

# New London Energy Committee

November 7, 2011, 7:00pm

## Meeting Minutes

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jack Harrod (Chair), Bill Spear (Vice Chair), Alison Seward, Joan Cobb, Brian Armentrout, Mike Meller, Margie Weathers, Peter Stanley (Zoning Administrator)

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Dave Harris

Chairman Harrod called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

### 1. Minutes of October 3, 2011 Meeting

Harrod asked if there were any suggested amendments to the minutes of October 3, 2011, which he had circulated electronically to the members of the committee. Meller noted the incorrect spelling of Reed Clarke's first name. Spear noted another typographical error. Harrod called for a motion to accept the minutes, as amended.

**IT WAS MOVED (Mike Meller) AND SECONDED (Bill Spear) to approve the minutes from October 3, 2011 as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### 2. Elkins Micro/Hydro

Stanley said there was nothing new to report. Jay Boeri still has not submitted his report. Stanley said he would contact Boeri to check the status of this project.

### 3. Colby-Sawyer College Developments (SIFE, Sauerwein replacement?)

Spear said he will be filling in for Dave Sauerwein during Sauerwein's sabbatical, representing Colby-Sawyer College, as college President Galligan has approved. Spear said that there had been talk about having a student from the college join the Energy Committee. After speaking to Leon Milan, head of the college's environmental program, it was agreed that this was a good idea, so long as it would be okay for the student to be present only during the school year. Dr. Milan felt that requiring the student to be a New London resident would limit who could represent. But Harrod noted that committee members must be town residents. Harrod felt that it also should be an underclassman so that he or she could be with the committee for a longer time. The committee was in favor of Spear continuing efforts to find a suitable student candidate to join the Energy Committee.

Spear said he was working with SIFE (Students in Free Enterprise) to manage the numerous projects they are interested in, as he feared they could become overwhelmed. He has suggested their coming up with a strategy to be most effective. They would like to be involved in the potential Green Fair and whatever else the Energy Committee might ask them to do. President Galligan has agreed to allow the college to act as the non-profit organization to handle money for the Green Fair event. As soon as the new CFO is on board at Colby-Sawyer College, they will be ready to start planning the event.

Spear said he met with Jenn White, the college's Sustainability Coordinator, and they talked about categories of projects. Casella Recycling (the company the college is using for single stream recycling) was one category. They have noticed an increase of volume in recycling since moving to single stream. This has caused a problem for the college as the workers from Sodexo are becoming overwhelmed. Some students have volunteered to help with this and assist in moving the recycling to the appropriate locations. Their hope is to get a recycling bin on each floor of each building. They plan to do this with some grant money that is available.

Other categories on campus which SIFE wishes to explore are: Energy, Transportation, Food, Waste and Consumption, Water, Biodiversity and Culture, and Curriculum and Investment.

The Polar Bear monitor is used to keep track of the levels of energy being consumed in each building. Before Thanksgiving there will be monitors in all the residence halls. There is a student in his junior year who is measuring attitudes towards sustainability before students go live with the Polar Bears. He will then measure a second time after they flip the switch. They have gathered about a month and a half of benchmark data around the campus. Students will be encouraged to lower energy consumption. There will be competitions between residence halls. Spear felt SIFE was likely to play a role in this project. They will monitor “phantom energy consumption” which is power being used when electronics are “asleep” and not turned off completely. They plan to turn off these devices completely by powering off a power strip. Stanley said it would be interesting to see the difference between on and off-campus housing energy usage. He commented that there is a lot of off-campus housing currently. Spear agreed that this was something to consider as they had not thought about it before.

Spear said that the college has applied for a P4P ([nhp4p.com](http://nhp4p.com)) grant. It is a program where they bring in one of the participating partners and do some exploration. If they can accomplish a 15% decrease in energy consumption, they will give a grant to help with the cost of making the retrofits. They are researching the possibility of being able to qualify for this grant. It was noted that alternative energy was not a permissible upgrade under this program. They are on campus currently to check the feasibility of winning a grant.

Spear said they are studying the feasibility of a “Zip Car” on campus. He explained that a “Zip Car” is a car that can be borrowed periodically by more than one person. A person becomes a member and pays an annual fee to use the vehicle. There is a set price per hour or per day. Gas is included at no additional fee. The Zip Car company recommends having at least two cars available, for convenience’s sake. The cost is \$1,500.00 each per month for minimum revenue. The college would need to sign up for that and agree to make up for any short-falls. He felt this would be something the Energy Committee could get involved in. Perhaps people at the hospital or throughout the town would be interested in participating in the “Zip Car” program. The idea is that fewer personal cars would be purchased if people knew they could have access to a vehicle when they occasionally needed one. The college is trying to find out if this would be a successful model on campus.

In the dining hall, they have an intern looking into the feasibility of increasing the use of local food. They have to work within the Sodexo guidelines, which are somewhat flexible. The dining hall will run a sustainability week coming up, which was suggested by the Sodexo team. They will give students a choice to drink tap or bottled water, and consider having water re-filling stations for use with reusable water containers. They also now have “Meatless Mondays.”

