

Energy Committee Meeting Minutes of December 7, 2009

Members Present: Jack Harrod, Joan Cobb, Russell Aney, Dave Sauerwein, Mark Vernon, Bob Crane, Mike Meller

At 7:08pm, Jack Harrod called the meeting to order.

Minutes of November 2nd Energy meeting

Harrod said that he had incorporated some minor edits from Russ Aney into the draft. There were no further changes or comments.

IT WAS MOVED (Mark Vernon) AND SECONDED (Bob Crane) to approve the November 2nd, 2009 Energy Committee minutes as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Master Plan schedule/energy chapter drafting

Harrod said that the initial draft of the Energy Chapter of the Master Plan, as drafted by Ken McWilliams, Town Planner, was reviewed at the November 10 Planning Board meeting. Many members of the New London Energy Committee were present for the meeting. It was thought that a shorter chapter that focused more on the key issues and planning principles would be appropriate, using Ken McWilliams' extensive reference information provided in his initial draft as an appendix, as appropriate. Gerry Gold had offered an initial draft and outline for a revised chapter. Aney volunteered to lead the re-drafting on behalf of the NLEC and Gold offered to assist him in the effort.

Aney further explained that Gerry Gold recently completed an entire redraft of the chapter and had shared it with him (Aney). Aney also noted that he had not yet had time to revise Gerry's draft and incorporate some of the additional feedback from NLEC members. Aney committed to having a draft available for review by the NLEC within the next week, noting that a new draft needed to be distributed to the Planning Board and posted on the town's web site on December 15th, providing time for people to review the draft prior to the December 22nd Planning Board meeting. Harrod confirmed that the December 22nd Planning Board meeting would focus on the Energy Chapter draft, and encouraged the NLEC members to attend.

"Button Up NH"

Harrod reminded the committee that the "Button Up New Hampshire" workshop would be this Thursday, December 10th, 7:00-9:00, and he suggested that committee members arrive a bit early (6:45). He asked the committee members to help spread the word, noting that he spent \$205 of his own money to announce the workshop in two issues of the local weekly publication, The Kearsarge Shopper. Harrod also notified the InterTown Record of the event. Aney offered to post it on the Sunapee News web site, and the Kearsarge Corner calendar. Dave Sauerwein offered to seek ways of promoting it at Colby-Sawyer College. Harrod also informed the committee that he had posted flyers that he created on various public bulletin boards throughout the Town where similar announcements are posted. Finally, Harrod noted that Clarke's Hardware was kind enough to offer to post an announcement near their check-out registers, and that they would help to promote the workshop. Aney suggested posting similar flyers at other local home improvement stores, such as R.P. Johnson's and LaValley's.

Harrod also noted that this was the inaugural "Button Up" workshop for the entire state of New Hampshire, and that these workshops had been very successful throughout Vermont, where they were initially developed. Harrod said that Bob Walker of the Sustainable Energy Resource Group (SERG) would be leading the workshop, and that Bob has led numerous Button Up workshops in VT. Harrod suggested having a copy of the "Button Up" DVD in the library to loan out for free. He mentioned that in Vermont they will be showing a PowerPoint presentation and the DVD as well. He asked the members to put the word out to their contacts about the workshop. Harrod said he would talk to town administrator Jessie Levine about sending a notice about the workshop to the people on her email list. He hoped it would be a success. Aney suggested that at the same time, Harrod ask Levine to put a notice about

the workshop on the main page of the Town's website. The committee wants to insure that the workshop will have a high attendance. Meller commented that the best attendance for a recent event had been at the presentation/discussion concerning the Lempster wind farm.

NHMEAP

Aney explained that the folks from Clean Air/Cool Planet were going to provide assistance to up to 48 municipalities in New Hampshire. For each municipality, they would first do an energy inventory and benchmark their municipal buildings. They would determine which were consuming the most energy. Secondly, they would offer assistance to have a policy/zoning audit. Jeffrey Taylor, who used to be the head of OEP, would facilitate this and would go through the zoning rules in the town to determine if they have rules that may not be energy-friendly. They would also do things such as checking to see if there was a chapter in the towns' master plan that would promote energy efficiency and conservation. Aney said that they would also be providing a 90% subsidy on a professional-grade audit for one of the municipal buildings. In New London, this would probably be Whipple Hall because Tracy Library had already been audited. After the audits are done, they will determine which building was the worst performing. They'll give prescriptive measures with paybacks included.

