

**Town of New London
Energy Committee Meeting
June 1, 2009**

Present: Jack Harrod, Mark Vernon, Bob Crane, Alice Sprickman, Joan Cobb, Mike Meller, Dave Sauerwein

Also present: Bill Spear, Peter Stanley

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

The first order of business was the minutes of the May 4, 2009 meeting. With one change on page one, in the section marked 'E', from "prints" to read "grants", the minutes were accepted as submitted.

Jack Harrod reported on the meeting that he attended with the Board of Selectmen on May 19, which he had specifically requested in order to get their opinion on what the Energy Committee should be doing. He basically divided it into three parts: 1) the Town should do something to recognize Chet Reynolds; 2) a review of what the Committee has done over the last two years; and 3) to solicit their input as to the issues and areas where the Committee might be helpful to the Board of Selectmen and also their consideration of potential candidates for membership on this committee. He said that they are considering these things and he will follow up either with Jessie Levine or directly with the Selectmen.

He went on to say that on June 20 there will be a conference down in Concord, "Local Energy Solutions", which he will attend. He stated that there was a \$20.00 registration fee if anyone else wanted to attend. The first two breakout sessions will be on "Partnerships and Local Energy Actions", which is about community outreach and building strong relationships and "Building a Local Energy Committee", which he will be focusing on. He said that he would report back to the Committee when he has finished attending the conference.

The next item on the agenda was the Energy Matters articles schedule. Alice Sprickman interjected that the next article would be in Tuesday's (June 2) edition of the InterTown Record. Jack Harrod said that they would need to get back on track so that they could have an article printed every two to three weeks. He suggested that the Committee might take a summer hiatus and resume having articles submitted in September. Bob Crane still needed to submit an article and Jack asked Mike Meller to do an article on nuclear energy. Mike responded that he would not have the time between now and the start of summer to submit one. Jack said that they could have Mike's article back on the schedule in September. Mark Vernon asked if they could have Bob Crane, Dave Sauerwein and himself submit articles before the end of June. Jack responded that the next article would have to be ready for print on June 16 and submitted by June 13 to Alice. Bob Crane agreed to do his article for that schedule. The next issue would be June 30 and the article would have to be submitted by June 26. Dave Sauerwein agreed to

submit an article for that printing. Jack stated that the Committee would resume in September with articles from Mike Meller and Mark Vernon. Alice Sprickman asked if it would be all right to give Jack's name to the staff at the InterTown Record as point of contact, and Jack said that would be fine.

Jack then went on to the next agenda item about the "No Idling" leaflets, which he said were being distributed at the Town offices to people who were registering their vehicles. He said that the signs had been ordered (by Jessie Levine), but that he didn't know if they were physically here yet and Mark Vernon offered to follow-up on that.

Jack asked Mark Vernon what the status was on the natural landscaping project. Mark reported that they had gotten a lot of feedback on it from the Garden Club, which stated that they did not want anything near the Information Booth. Bob Crane suggested putting it near Route 11 and Mark said that they were planning to use the area near the Transfer Station (to the left of it). Mark said that they would be doing the same area as last year, but they will be expanding beyond it this year. He confirmed that Richard Lee will be mowing the area(s) surrounding the plantings, but that he (Richard) wanted to let the plantings grow (to the right of the area).

Joan Cobb reported that there are new seeds from the Vermont Wildflower Society that will be coming and that they won't need a lot of maintenance (if the ground is prepared properly). She said that she had the roto-tiller contractor all lined up and ready to go and the cost would be \$80.00. Jack Harrod asked where the money would come from and Joan stated that she usually contributed it. It was determined that the Committee did have a budget of \$900 (Peter Stanley got a copy of the 2009 budget), but if Joan did pay the contractor, she should get a receipt so she could be reimbursed.

Jack Harrod reported that he had received a call from a man in Strafford, NH about their energy committee. He said that the man had stated that he had found the New London Energy Committee through the internet and had read some of the meeting minutes. The man said that he was calling Jack to get some ideas on things that his town might be able to do. Jack told the man about the June 20 conference in Concord and said that the man might attend. Jack reported that the Committee was being noticed by outside communities and was an example for others to follow.

Jack Harrod asked Peter Stanley to discuss with the Town leaders the possibility of a formal energy audit on the Town buildings, similar to the one done at Tracy Library. Alice Sprickman interjected that a grant could cover the cost of an audit. Peter Stanley responded that mainly the monies were obtained through tax incentives and it would be harder to get money in the coming year, but that the Committee could spend the money already allocated to it. Mark Vernon stated that he would prefer to spend the money on the Tracy Library needs which had already been determined by that energy audit. Jack Harrod said that Tracy Library was responding to their audit and that it came out of their budget monies. Bob Crane said that it was his understanding that David Harris was working on the insulation and other obvious issues that the audit had pointed out. Alice Sprickman said that she would ask Sandra Licks about the status of the library repairs and

report back to the Committee. She also stated that one of the things allowed through the block grants was the training of auditors who can review and certify buildings for energy audits and repairs. She suggested that the Committee submit a grant for that. Jack Harrod responded that one of the issues from the last meeting was that they need someone who can write grants. He asked Peter Stanley what the Town did when they needed grants written and Peter said that it was done individually by the departments. Joan Cobb stated that she had written some grants and that it required a lot of information and time. Mark Vernon said that he thought the Committee should select one or two projects worth pursuing and write the grant requests themselves. Jack agreed but said that he thought the Committee should have some advice from people who were more familiar with grant writing and applications. Alice Sprickman suggested that they ask Frank Anzalone, who has expertise in building conservation/efficiency. Jack said that he would network with as many people as would be helpful to the Committee when he attends the workshop on June 20.

