

# New London Energy Committee

January 3, 2010

## MINUTES

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jack Harrod, Bill Spear, Dave Sauerwein, Mark Vernon, Joan Cobb, and Peter Stanley

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Margie Weathers, Russell Aney, Mike Meller, and Dave Harris

Chairman Harrod called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.

### 1. Minutes of December 6, 2010 meeting

Harrod asked if there were any amendments to the minutes, which he had previously circulated to the members. There were none.

**IT WAS MOVED (Dave Sauerwein) AND SECONDED (Mark Vernon) to approve the minutes of the December 6, 2010 Energy Meeting, as circulated. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### 2. Master Plan Schedule/Energy Chapter

Peter Stanley gave a master plan update. The former town planner, Ken McWilliams, no longer works for the town and an agreement with the Upper Valley Regional Planning Commission has been signed. Stanley will be working with their representative to figure out when the Master Plan will be put together. Stanley suggested getting the latest draft of the energy chapter from Russ Aney so they can finish it and fill in the gaps. He added that they will review everything in the Master Plan that has been completed to date so they can figure out where there are weaknesses and where extra work is needed. He thought that probably they will do a major re-write of the land use chapter, which McWilliams had done one version of. He was not sure yet as to a timeline for this project.

Aney was absent from the meeting, and Harrod said that he would notify him of the need for the draft chapter.

### 3. Energy Efficiency Community Block Grants (EECBG)

No update was made on this, as Aney was absent from the meeting.

### 4. NHMEAP Update

No update was made on this item as well, as Aney was absent from the meeting.

### 5. Colby-Sawyer College Developments

Harrod noted that there had been a wind turbine meeting on December 13, called and chaired by college president Tom Galligan. Besides himself, those present at the meeting included two of the three selectmen, the Town Administrator, the presidents of both the hospital and college, and three deans and/or vice presidents of the college, as well as NLEC member Bill Spear. Sauerwein said that Jake Danieli was the student who had motivated the president of the college to take the next step and get the key members of town together to start the conversation.

Harrod said that he had circulated an e-mail exchange that he had with Jack Ruderman from the state Public Utilities Commission to see if he had any ideas on where to get seed money for the turbine project. He said there were several other possible channels to explore.

Sauerwein felt that the outcome of the meeting was that the attendees welcomed more conversation on the topic. Harrod said he was excited to have seen the turnout at the meeting. Spear said that it was important to note that Colby-Sawyer College didn't want to do this wind turbine project on its own; the college wants to collaborate and get the town involved. He believed the market research his class plans to do in about a month will be helpful as it will show how the town feels about the possibility of having a wind turbine. He liked the approach of getting people involved early on.

Harrod said that when the question came up about possible locations for the turbine, he was surprised that the president of the hospital noted that there was a lot of land located near the hospital that could be available. Stanley said that sites that have a long, unobstructed fetch to the wind would be optimal. The only place he could think of was the field behind Peter Messer's house (on King Hill). He noted that the back of Pleasant Lake has hills behind it that are high enough so that the better place to position a turbine might actually be in Wilmot or Springfield, in order to take advantage of the prevailing wind. Testing would need to be done. Stanley noted that there was an 1800' hill in Springfield in the Gile Forest that could be a possible location.

Vernon asked if the college athletic fields had been looked at as a site for a future turbine. Sauerwein said that everything was put out on the table and they took all views into consideration. If there is enough will in the town, then they will search for an appropriate place and move forward. Harrod felt that all of the players were willing to continue talking about the subject. Sauerwein wanted to note that there are no designated sites being taken into consideration but they are all just at the talking stage right now.

Harrod said that it spoke well of the college that a student could go right to the college president, who could then reach the "movers and shakers" of the town to get together to discuss this issue. He was glad that the college was part of the town.

#### 6. Encouraging the use of reusable shopping bags (Hannaford et al.)

Harrod said that the manager of the local Hannaford store was notified of the committee's wishes by Hannaford headquarters, but he hasn't heard back from anyone at Hannaford yet. Cobb said that the manager is currently on vacation. Harrod suggested trying to involve Hannaford in the town-wide effort to encourage the use of reusable bags. Cobb said she would be willing to go in and set up a meeting with the manager. She would then alert Weathers and Harrod of the meeting date and time to get together. Harrod thought this was a good idea.

#### 7. December 8th "Button Up" Event

Vernon and Harrod were at the event. Harrod said it was a good follow-up to what the committee did a year ago. The two people who came from Vermont were good presenters, but Harrod thought there was a disappointing turnout with about 25 people. He felt this was a worthwhile event to hold each year, as well as the suggested alternative gardening presentation in the spring.

Vernon said he talked to Chief Seastrand about no idling, and the chief said he would refresh the concept to his squad. He said that they would also be willing to put up a "no idling" sign at the station.

Sauerwein said that he noticed that there were a lot of people waiting in line to wash their cars at Jake's gas station and that they were all idling. He wondered if there was a person he could talk to about putting up a "no idling" sign. Stanley said that he wasn't sure of the man's last name, but the owner was "Ed" and he could try contacting him. He also noted that the line of cars is not supposed to be in the street, so they could try and enforce that as well.

