

Minutes: 03/05/18

Group: Brattleboro Energy Committee

Attendees: Michael Bosworth, Milt Eaton, Tom Finnell, Tom Franks, RoseAnn Grimes, Oscar Heller, Tad Montgomery, Kathleen White, Phoebe Gooding (Energy Coordinator).

Guests: Steve Barrett (DPW Director) and Peter Elwell (Town Manager).

Topic	Discussion	Action
Agenda Review		
Approval of January 2018 minutes	No discussion.	Approved 7-0
Guest: Steve Barrett, Waste Water Treatment Plant Audit	<p>Introductions. Written report of WWTP audit not yet finalized. BEC will get a copy for comment. Steve will meet with BEC again in April or May to review final report. Audit was done with funding from Efficiency VT. Steve reviewed highlights. WWTP was revamped in 2012 and audit validates that it was well done and we already have good systems in place. Cost of the audit was \$12,900. EVT pays half up front and the other half when the recommended work gets done.</p> <p>The largest project recommended is stabilizing the digester, which Town is already working on. Cost of all the recommendations is \$234,440, payback is 4.8 years with savings of 28% or \$48,000/yr. We already have one of the most efficient ones in Vt/NH. But could improve. Some of the methane gas escapes, but how to fix it is yet unknown. Discussion about whether WSWMD and Town could collaborate on 1 digester vs fix the town digester and build a new one at WSWMD. Steve isn't sure about capacity of WWTP digester. Need to look at amount of food wasted collected by town.</p> <p>Steve highlighted several other recommendations, which can be seen when he sends the draft report to us.</p> <p>Discussion: Could solar power or hydro be used to run WWTP? Hydro is not feasible for town plant--not enough elevation change. A good site for solar at WWTP or Water Treatment Plant has not been found. Looking at</p>	<p>BEC should connect with WSWMD to find out status of digester project there and assess if possibility of collaboration.</p> <p>Steve Barrett will send BEC a copy of the report he reviewed with us, so we can comment. He will meet with us again in April or May with finalized report.</p>

	DPW as a possible site, when building is upgraded.	
Check-in/Announcements	<p>1) Phoebe: met with Shanta Lee Gander, selectboard candidate, and discussed that BEC work is not just about energy use, but human rights and quality of life issues for Brattleboro's residents.</p> <p>2) Michael: SEON is sponsoring a Weatherization workshop, Wednesday, March 7, 5:30 at the River Garden, \$5 donation.</p> <p>3) Michael also talked with Shanta Lee, mostly about carbon tax (ESSEX) plan.</p>	
Storage, Microgrids, GMP	<p>BEC has talked with Patrick Moreland about possibility of solar array with battery storage on Parking Garage. Energy stored could be a helpful backup source of power for emergency use for the Fire Dept.</p> <p>Jason Cooper is seriously considering developing battery storage at one of his buildings (2 MW).</p> <p>George Harvey is looking at developing a small microgrid. Michael asked GMP's Dorothy Schnure, if she is willing to get GMP technical folks to come talk with town, BEC and interested partners. Milt is not overly impressed with what GMP offers for home battery storage--4 different plans. Tom Franks said if GMP has no shortage of energy on the grid, they will not need storage here.</p>	Tom Finnell, George, Oscar, Michael (microgrid working group) will discuss, talk with Jason and decide whether to meet with GMP.
EC resignation	<p>Phoebe explained that she was experiencing extreme exhaustion ("burnout"), needed to let go of something in her life and the EC position made the most sense. Asked what we need her to do in next 2 weeks. Stated a full time Sustainability Officer would be a better model for the town. Phoebe hasn't received funds from the NE Grassroots Environmental Fund grant yet. Discussion--see Action item.</p> <p>Peter Elwell confirmed that \$10,000 is in the town budget for FY19 for EC and hopes Phoebe's non-profit BSEC will stay in operation to accept the funds for the next EC. Phoebe said what's left of her stipend could be added to the stipend for FY19 EC. Michael questions the sustainability of this model and suggests we may need to</p>	<p>Phoebe will give BEC a written report on her thoughts about the EC position and how it could be improved.</p> <p>Phoebe will talk to Michael about whether BEC can do the work for the grant. If not, she will ask whether and for how long the funds can be held on to for next EC to take on. If not, she will return the funds.</p>

	<p>make a stronger case for a FT Sustainability officer position. Peter said BEC can still make a case for an SO position at a selectboard meeting. RoseAnn feels an SO position should include resiliency, bringing community building and quality of life issues together. Northampton uses this model--STAR program. Tom Franks is struggling with whether BEC should have paid staff. He thinks not, because he feels BEC has not done anything in the last year since he has been a member. He may say this at town meeting. Milt feels BEC should be experts on technology so we can make recommendations/advise the town and selectboard on how to get best bang for buck.</p>	
<p>Next meeting date</p>		<p>Monday, April 2, 5 PM Hannah Cosman Room.</p>