

Brattleboro Energy Committee
8/29/16
Minutes

Bratt Energy Committee Minutes 8/29/16

Attendees: Michael Bosworth, Paul Cameron, Milt Eaton, Tom Finnell, George Harvey, Joel Martel, Kathleen White. Guests: Lester Humphreys, Chris Mays, Daniel Quip.

Agenda items that didn't need a quorum were discussed first.

Meeting was officially called to order at 5:53 when a quorum was reached.

A-C: Approval of May 2, 2016 meeting minutes: Approved 6-0

D. Announcements:

1. Education subcommittee meeting 8/31, 2 PM, Planning Dept
2. Solar Net Metering info session at WSWMD 11 AM and 7 PM. Paul is going at 11.
3. Police /Fire Committee mtg 9/14 4 PM. Good opportunity to offer suggestions for heating system, etc.

E. Elect officers: motion to continue with slate of officers as is: approved 6-0

F. Review of Vt Open Meeting Law: Clarified that without a quorum there is no official meeting.

G. Downsizing Energy Committee: We currently have 9 committee members with 2 open seats. Motion that we ask selectboard to decrease the number to 9 seats. Four 3 yr terms, four 2 yr terms, one 1 yr term. George suggested that we ask if quorum could be based on current number of members rather than number of seats available. All agreed we should get answer to above question. If quorum is based on number of seats, then all agreed we should downsize to 9 seats on committee.

H. FY 2017 Work Plan: Reviewed current workplan and discussed changes for FY 17. See completed work plan. Accepted as amended 6-0. Action: Paul will send out new work plan.

I. Town's purchase of solar net-metering credits discussion with Lester Humphreys: Review of history of net metering credits in Vt. Started by GMP, paid 5 cents/kwh to people generating solar power. This encouraged people to go solar and saved GMP money (GMP had to buy power at 40 cents/kwh during peak times). Solar grew to 5% of power produced by Vt. The market opened up for credits--Conn and MA started buying solar credits from Vt. GMP was paying Rate 1 plus 6 cents solar adder. We have reached 15% solar at peak power. Legislature would like to reach 90% renewable energy statewide. Adder is now 4.3 cents. Rate 1 is 14.7 cents/kwh, GMP paying 19 cents. Legislature and GMP agreed on a 15% cap. Hydro Quebec has unused capacity, would like to sell power to Vt, MA & Conn. GMP would like to build their own solar fields. New rule (not finalized): 50% of power generated has to be used on site. Community solar would then not be viable. We can contact our legislators to weigh in on this. GMP & Legislature want to encourage smaller scale back yard models vs 150-500 mw sites. With the sale of renewable energy credits, Vt has to stop claiming use of that % of solar power. Or, the creator of solar needs to hand over the credits to GMP toward overall state goals. Possibilities: under proposed new rules there will not be anymore 500 MW systems built to serve dispersed towns or residents.

WSWMD project: town would receive 19 cents/kwh for power generated for 10 years. Good savings for town. After that town would receive Rate 1. Town would sign up to take some percentage of what is generated. Town would get 13.9 cents/kwh credit on its energy bill. Town would never pay more than it receives--no risk. Town currently has contract with Next Sun, but in limbo as town is contesting contract. In the second ten years, if rates go up, the 13.9 cents is a good deal, but if electric rates go down, there won't be an advantage. May still be worth it for the town to get the savings in the 1st 10 years. WSWMD wants to know sooner than later. It's 1st come, 1st serve. May not be up and running until 2017.

J. Button Up Day statewide is Saturday, 11/7/16. Grant program available that non-profits and Energy Committees can apply for to offset costs. Activity ideas presented by Paul:

1. Heat Pump workshop
2. Series of home energy parties for low to mid income homeowners to learn about resources to increase home's energy efficiency
3. Working with hardware stores to promote sale of weatherization materials. Main costs would be for food for workshop and energy parties: approx \$250. Bratt Climate Protection would be applicant, in collaboration with Energy Committee. Approved 6-0. Action: Will discuss further at Education subcommittee mtg.

K. Subcommittee reports:

1. Energy Efficiency: Michael & Paul met with Peter Elwell. He will check on status of WWTP. Town wants to do basic safety improvements on Harmony Lot. This may impact funds available for energy efficiency in Transportation Ctr. Additional work could be funded by general Fund.
2. Smart Commute: Vanpools are being set up at BUHS/BAMS (5-6 people interested--need to find 1-2 more people) and the Retreat. Vanpool Company will do an analysis of where people who work at Retreat live.
3. Zero Energy Now: participants can get up to \$9K discount on work done. Still trying to get about 25 more homes to participate.

Meeting adjourned 7:05 PM. Next meeting October 3 at 5 PM.