

Draft Energy Committee Meeting Minutes of July 6, 2010

Members Present: Jack Harrod (Chair), Mark Vernon (Vice Chair), Russell Aney, Joan Cobb, Dave Harris

Members Absent: Frank Anzalone, Mike Meller, Dave Sauerwein, Bill Spear, Bob Crane, Peter Stanley (Zoning Board Administrator)

Jack Harrod called the **MEETING TO ORDER at 7:09 pm, 50% of the appointed members being considered a quorum.**

1. Minutes of June 7, 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 (Dave Harris) AND SECONDED (Russell Aney) to approve the minutes of the June 7, 2010 Energy Committee meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

2. Master Plan Schedule/Energy Chapter –Aney said that this chapter was reviewed at the last strategy session. It was found that there were some things that could be edited to be made more in synch with the long-term strategy. He said he would commit to completing the chapter within the next couple of weeks, before the next strategy meeting. Harrod said that currently there was not any pressure from the Planning Board to complete this chapter more quickly.

3. Energy Efficiency Community Block Grants (EECBG) – Aney said that the NH Office of Energy and Planning (OEP) gave some suggestions for planning that did not turn out to be rules they could live by, i.e. putting Shelley Hadfield as the Grant Administrator into the actual proposal. Some progress was made in the procurement paperwork and guidelines, and with the historic review of buildings. OEP has required the use of benchmarks, using the Energy Star Portfolio Manager for every building reviewed in the upgrade or retrofit. The Town is responsible for developing its own models and scores for buildings and schools. Town buildings have to be reviewed slightly differently than was done in the previous study. They have to go back and modify some of the ways things were done, such as the propane consumption numbers. Propane was not split up among buildings, but was just figured as one amount for several buildings. Aney said that they have all the data but still have to do some more analysis. The OEP wants to be able to measure how much energy is being saved due to the grant. This factor is making a lot more work for the towns. Aney commented that one piece of good news is that the DOE ruled that they can use the contractor chosen by the electric utilities for retrofits rather than going out with an RFP. Initially, they had wanted the Town to use its own subcontractor instead of PSNH, which has a 50/50 program that would save even more money. He said that they got the ruling just 10 days ago that they can use PSNH as the contractor. They have also had to update some paperwork, as the application for the program was “pending” because it wasn’t signed by the Town Administrator, Jessie Levine. They have to have it signed by her on approved letterhead. Aney said that they are struggling through the contracts. Ms. Levine has spent about 7-8 days working through them and she thought they would only take a few hours. He wasn’t sure where the school was in terms of putting its RFPs out. They had some issues, as Honeywell helped them write the RFP. He wasn’t sure how it was being handled and said that Shelley Hadfield was administrating it.

4. Municipal Energy Assistance Program (MEAP) Status – Aney said that he hasn’t heard anything from the auditors regarding the 90% funded audit the Town is supposed to receive. He wasn’t sure if Ms. Levine had heard from them yet either. Aney said that none of the buildings really stood out as being candidates for an audit. The Town Hall/Court House didn’t seem to be a possibility due to the entire building not being regularly used. The Town Offices were recently upgraded, so they were not really a candidate either. Aney said that the fire station could be considered from a weatherization perspective. He thought he would talk to the people at MEAP about perhaps doing solar hot water for the fire station. They have radiant heating in parts of the building, some nice

boilers and they tend to do a lot of washing. Aney said that he would explore this more when he next speaks with the auditors.

5. Colby-Sawyer Developments – No one was present from Colby-Sawyer College to discuss this agenda item. Vernon asked if, since the academic year was so short, the committee should have a plan of what they want to do when the students come back. Harrod felt they could start that conversation during the August meeting.

6. Green Fair Update – Harrod distributed an article from the InterTown Record that described a large solar installation at King Ridge. Harris said that the next Green Fair subcommittee meeting was scheduled for July 20th. He also opined that unless they get rolling in the next two weeks, he wasn't sure the fair would even happen this year. Spear had created an application form for vendors, which describes the fair and tries to market it. They want to be able to give final approval for those wishing to be a vendor at the fair. They don't want people to have a booth, not show up and just have paper materials there. Harris said that the next step is to have a final copy of the form to bring to various places to encourage people to register. He also noted that they have agreed to create a non-profit entity to deal with incoming and outgoing money. Part of the problem is how to work with the dollars coming in or going out. If money goes through the Town, and if they make more than they spend for the fair, the Town can spend any extra revenue as it wishes. The Energy Committee wants to be able to use that money for perhaps another fair, or to donate to a non-profit organization. Aney said that they should set it up as a 501-3.c. He said that this sort of non-profit can be funded or helped by others who were not members of the Energy Committee. Harris asked if Gerry Gold wanted to join the group. Harrod said that he spoke to Mr. Gold six months ago, who said he was too busy with other commitments at this point in time.

