NH OEP. These are called "Energy Efficiency Community Block Grants" (EECBG). There has already been an RFP issued for the grant administrator. OEP is subcontracting the reviewing of grant proposals to see which best meet the criteria for saving energy, improving efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas in the state. Overall, DOE has granted \$17.3 million dollars to NH for this program, and \$6.5 million will be available to municipalities through a competitive grant process, while another roughly \$8 million is being distributed directly to the state's counties and the ten largest towns. OEP will be using \$500,000 to fund the grant administrators and \$2 million for technical and advisory assistance. The main idea behind the technical and advisory assistance service is to help municipalities develop a strategy, tracking systems, skill sets and other resources required to build a sustainable capacity to become more energy efficient. Over the next six months, the towns should be working towards finding opportunities to save energy, improve efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas.

Aney added that through the New Hampshire Carbon Challenge, money was received for a consumer portal, and the affiliated group Clean Air – Cool Planet received funding for the NH Municipal Energy Assistance Program (NHMEAP). NHMEAP has been funded to work with 48 towns in the state and will select the towns on merit. He said that the selected towns were to get energy audits and assistance to do strategy work. They would also conduct a policy audit to help resolve zoning issues that may not be environmentally friendly. One investment-grade audit for one building in the town would be included. They would then get a general understanding on how money is spent in the municipality. The study would include heat, electricity, and streetlights. Aney said that much of the work for these audits needs to be done by someone in the town. There is some money available for interns, but they are trying to lean on the people in the local municipality to collate the data and find line items of costs for expenditures. He will be attending another EESE meeting next week to find out more information.

Mike Meller asked Aney what he did for a living. Aney stated that he has been involved with management consulting and is now involved with "clean tech" and energy efficiency issues. He is trying to understand customer decisions on energy efficiency. He is also working on new software to monitor real-time energy consumption, including the use of water resources in a home. This would all be done without the need for a Smart Meter. He hopes that the software would help give insight on what is costing people money or what is consuming the most energy. Meller asked what type of people are his current clients. Aney responded that they are mostly private energy services companies. He is also trying to do some work for the Municipal Association for the State of New Hampshire, the EESE Board and others advocating for energy efficiency.

#### Other Business

Dave Harris gave a library update. He said that they are going to be looking for bids for replacing some windows in the next two weeks. They would like to have the windows replaced before winter. He said that they have decided to go with new windows instead of refitting the old ones. They have chosen a "Low-E Argon" window. He stated that the only issue they are having is that there are ten curved, and expensive, windows that may delay the completion of the project due to budget issues.

Harris also shared that they are going to remove all the shrubs on the Main Street side of the library and hope to add two trees in their place. He believes they will plant two hybrid elm trees. Harrod asked if the trees would interfere with the propane tank or lines. Harris said that the trees would be far enough away from the propane location. He added that the shrubs are too close to the building and are causing excess moisture on the building. Removing the shrubs will also make it easier to re-side the building next year.

Mr. Harris also noted that there would be a Green Building Open House on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. Three homes in the area would be open to the public as an educational event. He believed that there should be a press release submitted to the InterTown Record to announce the event. Harris said that he would contact Harrod on the press release.

After some discussion, the committee agreed that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday, October 6, 2009 at 7pm in the Sydney Crook Room of the Town Office.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary

Reviewed by Jack Harrod

Chairman, NLEC