



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

375 MAIN STREET • NEW LONDON, NH 03257 • WWW.NL-NH.COM

ENERGY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES May 1, 2013

PRESENT: Bill Spear (Chair), Mike Meller, Michael Rodriguez, Dave Harris, Leigh Bears
ABSENT: Joan Cobb, Brian Armentrout, Alison Seward, Margie Weathers
ALSO PRESENT: Alan Owens (Director of Facilities, New London Hospital)

Chair Spear opened the meeting at 7:00pm.

Approval of Minutes of April 3, 2013

IT WAS MOVED (Dave Harris) AND SECONDED (Leigh Bears) to approve the minutes of April 3, 2013, as circulated. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Bussing in New London - Mike Meller

Mr. Meller said they have talked about bussing in the community for years. He was on the board of Vital Communities which serves the Upper Valley and New London and noted that the Advanced Transit bus system was created by a member of this board. The bus system does have to be subsidized, however. He thought in this area, places like Colby-Sawyer and Dartmouth Hitchcock would be possible partners in a bussing system. He thought the Select Board would need to be convinced to approve this kind of project and thought they would, so long as the Town did not have to subsidize it. He thought it was a good proposition for the Town; the community is getting older and it could even service nearby areas of Eastman/Grantham.

Mr. Meller felt that someone needed to spearhead this project and run with it. He thought the Select Board would listen if this issue was brought to them. The model would use mini-busses, which would seat 6-8 people at once. In essence, these would be vans and it was thought that the demand for rides would be seen in both the summer and winter months.

Chair Spear noted that during a study he conducted, he found there to be 44 dialysis patients in Claremont and Newport who struggle to get to their appointments three times per week. In his research, he found that they would need a minimum of 90 patients to make this kind of a service worthwhile.

Mr. Meller said he would like to retire from the Energy Committee after many years of membership and wanted to hand this project over to someone else. It was noted that this project would take a lot of work. Chair Spear said he would be interested in meeting with Mr. Meller to get more information. Mr. Meller thought it would cost a couple hundred thousand dollars the first year to get the program off the ground.

Chair Spear felt the college and hospital would benefit from such a public transportation system and could be approached for support. Mr. Meller thought President Galligan had done a good job to keep the Town and the College working together collaboratively. Mr. Meller was thanked for the work he has done on the Commission over the last seven years.

Energy 101

Mr. Rodriguez said he would be willing to work with the Andover Energy Committee to get this program going. Chair Spear said he would ask Larry Chase of the Andover Energy Committee to contact Mr. Rodriguez.

Library Session – April 9

Chair Spear said there were 23 people at the event. Mr. Harris thought if the title was changed to “Climate Change is a Hoax” it would draw a lot more people. Chair Spear thought they should go to the next step which is to work with consultants and contractors to see what they can do in the Town to facilitate real change. He felt a workshop of some sort should be planned to invite people to create their own sustainability initiatives. Chair Spear said he could contact someone who did some work at the college to help them with a workshop. The committee was in favor of this idea.

Mr. Harris suggested that the workshop could have a step-by-step method of looking at a home and what measures could be made in each area to save energy. Mr. Rodriguez said a lot of this would be covered in the Energy 101 program.

Facebook Page

Mr. Rodriguez said Ms. Hallquist said the Town would be happy to consider a Facebook page for a group from the Town but they need to decide on how it will be maintained. There are liability and first amendment issues to consider. He would need help from the group on a policy or he could find a generic policy online. He thought they would really benefit from having a Facebook page to draw people to their events and their work.

Green Funds

Chair Spear said he met with the Trustees of the Town of New London trust funds and said their charter is that they must optimize their return. They manage the Town’s funds very aggressively. The trustees completed some research and noted that green funds often have lower returns than comparable funds. Investing in a Green Fund, as an alternative to traditional funds, would require permission from the town to make a lower return. However, the Trustees noted that if the Energy Committee developed a separate fund for sustainability and gave that money to the trustees to manage, the Energy Committee would be in charge of how the money is spent.

Building Updates

Chair Spear wondered if upgrades to the Town buildings should be considered. Mr. Rodriguez said that he found in the last audit that the Police Department was the only building in the Town that would benefit from photovoltaic.

The next meeting was scheduled for June 5, 2013.

**IT WAS MOVED (Michael Rodriguez) AND SECONDED (Dave Harris) to adjourn the meeting.
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:04pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London