#### 8. "Member Minutes"

Harrod said that he sent some proposed text for the annual town report to committee vice chairman Vernon and since Vernon had no edits to make, he sent it on to Linda Jackman for inclusion in the town report.

Vernon said he went before the Board of Selectmen to advocate for bike stands on the town green. He didn't think the will was there with the Board of Selectmen or with Ms. Levine. There were some reassuring words that they were supportive of the theory, but there was some resistance to putting the racks on the green. There was less resistance to putting them at the info booth. Some felt the racks would detract from the appearance of the green. Vernon noted that Selectman Mark Kaplan remarked about the area around town being very hilly and that there wouldn't be a lot of biking. Vernon was disappointed in how the meeting went.

With regards to Vernon's effort at crafting a Power Management Policy for the town offices, Spear gave some edits to him for inclusion. Stanley noted that Ms. Levine would be the one to contact about the policy.

Sauerwein said not to lose hope for the bike racks, as Jennifer White, the sustainability coordinator at the college, was thinking about a community bike loan program, as a goal the college would like to enact eventually.

After some mention of a suggestion by the Board of Selectmen to employ donations from business owners to purchase common bike racks (instead of stationary hitching posts), Stanley said that businesses would need to see some demand before starting to donate to the cause of purchasing bike racks. The town's aging population perhaps is not very interested in two-wheeled, self-propelled transportation. Sauerwein said that if there were places to put a bike, more bikes might be utilized. He said that the idea they have in mind at the college is to have a set of bikes available for students who would be prone to using them. Racks would be part of the package and available to the entire community.

Cobb said that she had sent some questions about the Community Block Grant program to Harrod. It has been thought that the RGGI grants might be discontinued by the newly-elected legislature in light of current political and budgetary concerns. Stanley agreed that this could very well happen.

Cobb noted that when Weathers gets back to town, she would gather her and Nick Ourusoff, and they will plot a campaign to approach local businesses about encouraging the usage of reusable shopping bags.

Harrod said that as of January 1, 2011, Italy has banned the use of plastic bags at stores. He sent the article to the representative of Hannaford to show him that this sort of thing is on the rise. Harrod thought it would be helpful to offer a token discount for those who use reusable bags.

Stanley said he had a discussion with someone working at a University of Ohio think-tank. One issue was how to make Nuclear Power more efficient. They are working on using automotive

robotics, combined with GPS and other existing strategies to permanently place robotics in reactor compartments. That way, in times of repair, overhaul and routine maintenance, the work can be done in a secure location by someone who is using a virtual reality program. Stanley said that he has had experience in this type of work and knew that there was a lot of wasted human power and time due to exposure. Using robotics eliminates some of the problems and the waste associated with exposure, as everything the person wears and touches afterwards has to be discarded. After one nuclear submarine refitting, 20 box cars of waste was shipped to the mines in Kentucky and will sit there forever. Stanley opined that these advances offer practical solutions and a positive outlook for nuclear power.

Harrod said that he read about a Russian expert's suggestion concerning small floating nuclear reactors that could be used in remote locations, such as Siberia or Africa. They are small and mobile and can be sent to a remote location and hooked up to provide a power supply.

Spear said the nuclear power plant in Antwerp, Belgium was set in the middle of the city to show how confident they are in the power source. They claim that the quality of the welds is super human. Stanley said in Scotland, the largest field of wind turbines, totaling over 100, is phenomenal. They are all near the west coast, taking advantage of the prevailing winds off of the ocean. They never stop turning as there is always enough wind at that elevation to keep them going.

Spear explained that his doctoral study is on recycling behavior. He wondered if the Energy Committee does anything to promote recycling. He noted that it takes 95% less electricity to recycle an aluminum can than to create a new one. Stanley said the town has been actively involved in recycling and has a high level of voluntary cooperation, as opposed to most communities. Spear explained that he will look at the two best and worst recycling towns in the state as case studies. He noted that Pay As You Throw (PAYT) programs tend to be successful, but New Hampshire is a state that values personal freedom and so there is resistance against mandating anything, even recycling.

Harrod wondered why the town is encouraging Single Stream (SS) recycling when the town already has a high rate of citizens who recycle. Stanley noted that it is to enable the recycling of all the plastics, as they can only accept certain plastics currently. Harrod said that single stream incurs fees as the items have to be sorted somewhere by someone else instead of just the consumer. Spear said that there are some automated systems that help with the sorting. Vernon said that recycling was a goal in the committee's strategic planning document. Spear noted that the people at the transfer station assist people to make it easy to separate their recyclables and get them in and out quickly. Harrod said that Concord has increased recycling with PAYT but added that prior to this change, there hadn't been much recycling being done in the state capital.

Vernon said the town should advocate generating less trash to begin with. If recycling gets too easy, it would promote the generation of more trash.

#### 9. Next Meeting

Harrod said the next meeting was scheduled for February 7<sup>th</sup>. There were no conflicts by the other members of the Energy Committee.

With no further business, Harrod called for a motion to adjourn.

**IT WAS MOVED (Dave Sauerwein) AND SECONDED (Mark Vernon) to adjourn the meeting of January 3, 2010. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:54pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary  
Town of New London

Reviewed by Jack Harrod  
Chairman, NLEC