Harrod said that Spear had said that he was going to get him the paperwork to get Town permission to use the green in October. Harris said that he had the paperwork but just needed to decide on a name for the event to hold the reservation. They also needed this name in order to tell other organizations about it and start generating dollars. It was also unclear if the request to use the Town green should come from the NLEC or the new 501-3.c entity.

Harrod said he hadn't yet contacted Clear Mountain Solar from Claremont, as he wasn't sure about the details of the event. He thought they would be happy to come and participate. Harris said that he had a lot of people they wanted to contact. Harrod said he would like to help the group as much as he could, but during the time of the fair, (October 2) he would be busy with campaigning for the New Hampshire elections. Harris said that Spear is trying to finish work on his barn, where his daughter will be married in about three weeks, so his time is being taken up with that currently.

Vernon asked if they decided not to hold the fair this year, would they keep on planning and have it next year? Aney said that it was a perfect opportunity to use New England grass roots tactics and that if they could get it going now, they could get some grant money coming in. He felt that the sooner they could get the utility companies into place, the better. He has contacted PSNH and said they are looking into it. He added that New Hampshire Saves does not have marketing money available, but may be participants in the fair. Harris said that New Hampshire Sustainability would be helping to market the event on their website. Harrod opined that it is hard to organize these kinds of events for October when the summers are so busy. Aney said that if they get 20 vendors there, that would be fine. He thought they could get that number without a problem. He said he has a geothermal person coming, Gro-Solar, and half a dozen

alternative energy vendors who are interested. Clean Air/Cool Planet volunteered to participate as well. Harris said they hope to get some hybrid automobiles in as well, but will be picky on who they invite, as most makers have hybrids. They want to focus on the higher fuel efficiency models, such as the Toyota Prius and the Honda Fit.

Aney thought that perhaps Jennifer White from Colby-Sawyer College would help, as would some of the students. He thought the fair would happen and didn't think it would be hard to get at least 20 vendors there. He opined that they should go through with the non-profit, obtain a Federal ID number, and get IRS approval. A letter is required by the IRS to get the status they are looking for to set up the non-profit. Harrod said that it is likely to take a very long time to get the paperwork from the IRS. Aney said they had another subcommittee meeting on the 20th at Margie Weather's house. By that time they will have a name, marketing brochure, check book and will be contacting people to be vendors. It will be a two hour meeting.

7. Strategic Agenda (Mark Vernon's discussion paper) – Vernon said that they have the first version of the strategic agenda completed, and he passed out an outline of it. There were eight sections, a mission statement (quoted from the warrant article that led to the NLEC's creation), and a vision statement. Aney said he understood that they'd set a goal to lower greenhouse emissions by 20% in 2025. He suggested pushing it to decrease by 25% by 2025. He opined that this would also be easier to remember.

Harrod said that he liked the fact that they specified both municipality and community in the initiative. Vernon said that they don't want to be too broad and to not bite off more than they can chew. They want to focus on specific areas. He asked how the committee felt about the recycling segment. Aney said that they should be involved in helping others to understand how best to cut down on the use of resources. Vernon asked if the first goal was scattered. Aney said he liked it. He said they are performing an energy management function. Aney suggested using Municipal Energy Conservation. Harrod liked to keep it as Municipal Facilities Energy Conservation. Vernon said that they would continue to think about it. Aney suggested the term "Waste Reduction or Management." He said that when people think of wastewater management, they think of sewage. He was thinking about the flow of materials that goes through the Town, and lessening it. The notion was to manage the waste cycle starting with trying to reduce the amount of waste that is created to begin with. He thought Jennifer White at Colby-Sawyer College would be good with this portion, as it had to do with sustainability. Vernon said "sustainable practices" as recycling was a bit limiting. Harrod wondered if their mandate as a committee went that far, to get involved with recycling. He opined that the committee was created to help conserve town energy and that getting so involved in recycling and waste management was beyond that. Aney said it was the notion that people should consider how much energy they are building up or passing through. He wasn't saying it was the committee's responsibility to promote recycling but that it was important for its members to be biased on the issue. Harrod wondered if they had a role in the decisions the Town makes with regard to recycling. For example, the Town can choose to cart non-recyclables to Claremont to be burned in order to produce electricity, or they can be hauled to Berlin to be put into a landfill. Aney said that the committee should be involved with this sort of thing. Vernon suggested they save this conversation for another meeting when more members were present.