Aney noted that Laura Chesnut, an employee at Dartmouth, is working as an intern with SERG and Clean Air/Cool Planet and would be assisting in this program. Meller said that he recently heard Bill Clinton speak in Manchester. Clinton said that if small governments around the country would button up their buildings it would save as much as 40% of the cost of running them. Meller felt that was a remarkable number and he wasn't sure where the former president got it, but it could be an exaggeration. Even so, Meller felt that it was certainly something to keep in mind and may be a way to sell the idea to a lot of people.

Harrod said it was a key factor that New London made the second cut in the NHMEAP program. The town is in the program as one of the 48 municipalities. Aney noted that NHMEAP doesn't want to enter the data from the building audits themselves. They will help the Town, but they want the towns to go through and gather the information themselves. Aney wanted to find someone who would enter the data into the Energy Star Portfolio Manager online software application. He explained that he already had the electricity consumption for the buildings over the last 18 months. Harrod asked if there were any college interns who may be interested or able to help out. Sauerwein said that there were people at the college who were interested in this field. Harrod suggested that perhaps students could get some college credit from working with the energy committee on this project.

Aney thought that the other part of this project was to create a strategy for New London. The student or students could take the baseline data analysis and help map out bridges between a vision of the town's future, and the steps that can be taken along the way to bring the town closer to that vision. They could help the Town work towards actual goals. Sauerwein commented that the college was working on this same sort of thing under its President's initiative. Sauerwein said that the committee could possibly share the Master Plan document they were coming up with once they get a draft, and that it could serve as a model for the college to use for its own similar project.

Energy Matters Articles for the InterTown Record

Harrod asked if anyone would volunteer to draft something for the InterTown Record as an "Energy Matters" article. Mike Meller said that people have been volunteering him to write something on nuclear power but he felt that it was too controversial an issue. He thought that people had gone off on so many tangents on this subject and was concerned that he wouldn't be educating anyone. Harrod said that he would like to have an article in the paper and didn't want to go too many more issues without including one. Sauerwein asked if a follow-up to the Button-Up New Hampshire program would work. Aney opined that part of the challenge of these articles is to identify an original spin on subjects people are already familiar with. Harrod ended the discussion by stating that if anyone would like to volunteer to draft something, he would appreciate it.

EECBG

Aney said that the grant administrator for this program would be announced on Wednesday the 9th of December. He added that they have just closed an additional RFP on the 30th for a technical assistant for the program and noted that he has applied for this position, as have an estimated six additional contenders. They will announce their pick for this position sometime in January.

Aney explained that there was \$6.5 million dollars in grant monies available for municipalities. That RFP for funds won't come out until the end of December or beginning of January. The OEP (state Office of Energy and Planning) has a deadline of March 10th to announce who would win the monies.

Harrod opined that if New London were to win any of the grant money, Aney couldn't work for the Town because he was part of the committee and it could pose a conflict of interest. Aney said that he didn't see that the position would pose a potential conflict because he would not be selling anything and would be working with the OEP with software to enable towns to access certain resources online.

Aney went on to explain the many EECBG opportunities available for New London to apply for.

1. Tracy Memorial Library - external shell retrofit. They propose removing the siding from the oldest parts of the building until they are down to plaster. They would seal the building with closed cell foam, establish a water/vapor barrier, fill the rest of the cavities with hard pack or foam insulation and attach new siding. They would also propose to add storm windows with a high performance glass with low e rating. This would be less expensive than replacing the existing windows entirely, and highly efficient. Refinishing the windows has also been added to the request. The proposed work would cost approximately \$150,000.

Meller mentioned that his wife was formerly on the library board and a few years ago they spent well over \$200,000 on upgrades to the building. They went way over budget and had to get special approval at Town Meeting to spend the money to finish the project. He said that it was a real problem and was wondering if the Town, with the kind of needs that it has currently, would go for this project. Aney said that this grant money would supplement the capital fund already in place, and would reduce the cost of the retrofits they were already considering. They hope to offset the costs as much as possible with the grant money. He added that they are looking at hiring GDS Associates to do some simulation work to show the possible energy savings from their proposed upgrades. It would cost several thousand dollars to have this analysis done but it would help in the argument to do this work and to make sure it was worth it.

