

Minutes: July 14, 2014

Group: Brattleboro Energy Committee

Attendees: Lester Humphreys, Bob Rueter, Chad Simmons, Michael Bosworth, Tom Finnell, Tad Montgomery

Guest: David Schoales, Smokey How, Eric Wilson, Pete Edling, Laurie Cartwright, Bruce Clauson

Coordinator: Paul Cameron

Topic	Discussion	Action
A). Call to order, Agenda review, Minutes approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Agenda additions: add election of officers -Reason for abstaining from vote: conflict of interest. -Did not have enough committee members present that are able to vote (off the 11 seats, we need 6 voting committee members to approve minutes) -If someone is not at the meeting, a member <i>can</i> vote in favor of the minutes as long as he/she read and agree with the minutes. Member does not have to be at the committee meeting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Motion to approve May 5th and June 9th meeting minutes: 0 nays, 2 abstains, 4 yays. Does not pass. Need 6 to pass. Table until next meeting.
B). Announcements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Meeting in Montpelier Wed 16, 9am-Noon at Statehouse "Solar Summit." Give input to legislators from community with regards to solar. 	
C). Solar Proposal-Real Good Solar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Speaking to any solarize campaign that will come up in Brattleboro -“Solarize” is a community decision -What is solarize? Stated in 2009 in Portland, OR. Allows homeowners to have bulk purchasing power, where everyone in community can buy-in to solar projects. Often, the more people that buy in, the lower the cost of the projects. Making solar projects competitive for community members. -Benefits of solarize: demystifies process of going solar; big education component to work; very community oriented. -Company offers guidance for potential buyer(s) going through projects -Real Good Solar (RGS) here to advocate for solar -Solarize is good for economy -Work with contractors and partners in the community -RGS has worked with these towns/collaborators in VT: Putney, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Tad will send data from MA to all on committee members as well as Lori.

	<p>VPIRG, Stowe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Installers are both RGS employees as well as local contractors, depending on needs -Do solarize projects only choose one vender? The successful ones do. Vetting is streamlined through one vender, makes it easier for consumer. -MA collects data on ALL solar installs across the state. From data, solarize projects increase solar sales for all vendors. Solarize projects have an end date (offer ends on X date). There appears to be some forces that will increase the cost of solar including: trade war with China (tariffs on solar panels); draft plan for CEDF is proposing to remove all solar subsidies (VT statewide); Federal reserve is proposing to increase rates on loans (will increase cost of solar projects). -Concern raised: picking a specific vender may raise some political issues, especially in small towns. Should do follow-up with other towns to see how they deal with this issue. The hope is not to compete, but to get more solar installed. We could also bless the concept of "solarize" and have a separate committee/sub-committee to do the RFP process -Dummerston is starting this process, but forming a task force. 	
D). Open meeting law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Paul sent out law language to all on committee -Quorum of 6 is needed to make any minutes or decisions. -Draft meeting minutes must be made publically available within 5 calendar days of meeting. -Individual committee members may be fined if not meeting these requirements, but won't go into effect until next year. 	
E). Elect New Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Board Chair: Lester -Vice Chair: Bob -Clerk/Secretary: Chad -Paul will get the word out to join the energy committee. We will all put the word out. -Lori Cartwright is interested and will 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Motion to elect Lester as Chair, Bob as Vice Chair, Chad as Clerk. 6 in favor, 0 abstain, 0 nays. Motion passed.

	<p>apply</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -New members welcome to join subcommittees 	
F). Subcommittee Reports:		
1). Energy Efficiency a. Town buildings, Home Energy Challenge	<p>a) Town buildings, Home Energy Challenge (HEC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Looking at doing efficiency work on town buildings -Using 2012 study as a baseline -Refining points from the study to propose work to be done. Phase one, do energy audits. Phase two, do work on: transportation center, fresh water treatment plant, ice rink. -Proposal deadline for work is Aug 1st. -\$45k energy efficiency fund set up by town to be used for audit and efficiency work -\$50k set aside for audits on these three projects -Proposal would be for use of the \$10k HEC grant money. -We need to get the outside square footage of buildings to make best decisions. Better than inside square footage. Efficiency subcommittee will be doing this work in September (Sept 8) 	
2). Energy Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Jed Leslie (previous member) finished database that looks at where money is being spent on energy within town buildings -Goal: where are the town's BTU's and money going? Why? We can now drill down to specific line items, departments, buildings. -This will create a feedback loop and way for us to make decisions. -Doing this on fiscal year basis. Will start with FY 2014. -Examples: streetlights, waste treatment plant 	
3). Home energy video project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -No updates -Will have updates in September 	
4). Renewables a. Solar tax b. Solar electric projects c. Electric car charging stations	<p>a) Solar tax</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -State passed new law re: taxation of solar projects. 50Kw or less would be tax exempt; Larger than 50Kw would be taxed at \$4/kwh - Paul asked Patrick if town can 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Paul will ask Russell Rice how community solar projects would be taxed.

exempt by size of project? If so, what's the process for making this happen?
Paul still needs to hear back from Patrick.

- Committee's options to recommend to the selectboard is to: a) do nothing, tax projects at state rates; b) exempt all systems; c) through stabilization program, tax at level based on size
- Committee has already made recommendation to selectboard (use state's rates), but since the law changed, the selectboard is giving us an opportunity to reconsider our recommendation. This is why we are following up with Patrick and base our new recommendation on his response. If we do recommend any taxation, we would also recommend that any tax revenue would be set aside for town energy efficiency projects.
- How would community solar projects be done? We're not sure.
- b) Solar electric projects
 - CPG issued for Green Lantern Project in Westminster. Town of Brattleboro is getting solar electricity, but will not be receiving Renewable Energy Credits (REC). Brattleboro gets to keep between 10-15% of the net metering credits, based on formula. There is a floor of 10%.
 - RFP has not been sent out for second project. Committee is asking for RFP to be sent out. Project would be anywhere from 10kw-500kw. Green Lantern has proposed the same terms for a second RFP. Committee is hoping to look at other proposals
- c) Electric car charging stations
 - New stations in parking garage are installed and being used
 - GMP is not funding any new projects until the fall.
 - Businesses can contact GMP to communicate interest in charging station projects
 - Jason removed the regular 120v plug from the plan. It could be added back, if we wanted.
 - Tad talked to Mollie Burke, Woody Woodward and David Cohen to

	<p>encourage them to apply for state subsidies to be used in Windham County for electric assist bike charging stations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Tesla is looking at putting in a supercharging station at Price Chopper. -Tom suggested talking to the Chamber and BABB to generate more interest in getting them installed -Other businesses interested: Brooks House, Chelsea Royal, Marlboro Grad, Ford Dealership -Great work to Jason and Paul on this project! -West Brattleboro is doing a movie night. Wants to do a bike-powered projector. Looking for help to build bike apparatus. 	
5). Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Transportation committee has worked with local business on "Smart Commute." -Committee did survey with 10 interested businesses/organizations -Businesses meet regularly. Next meeting Sept 3rd, 1-2pm. 	
H). Next Meeting	Aug 4 th , 2014. 5pm. Hanna Cosman Room, Brattleboro Municipal Center	