

Minutes: October 5, 2015

Group: Brattleboro Energy Committee

Town Energy Coordinator: Paul Cameron

Attendees: Mike Bosworth, Tad Montgomery (note taker), George Harvey, Tom Finnell, Bob Rueter, Kathleen White

Guests: Guy Payne – SEON/Windham Wood Heat Initiative (WWHI), Charlie Niebling – INRS/WWHI, Eli Gould - WWHI, Kim Smith – WNRC/WWHI, Cody Berwick

Topic	Discussion	Action
A-C). Call to order, Agenda review, approval of minutes		Aug. 3 & Sept. 14 minutes approved, both 6-0
D). Check-in, Introductions, Announcements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Forum tomorrow at the Latchis Theater on climate change economy, sponsored by VT Council on Rural Development.- VECAN conf. Sat. Dec. 5, Richard Heinberg to keynote- Solaflect Energy has installed a ground-mount solar PV system in Dummerston, they are open to giving tours. Cody Berwick will get tour time options to Paul.- EV day happened on Sat., people had fun- Dave Cohn will be giving an electric bike demo Oct. 20, 5 PM to state employees.	
E). Biomass & Carbon Emissions Discussion	<p><u>Charlie</u> – forester, former manager of New England Wood Pellet. Debate about carbon neutrality of biomass really started in the public eye 6-7 years ago in MA with a state RFP for wood-fired electric plants. Resulted in changes to their RPS requiring >50% efficiency from biomass. Study on carbon neutrality of biomass commissioned in MA, written by the Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences. Introduced concepts of carbon debt and dividend, and said that these are much more favorable for biomass being used to make heat at 80-85% efficiency. Study didn't look at feedstocks for pellet manufacturing, which Charlie said is primarily the waste byproducts from other wood industries & manufacturers. The rest is 'roundwood chips' – small diameter, less value than cordwood that they (NEWP) get from six specially chosen vendors. He believes that biomass is a renewable but finite resource, if managed sustainably. Keep it at the community scale where the wood doesn't travel far, helps the local economy. He called biomass “carbon beneficial” when compared to petroleum products, if not carbon neutral.</p> <p>US Forest Svc. Inventory – Windham County has the greatest net growth of inventory in VT, > 2:1 ratio of growth over harvest & decline.</p> <p><u>Gould:</u> We have very rich forest soils here in Windham County; New England may actually be acting as a carbon sink. He thinks that a poorly managed stand of trees might actually diminish carbon uptake, as well as harm good wood production. Another problem he sees is 'high grading' where the best trees are taken and lower quality trees left, leading to the long-term degradation of forest health.</p>	

F). Subcommittees		
- Efficiency	Margaret Dillon will have preliminary results in November. At this point she doesn't have anything to report to the subcommittee. Chris Hebb has done mechanical system evaluations of Town buildings as a sub-contractor working with the Windham Wood Heat Initiative.	
- Renewables	Brattleboro Solar Summer will have a subcommittee meeting on 10/15 at 5 PM to discuss the program. Still waiting to hear back from Integrated Solar, otherwise Paul said that three residential and four community solar systems have been counted. A group called by Patrick Moreland met last week to discuss purchase of solar credits. Three town accounts are now receiving up to 60% of their bills in solar credits. Andy Cay has offered to help the town figure out which accounts should get more credits from WSWMD or elsewhere. The accounting system is a substantially complex task. Bob Fisher has asked for a ruling from the PSB re the issue on whether the town can be an offtaker from more than one producer. WSWMS solar project - the contract with Pristine Sun has been signed. The project must be completed before the end of 2016.	Tad asked Paul to include the renewables sub-committee in these types of discussions, or at least to ask Patrick for this.
Project Atlantic	Ralph Meima has offered to re-invigorate the P.A. Subcommittee and start calling meetings.	A fuller discussion has been put off until the Nov. BEC meeting.
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Paul said that the Retreat is actually a prime candidate for vanpooling. 50 employees expressed interest. He is working with the HR director, who's very interested. - More than 200 employees from the Windham Southeast Supervisory Union also responded to a survey. Paul will meet with WSESU and World Learning soon. - Still working on the Freedom Station fast charger elec. car station from GMP. Latest idea is to put in the High-Grove lot. Would have to go in CY 2015 as per the grant requirements. 	
G). FY 2016 Work Plan & Discussion	<p>Discussion happened. It was thought that sub-committees should think about what their priorities are re the work plan.</p> <p>PACE discussion with contractors – referred to efficiency sub-committee.</p> <p>Project Atlantic – Ralph to re-convene.</p> <p>Paul will send out the revised draft.</p> <p>Subcommittee members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Energy Efficiency – Bob, Lester (?), Tad Renewables – Lester, Tad, Kathleen Integrated Energy Systems – Tom, Tad, George, Michael, Jason (?) Transportation – Kathleen, Alice Charkes, Barb Walsh, Becky Jones Energy Data – Lester, Michael (?) Project Atlantic – Ralph, Michael (?), Mike Auerbach, Tad (?) 	
H). Feedback &	11/02/15 next meeting	

Next Meeting		