

**Minutes: February 1, 2016**

**Group:** Brattleboro Energy Committee

**Attendees:** Michael Bosworth, Tom Finnell, Bob Rueter, Paul Cameron, Tad Montgomery, Kathleen White;

**Guests:** Wendy Harrison, Christopher Parker, Chris Mays

Topic	Discussion	Action
A-C: Call to order, agenda review, Approval of 12/7/15 and 1/5/16 minutes	Meeting called to order at 6:03 PM. No quorum, minutes unable to be approved.	Approve minutes at next meeting.
D). Check-in, Introductions, Announcements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Climate Economy Conference to be held 2/22/16 at VTC in Randolph. Paul, Michael, Chris Parker planning to go.</li><li>2. Energy Roundtable, 2/23 5:30-7:30 at MGC. Sponsors VECAN, WRC, SEON, BCP. Johanna Miller will give energy snapshot, info on Zero Energy Now campaign.</li><li>3. Better Building by Design 2/3-2/4, Burlington.</li><li>4. Tad attended Section 248 workshop. Both solar promoters and those opposing big renewable projects attended.</li></ol>	Paul will send out carpool plan for conference.

<p>E. Passenger &amp; freight rail issues: Christopher Parker of Vt Rail Action Network</p>	<p>44-53% Vt's greenhouse gas from transportation. If we're serious about decreasing GHG, we must look at transportation sector. Most trans. is local (within 100 miles); most intercity long distance trips are by car. Vt Energy Action Plan has goals related to rail that could impact Brattleboro. Can move 1 ton freight by rail for 1/3 energy used by a truck, but rail less efficient when moving small shipments to various places. Can also be slower. Passenger trains: 2/3 as much energy as private car. Filling up the train (or bus) is paramount. If train already running, and you take it, your trip is energy zero. If we could double rail ridership, we could make a big impact. Fed transportation funding: \$3 trillion/yr spent on highways; 1% or 2 billion of that spent on rail. Vt spends 5% budget on rail, &amp; 5% on bus (largest amount of any state). Increased funds in large Fed transportation bills could increase mass transit ridership. Vt Energy plan calls for 400% increase in rail ridership to 400,000 tripstrip/yr on Vt Atrak.</p>	<p>People need to get involved to keep rail goals in the forefront.</p> <p>Trans needs to know that increased trains is important to people in Brattleboro area.</p> <p>BEC could influence improved rail service by sending a letter to VTrans and to House and Senate Transportation committees stating we want more trains daily to destinations south. Cite the goal in Vt Energy Plan (reflected in Vt Rail Plan). Ask Mollie Burke for help drafting letter. Ask Bratt Selectboard to write a letter.</p> <p>All agreed with Michael's suggestion that BEC draft a letter for next meeting.</p>
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trips/yr on Vt Amtrak.  
Would need 1 more same day train going through to achieve this. Opportunity: extend train that goes from Spr, MA to NYC north to WRJ or at least to Bratt.  
Would need political support from Bratt for this. MBTA could run it.  
Current track would accommodate extra trains.  
Crew costs would increase slightly if use existing train.  
If need new train, cost of train set. 40% cost of running trains is equipment.  
Amtrak nationally is funded 82-90% by ticket fees. In Vt, only 50% funded by tickets. Fed Govt gives little subsidy to Amtrak, so fares need to be higher.  
Fares are competitive for commuters as they are saving \$ by not driving cars. Only 50% of those looking for mass transit will ride a bus. In a few years, trains will be faster to NYC—3 hrs 43 minutes.  
Info at [RailVermont.org](http://RailVermont.org).

<p>F. Procedure for taking minutes</p>	<p>When minutes are amended prior to approval, who should make the corrections?  Agreement that any changes/approved amendments to minutes must be put in previous draft by minute taker for those minutes &amp; sent to Paul/Jan. If that minute taker is not at current meeting, BEC chair will make the revisions. Tad bowed out of taking minutes. Bob Reuter offered to be back up.</p>	<p>All in agreement of minute revision procedure.</p>
<p>G. Projct/subcommittee reports: 1. IES</p>	<p>Needs chair; no news. A goal wa to get microgrid here. \$400K over 2 yrs available for projects that align with CEDF. WRC Energy committee applied.</p>	<p>Michael will try again to reach group. When we know more about this issue, get IES together again.</p>
<p>2. Efficiency  a) Town building audits</p>	<p>Sub-Committee includes Tad, Bob, Michael, Paul; needs to elect chair. 3-4 building audits nearly completed. Met with Margaret 1/6/16.</p>	
<p>4). Renewables  a) Solar electric project  b) Electric car charging stations</p>	<p>Able to work out agreement with company harvesting the methane—hurdle eliminated. No chair.</p>	<p>Paul will send out list of members.</p>

<p>5). Transportation</p>	<p>a. Sub-committee will meet 2/11 5 PM, planning dept. Will elect chair. Kathleen spoke about the Safe Streets Project community forum proposed for May. Tad brought up concern about snowy unsafe sidewalks. KW will put on Safe Streets March agenda. Encouraged Tad to bring to Traffic Safety Committee.</p> <p>b. Town putting in 1fast charging EV station paired with level 2 in High-Grove lot, with GMP grant. No charge to town. Credit card system.</p>	
<p>6). Project Atlantic</p>	<p>No updates. Michael &amp; Milt were interviewed on video last fall. Ralph is chair.</p>	<p>Paul will contact Mike Auerbach for update.</p>
<p>7). Energy Data</p>	<p>Needs chair. Lester met with town officials with "system life cycle approach cost analysis". Both Reformer Bldg &amp; Municipal Ctr as possible sites for police dept came out about equal in cost. Tad suggested sharing report with Olga at The Commons.</p>	<p>Paul will get clarification on exact cost differences from Peter Elwell.</p>

8. PACE	Tad interested in reactivating committee. More outreach needed to get the word out about PACE. Rockingham is voting to set up a PACE district.	
H. Zero Energy Homes	Building Performance Professionals Assoc Vt. Only 1 contractor in our area qualified to participate: Farnum. Not interested in being GC, but could partner with others. BEC role to recruit home & business owners. Unknown how active we'd need to be. Will see once BPPZ has program up and running. Paul recommends a sub-committee. Once contractor is chosen, we can offer help. Solar Summer committee decided not to do another solar campaign, rather to focus on ZEH, a more wholistic effort.	Wendy will pass this info on to Bruce Whitney at WWHT.  Put ZEH subcommittee on next agenda.

**I. Town Energy & Sustainability Manager position:** Paul researching. Shared sample job description. Position would need to be open to anyone. Feasible? Do we want to advocate for this? Could save more \$ for town. More sustainable financially than Paul's current position. Could pay for itself. No other Vt towns have one—larger towns in other states do. Get officials from Towns that have this position to endorse, such as Mayor of Greenfield. Tad advocated for more \$ going to Energy work at town meeting last year. **Action:** Discuss at next BEC mtg. Get position more defined before talking to town officials.

**J. Talking with department heads:** Topics: Town purchase E-Vehicle; retrocommissioning of WWTP. Fuel usage; results of audit. February is a good time. Michael interested in being involved. Need clarity on agenda.  
**Action:** Paul will set up meeting with Peter Elwell.

**K. Feedback, next meeting date/topic/speaker:** March 7, 5 PM. Idea arose to ask Selectboard to decrease the # of BEC members to 9, since we do not have our quota of members and so we can be more assured of having a quorum at meetings.