2. To help cover the costs of the Town's contribution to lighting efforts identified by PSNH's audit that had been done. The building lights and lights external to buildings were audited, including the Elkins post office. This was identified as a \$15,000 project. He has the report and is working on modifying it a bit. PSNH will cover half of the project. About \$7,500 will be the responsibility of the Town, and payback would be in two years. The measure of the life for the lighting retrofits was typically ten or more years, yielding a tremendous cash savings in the town's energy bills over the lifespans of the remedial measures. Aney reported that he has proposed this idea to the Board of Selectmen and that they are interested in pursuing the retrofits. He indicated that PSNH could offer financing for the town's share of the cost and incorporate a financing charge for the project into the town's regular electric bill. The problem with doing it this way was that they would cut back on the offered rebates. Aney believes that the Board of Selectmen has a budget that still has money in it that could pay the Town's share of this upgrade. The Board didn't vote on it yet because, in addition to scrubbing numbers with the vendor, they called in a competitive vendor who also offered a free lighting audit of the buildings, and that work was not yet complete. They agreed to wait to compare numbers and cost-effectiveness of the proposed solutions. Aney said that they should soon have all audits in hand and could then determine how much to ask for to proceed.

Aney explained that the upgrades would be of the lighting-efficiency sort. They would also upgrade the exit signs with LED versions, which is significant because they are on all day, every day. The upgrades would also include outdoor lights and lighting controls. He said that the fire station came back with the biggest potential for saving money. Next was the police station, followed by the Department of Public Works. He noted that the Town Office building was not seen to be a cost effective upgrade candidate.

At this time, Meller explained that he had a problem driving in the dark and that in the early morning he has a problem finding the entrance to the Hogan Center. He suggested having a brighter light going into the parking lot, or at least something that would differentiate the Hogan driveway from the other roads in the area. Sauerwein said he could look into it.

3. The evaluation of micro-hydro in Town. Aney said that he has reached out to a woman in Vermont at the suggestion of PSNH. He asked her for an analysis of low head, low flow micro-hydro on three dams down

below Pleasant Lake. He also obtained USGS watershed information. The Dam Bureau for the State of New Hampshire has specifics and measurements of the dams. He said he still has to take photos and take measurements of the spillways, etc. He noted that Lori Bard would do an analysis and see if there was a potentially feasible project. She will then lay out her fees. He warned that it could be a 12 month – 2 year process and that the PSNH portion alone could be 5-7 months long. There would be environmental permitting required. The opportunity before them was to generate power from their own dams that exist in the Town.

Harrod noted that the old MESA building would be turned into a public welcome center for the Elkins area. They are looking into powering it completely with hydro power from the dam that exists behind it. Aney said that he didn't know how much it would generate, because there was not a lot of flow. Since there were three dams, they could go to the lowest point first and wire the power back to the MESA building. He thought there could be potential customers of the power, but he didn't think they could generate enough for more than the one building.

Aney said he identified that a new small micro hydro system does not qualify for renewable energy certificates (RECs) in New Hampshire. Certificates are only available for certain existing hydroelectric generation installations. Qualification for RECs would assist with the town's financing of the project because RECs can be sold to utilities to help them meet their renewable energy generation requirements, mandated by the state. Aney noted that Bob Odell (state senator) had agreed to help get an amendment passed in Concord to enable small and micro hydro generation to qualify for RECs. Meller said that Randy Foose and Dave Kidder (state reps) would also be helpful in promoting this and said he would contact them with information to be provided by Aney.

4. School system energy upgrades. Aney noted that at the last Joint Selectmen's meeting, they spoke in regards to mutually applying for an Energy Efficiency Community Block Grant for proposed capital improvements that had been presented by Honeywell. Aney explained that Honeywell has had a ten-year contract with the school board since 1996. In 2006 they had five year extension. He said that Honeywell had recently identified some new opportunities and are proposing a new 15-year energy services contract. The school board was looking for a \$3 million dollar warrant article to make the suggested improvements. Aney said that he discovered that this was in discussion while speaking with the facilities director. He met with the Selectmen and the school board. Both were supportive to pursue grant funding. The OEP confirmed that they would accept a combined application for grant money from the seven Kearsage District towns. Aney explained that Honeywell provides a free analysis of opportunities but that they don't specify how much you get for what amount. They don't want you to shop out the work for competitive bids.