Aney and Cobb agreed that there is more to energy conservation than just energy usage; it is lifestyle, natural landscaping, etc. and Aney intended to put this message into the Energy Chapter of the Master Plan.

Vernon asked if they should take out the mention of natural landscaping. Aney said they should not. They should keep it in there and also say that there is also the larger community development plan that needs to

be considered. They need to address how the Town conserves green spaces, or how it might create village sectors where people can walk around to do what they need to do (a walkable community). Harris said that this would mean a smaller lot size to promote this sort of development. Harrod disagreed. He said in cities, when people live on quarter acre lots, they would have all the land mowed to create a lawn. If there was more land, they might mow a little and keep the rest as natural green space. Cobb said that she has worked with several different communities to try and get cluster zoning passed, and it is very difficult. Aney said he loves it when Master Plans allow for this sort of thing and help to preserve green space. Aney said the notion of natural landscaping and community development would go together well. Harrod said they should not try to carve out more than what the committee could actually have an impact on. Aney said the subcommittee thought that the full NLEC should devote a monthly meeting each year to choose about six broad categories on which to focus as themes each year. They should have a progress report, an update and an action plan.

Vernon pointed out that in the draft they had agreed that Colby-Sawyer College should be listed as a partner. He wondered if they should be rolled in with the other stakeholders. Harrod said that he thought it read fine as-is.

The next strategic planning meeting was scheduled for July 19th at 7:30pm.

8. Local Energy Solutions Conference, June 19 – Cobb said that she was not able to attend this conference. Aney said that he thought the committee was pretty well-informed on the information to be presented there. Harrod felt it was a largely a repeat of the conference from last year and didn't feel he needed to go. He added that he attended a couple of conferences last year and heard what some of the other committees around the state were doing. The New London Energy Committee seems to be doing as much as, if not more than, most of the other committees.

9. Committee Membership – Harrod said that he had circulated an email to the committee members indicating that Margie Weathers wanted to become a member of the Energy Committee. Frank Anzalone had earlier said he would step aside if they found someone else who was interested and could participate more actively. Harrod contacted Anzalone and told him that there was someone that would like to join. Anzalone said he was happy to step aside, and was still available to contribute if needed on an ad hoc basis.

IT WAS MOVED (Russell Aney) AND SECONDED (Dave Harris) to thank Frank Anzalone for his efforts with the New London Energy Committee during the first two years of its existence, and to accept his offer to step aside as a member to enable Margie Weathers be appointed to take his place, upon recommendation of the members of the New London Energy Committee.
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Harrod said he would talk to Ms. Levine about having the Board of Selectmen appoint Margie Weathers to the Energy Committee.

Aney asked if they, as a committee, want to ignore or abide by the informal 10-member rule. He wondered if they felt that they should have the flexibility when someone expresses interest, to let him/her join. He said he thought that anytime anyone shows interest in becoming a member, it should be brought to the committee to discuss. Harrod said he has been a part of the committee since it began and has now been “saddled” with the position of chairman. It has been a rare time when they could even get 10 members to be on the committee. Harrod explained that they have been quite fortunate of late, since