The next item on the agenda was Other Business and Jack had two items: 1) his solar panels, on which he reported that his electric bill for May was \$25.00 and was showing an energy savings sooner than he anticipated (down by two thirds); and 2) a thank you letter for Chet Reynolds, which Mark had drafted, and the Committee needed to sign.

Mike Meller stated that he wanted to follow-up on the League of Women Voters presentations and said that they would be continuing in the fall. He asked to what extent the Energy Committee would attend or collaborate with the League and what everyone's thoughts were on this. Jack Harrod and Mark Vernon said that they thought it was a good idea to have an informal connection. Mike also stated that he had someone from Vermont who would be useful in lecturing on nuclear energy.

Jack Harrod invited Bill Spear who was in the audience to tell the Committee about himself. Mr. Spear said that he and his family had built an energy efficient home in the area (Baker Hill Road) about a year ago. He said that they had a solar hot water system that would soon be converted to solar heat as well and they had installed radiant floor heat which heated the house with low-temperature water. They had high-density foam insulation and all the soil they used was harvested and screened onsite. They saved over 500 trips (for dump trucks) and the fuel and carbon footprint was minimized by the approach they used. They also used fiber cement siding and Miratec, which is a trim that is partially synthetic and made from recycled fibers; all the corner boards on the house are made from pvc with a fifty year life expectancy. The roof has fifty year shingles and the windows and doors are argon-filled. He stated that they were very pleased with the way the house has held up during the winter and that they are very committed to it. He said that he teaches at Colby-Sawyer and that his class had done a marketing research project with a company called Energy Resource (in Sanbornton) re solar panels on his roof for hot water and heat and which ended up being horribly overstated. He went in search of a company that could give him a better system and the company he found asked him to take the heating element out of the to-do list until they could prove that the system could handle it (the system was a high efficiency propane fired condensing boiler). The marketing class helped identify the things needed to convert the company from a

residential one to a residential and commercial company. Mr. Spear also said that he was very interested in the windmill project that the College was considering, but Jack Harrod stated that that project was bigger than the winds systems for residential usage. Mr. Spear stated that his expertise was in marketing and that he was partially here at the meeting to see if he could help in any way and also to gather information from the Committee.

Jack Harrod made a motion to have Alice Sprickman remain on the Committee and it was seconded by Mark Vernon. The motion was passed unanimously, however there was no guarantee from Alice that she would in fact remain.

Jack then went on to the last item on his agenda which was the next meeting. He said that he saw a problem in scheduling it, so he was opening it to the Committee to determine when they should meet. He thought the first Monday in July was part of the 4th of July holiday; however it was determined that the actual holiday included Friday, July 3 and not that Monday, so it was decided that July 6 would be the next meeting date. He suggested that they take the month of August off, but tabled it until the next meeting.

Mark Vernon had two things he wanted to bring to the Committee's attention: 1) endorsing the Climate Action Plan and having the Selectmen read and endorse it as well; 2) having bike racks installed around town.

Mark Vernon made a motion to endorse the Climate Action Plan and Bob Crane seconded it. The motion was approved unanimously.

Peter Stanley suggested that the Selectmen be allowed some type of education period before asking them to endorse the Climate Action Plan. Jack Harrod interjected that the various sections had undergone significant changes and he thought that parts of it were not realistic either in the current economic situation or in general realities. He suggested that since it would be on the agenda of the conference that he would be attending, he should come back and report to Jessie Levine and the Board of Selectmen what he heard about it. The Committee agreed that he should do that.

Mark Vernon said that he was interested in the lack of bike racks in New London and would be willing to champion the cause either as a private citizen or as a representative of the Committee. Dave Sauerwein asked Peter Stanley what the code(s) might be. Peter responded that the Town did not have any in the zoning codes as a bike rack was not a structure, but that, on private property, it might have to meet setback requirements. He said that this was one of the areas in which he might be helpful to the Committee in the event that there were arbitrary concerns about these types of issues and also that the Committee should be thoughtful about the processes needing endorsement by the Planning Board.

Mike Meller stated that he thought the bike racks would be a physical symbol/reminder to people to use their bicycles for more than just recreation purposes.

Peter Stanley interjected that the Town was not actively pursuing putting in planned sidewalks for the time being.

Alice Sprickman asked about the status of the Master Plan and Jack Harrod responded that he didn't know the answer to that because Chet Reynolds had been the point person. Peter Stanley responded that every second Tuesday of the month was devoted to the Master Plan and Bob Crane and Jack Harrod agreed that the next meeting was on land conservation. Mark Vernon asked how the Committee could become a voice in the Master Plan and Peter responded that they needed to attend the meetings and speak up at them.

With no further business, Jack Harrod adjourned the meeting at 7:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Camille Holmes

Reviewed by

Jack Harrod