Aney said that because it was stimulus money, the Buy American clause would be in place. It also invokes the Davis-Bacon Act, which requires prevailing wages to be met. This can increase the cost of labor, as well as administrative costs. He said that they already have a grant administrator who will handle these issues for them. Aney added that if the school district wanted him to continue working on this grant work, he would be happy to, but that he would need to be paid to do so. He asked for \$3,000 to do this, which, he opined, was probably half the going rate. The school board would be his client. Aney said that another grant administrator, Shelley Hadfield from Lebanon, who is a long-term veteran grant writer and administrator, would review his proposal. The school board hoped to vote on this next week. Aney said that all the towns in the district would be on one application and each town would be awarded money proportionate to its share of the school district.

Aney explained that there was a \$400,000 cap on grant money for each town. For their region, \$1.3 million dollars was available and there was another \$1.5 million dollars that would be used as a slush fund statewide to supplement where needed.

Vernon asked if Aney was going forward with these projects as a member of the Energy Committee or on his own. Aney said that he would like help from the committee. He explained that he started with the library and suggested some changes to their proposal and then he offered to help them apply for the grant. He did this on behalf of the Town for the benefit of the library. If anyone wanted to help write these grant proposals, he would welcome the help.

Vernon asked if it would reduce their odds of getting money by having so many applications. Aney agreed that this was a risk and said that a lot of bidding strategy had to go into the applications.

Harrod said that the library and lighting upgrades have already been discussed with the Board of Selectmen. Aney felt that their input was useful and added that New London is the only town other than Warner in the Kearsarge District that has an Energy Committee. Aney thought that if the committee has some direction from the Board of Selectmen, then there would be a better chance of having them work on the projects. Harrod said that the committee's role was to advise the Selectboard, which would make the decisions. Harrod said that the Board of Selectmen has indicated in the past that they would like the Energy Committee to give them direction on how to proceed with things.

Aney said that something they should look to do was to wrap some marketing around the projects they are proposing. For instance, the Tracy Library project would be very public. They could do cut-aways to show what the walls looked like before and after. Explanatory materials could be utilized that could help walk the community through the process. It could be an engaging, educational process. Likewise, the school upgrades could bring into the classroom why the work was being done, and what they were doing, and how all the different components work. Aney explained that the OEP looks for things that go beyond just getting money for an audit. The Town should propose projects as outreach/educational opportunities.

Harrod said that the college's participation would help their cause. He explained that it looks good when a higher educational institution works hand in hand with the local Energy Committee. It shows that it is a community effort.

Other Business:

Aney asked if it would be OK if he could spend \$10/month to host a separate Energy Committee website. It would be linked to the Town's existing web page. They would keep the official records on the Town website and could do other creative things with their new site.

IT WAS MOVED (David Sauerwein) AND SECONDED (Mark Vernon) to spend \$10/month to host an additional web page, which would be linked to the Town's web site.
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Harrod shared the news that the Town would be using a new electricity power provider as of January 1, 2010. This does not affect PSNH's distribution system. Harrod thought the company's name was Glacier Energy.

Harrod mentioned an email that he had distributed from committee member Frank Anzalone about the trash-burning generator that Anzalone had researched in the past. He wanted the committee to be aware that Ms. Levine (Town Administrator) and Peter Stanley (Zoning Board Administrator) have been informed, and are looking into it. This sort of device burns trash to generate electricity and/or heat.

Mark Vernon shared three logos that he had come up with for the committee. Everyone thought the logo with the NLEC encircled with two green arrows was the best, but thought it should be expanded upon to add a sun or another bit of detail symbolizing energy.

The next meeting was planned for January 4th, 2010 at 7pm.

IT WAS MOVED (David Sauerwein) AND SECONDED (Mark Vernon) to adjourn the Energy Committee meeting of December 7, 2009. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London

Reviewed by Jack Harrod

Chairman, NLEC