Aney, Harris and Spear's involvement in the committee. In previous times there have been people on the committee who rarely showed up or participated. Since the committee membership has edged up to the 10 member mark, and the state legislation came about, the committee has been side-stepping the guidelines. Harris said that if someone was interested in being on the committee, he would be happy to step aside to allow for new ideas. He said that he was actually planning to step down anyway, at the start of the new year. Harrod said that he has heard from another member about that person's wish to possibly step down as well. He said it should definitely be tabled if someone is interested in joining. Harrod explained that he had noted to Ms. Levine earlier that the State legislation put a limit of 10 members for a "commission". Although the NLEC is not a "commission" under the terms of the law, he said that he would like to keep it at 10, but if they find someone who wants to join the committee, they should bring it to the group to discuss and be aware of. Harrod said that he didn't want people to be on the committee just to be on the committee, he wanted people who are interested in doing things and making things happen. He thought Ms. Weathers looked like that kind of person, and it was a definite plus that she has a lot of connections to the business community. Harrod opined that a new member should be someone who would replace a departing member in competency and interest, or should be someone who could bring a new dimension to the committee that it didn't already have. He thought that Town's decision to appoint Peter Stanley as an ex officio liaison from the Town was great, and it was agreed by many that he has given a lot of valuable advice to the Energy Committee.

10. Atlantic Energy Info – Harrod said that Tom McDonald contacted Ms. Levine about being an energy broker for the Town. Harrod talked to McDonald on the phone, and McDonald's pitch is that rather than having the Town remain on a month-to-month energy supply program, it would be better to lock into a 6-18 month contract to protect against price increases. McDonald's company provides this service in Massachusetts currently, and he knows about Glacial Energy (the Town's current supplier). Harrod learned that Atlantic Energy goes around and negotiates with Towns and businesses to find the best rate for energy. They get their commission from the supplier, not the Town, as a sort of "finder's fee". Harrod indicated that he proofread McDonald's materials and noted several grammatical errors, which did not give the best impression. He asked Aney if he thought it sounded like a good idea to lock in energy prices. Harrod said he was wondering if he should go back to Ms. Levine with the suggestion to explore the opportunity further.

Aney said that McDonald is basically recommending running an RFP on behalf of the Town. If they were to go onto the PUC website, they would see a listing of all the energy brokers available. PSNH will always be the distribution company, but whoever provides the best rate for each kilowatt of energy is the best choice. McDonald wants the Town to run an RFP, but they don't necessarily have to do it through him; they could do it themselves. McDonald may know how to manage the RFP, which could be helpful. Aney said he would like to do a detailed analysis of their energy bills before making any decisions. Harrod said he told McDonald that they had gone through the MEAP process so they know about their energy consumption, and that they had entered a contract with Glacial Energy at the beginning of the current year. He thought Glacial was a month-to-month contract. Aney said they have to figure out who would do an RFP and who would figure out what their demand was each month. He thought that it could be a worthwhile thing to look into further. Betting on whether electricity prices were going up or down, he just couldn't say. Aney added that the Town wouldn't necessarily need to use a broker for 100% of its energy load, and noted that it is a good way to be able to budget. He thought that after an analysis, they'd see that the power prices have gone down this year versus what they were a couple years ago.

Harrod thanked Aney for his input.

11. Other Business

Bike Racks

Vernon said that he met with Ms. Levine about bike racks in Town. He still needs to meet with Richard Lee, Public Works Director, who is concerned about more things to mow around. Mr. Lee suggested the use of utility poles outside to lock bikes up. Aney said that PSNH probably wouldn't let them do this and that he thought there were some attractive-looking alternatives to the standard bike rack design which could be pursued. Several of the designs he found would be easy to mow around, or they could be surrounded by a bit of mulch. He agreed to send Vernon some images.

No Idling at the Outing Club

Vernon said that after sending several emails, he has finally received a response. The Outing Club will consider putting up the sign at its next meeting. Aney asked if the library was going to put its "no idling" sign back up. Harris said that they took it down for the snow. Aney said he had already put it back up, but that it had disappeared. He said that he would be willing to put it back up on a sturdier pole.

Natural Landscaping Opportunity

Vernon said that there was a newly cleared strip of land near the parking area at the Town Offices. A few of the committee members thought it would be good to do some natural landscaping in this area, as it is just stumps and some weeds currently. The Energy Committee like this idea and thought that they could possibly work with some of the other groups in town to get it done. Cobb agreed to come up with a plan for the project.

Harrod noted that the next meeting date, August 2, had been approved at the previous meeting.

IT WAS MOVED (Dave Harris) AND SECONDED (Mark Vernon) to adjourn the Energy Committee meeting of July 6, 2010. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 8:21pm

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London

Reviewed by Jack Harrod

Chairman, New London Energy Committee