Spear said that they will have an upcoming course on Fair Trade. They will discover if it is actually sustainable or just a marketing ploy. A week after graduation the students from the class will travel to Costa Rica to see the Fair Trade movement first hand.

Spear explained that the college would be installing a pole-mounted solar array and a residential-sized wind turbine. He has checked to make sure this fits within the town zoning regulations for height limitations. Students will work to complete required permits, supervise site prep and will begin everything by doing a feasibility study. Any electricity produced would be used by the closest building and for a specific use. Stanley suggested the students read the regulations carefully and abide by them. Spear noted this project would be done for academic reasons, not for payback, and understood that they would not expect a large payback.

Spear said that the college has switched to 100% organic fertilizer on the lawns. They also have a program called STAR, which stands for: Sustainable Teaching and Academic Resources to offer guidance to faculty to include sustainable options in their classes. There are also many more paperless items being used, such as online course catalogs; these are much smaller and fewer are printed. They offer online registration also. In the dining hall, reusable mugs are used instead of paper cups.

Spear noted a program they have started in the dining hall called "Chow for Sows." Scrap and food waste goes to a local pig farmer. Restaurants in town may also be brought into this. Stanley said that pigs are usually slaughtered in the fall and that they may need to travel some distance to find places that have wintered sows that would eat the scraps. Spear said that the college does not compost on campus yet but they have talked about worm bins. They actually have some small worm bins around the campus as test cases to see how they would work.

#### **4. Reusable Shopping Bags**

Weathers had nothing new to report.

#### **5. Green Business Alliance Proposal**

Armentrout said he had nothing new to report.

Harrod said that he has a contact from Cool Air/Clean Planet who was willing to help with this effort. She is tied into the Portsmouth Green Business Alliance. Armentrout wondered where the proceeds of the cards used in this alliance (should they decide to charge for them) would go. Harrod said that any money that would come in from this initiative would have to go to the town if the committee was the sponsoring group; they couldn't hold onto it as a committee.

#### **6. Agenda for the fall and winter**

Meller thought there were many people who work at DHMC and other businesses in the Upper Valley who could use transportation, like the Advanced Transit system in Lebanon and Hanover. He thought it would be good to explore the Advanced Transit model or see whether those existing busses could come to New London and perhaps even Exit 13 in Grantham. He thought some people would be opposed to the idea but if it was done in a limited manner, (perhaps two or three trips in the morning/afternoon) it would be something to explore. He wondered how others felt about this idea.

Meller explained that the busses would be paid for by whichever businesses would benefit from the service, for example the college or the hospital. He noted that numerous trips to the DHMC are provided by COA for doctor appointments, which could benefit from this service. Harrod said that in the Energy Committee's founding warrant article, it said the committee was created to promote energy savings and to reduce emissions. He felt this was a relevant issue to look into, since public transportation would reduce emissions from private vehicles. Spear added that the college's nursing students do their clinical work at DHMC so this may be a good opportunity for them as well. If everyone is interested in finding out more details, Meller said he would go talk to "Vital Communities" to research it further. The committee agreed that this was something he should pursue.

#### **7. Member Minutes**

Stanley said they have started putting the PV array together at the Flying Goose, which has created some unhappy neighbors due to the scale and appearance. Weathers thought people would get used to the appearance and not have a problem with it. Stanley said that it all depends on what these things do to the neighboring property values. He commented that underneath some of these mechanisms, the ground maintenance is not done well. Equipment cannot get in there to mow. Perhaps they should come up with some impervious regulations, as the arrays create a large amount of runoff. He thought they could also come up with some way to reduce vegetation beneath the arrays. Perhaps they should come up with some vegetation and landscaping suggestions that would provide a softening of the sharp edges without compromising their function. A neighbor of the pub is interested in working with the Planning Board to come up with these types of regulations.

Cobb had an idea for the college and for the Green Fair. She is interested in limiting the mowing of grass and thought students would be interested in the concept as well. She passed around an article from the New York Times called: "Sheep Lawn Mowers and other Goat-Getters" which suggested the use of goats and sheep to maintain desired grass length.

Armentrout said earlier he had spoken about having recycle bins placed at town events, such as the Farmer's Market and Hospital Days. He had visited the Warner Fall Festival and saw that they had a 4x4

trailer with bins built into it to collect recyclable materials. After the event, they simply haul it away. Armentrout took a photo of the trailer that has the name of the company on it, which came up with the design.

Spear said he would be running a marketing research class in the spring. If the committee wanted to research the community or college about implementing Meller's bus idea that would be a good time to do it. Meller commented that the drivers of the Dartmouth Coach busses are first rate, courteous, and were good drivers.

The next meeting was scheduled for Monday, December 5<sup>th</sup> at 7pm.

IT WAS MOVED (Mike Meller) AND SECONDED (Margie Weathers) to adjourn the meeting.  
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 8:06.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary  
Town of New London

Reviewed by Jack Harrod  
Chairman, New London Energy Committee