

LEE ENERGY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

January 30, 2024

ATTENDANCE: Don Anderson, Carol Doering, Erik Johnson, Mary Woodward, Barb Wauchope, Lou Grondin

The 11-29-23 meeting minutes of the Energy Commission were circulated, and all present voted to approve with two minor word changes noted and made. There was a discussion as to whether the 3 people in the 12/19/23 meeting would constitute a quorum, but it was not concluded at the meeting. (Note: RSA 38-D:3 states “no fewer than 3” would seem to confirm 3 as sufficient for a future Quorum)

The next meeting date was voted on and approved for 2-20-24.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. The initial discussion was on the RFP for the new Town Hall, about which the commission has the ear of the Town and involved in the meetings between the Town and the chosen builder, with whom build details are being discussed. The commission advocates as much insulation as possible for future energy savings as well as parking lot solar array. Lou noted in his meeting that “pre-fabbed” insulated panels is an option.
2. No update on the library renovation discussed at this time.
3. Regarding Consumer Power Aggregation, it was confirmed in a phone conversation with the Town Administrator during the meeting that they have been in contact with Standard Power who has not gotten back to them as to when they will implement.
 - a. We did not confirm if NHEC still needs written approval from the Energy Commission—**not discussed.**
 - b. A quick discussion was to keep the Consumer Power Coalition of NH Towns as an option moving forward as the next “batch” of towns will be included in August of 2024. There are presently 23 members, and the administration costs were considered minimal so far. It was noted Durham will hold an information meeting at their town hall at 7PM on 2/4/24.
 - c. Revision Energy in the meantime seems to be pushing Community Solar Arrays and that the Public Utility Commission (PUC) seems to be wanting to “roll back net metering.”
4. Regarding EV chargers it was noted that the State of NH recently lost federal infrastructure funding, believed to be \$15 million from the VW agreement, due to inactivity in implementation. No other items were discussed.
5. Local Energy Solutions (LES) conference ideas based on the assessment of the “once in a generation moment” for energy conservation due to the federal Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).
 - a. There was no discussion regarding use of Block Power, a 3rd party who manages electrification projects for municipalities. (Reference Peterborough and Bethlehem plans).
 - b. The “Solar Capital Reserve Fund” was to be introduced as a Warrant Article in the Town Deliberative Session of 2/3/24 (Warrant Article #11 for \$35,000 in 2024-5). This negates the need for a separate Transfer Station buyout noted as Item #7 previously. The actual warrant article was pulled together by the Town Administrator.

- c. Carol is still going to contact the Town of Exeter regarding energy upgrades to manufactured housing.
 - d. The recruitment of young people, such as High School and Middle School students, for the Energy Commission was **not discussed**.
 - e. NH Legislator heat pump implementation was **not discussed** (there are 12 bills coming up in the legislature).
6. Lee's Energy Baseline still needs an update from the town administrator on information from 2016 through to today. The annual information to the Select Board will be the Fiscal year from July 1st through June 30th each year, so additional manipulation may be required. Some past items still need updating as to dates implemented.
 7. The Annual Report required by the Commission to the Town will not be needed for Town Meeting in March. Lou noted in an e-mail that he was going to update it for the year.
 8. Library Equipment Borrowing was quickly discussed with the commission saying the money in our present fund should go to purchase a Watt Meter. It was voted on and unanimously approved by all commission members. It was noted that other items could be added later to "Energy Tool Kit" available to town citizens. It was also noted that in Barrington they went "door to door" to promote energy conservation.
 9. The question as to whether the Library and Old Town Hall had automatic thermostats was not discussed.
 10. The Commission's fund for Energy Efficiency request for \$1,000 for initial funding from the town is still not confirmed.
 11. Not discussed: Town Natural Resources Map.
 12. Not discussed: Regarding the new "Starbucks" is there anything we can do?
 13. Not discussed: Follow up question whether the Commission should recommend to the Select Board tighter building efficiency codes for Lee.
 14. Not discussed: updating the town web site—still needed: CIP improvements (2017-2024), Energy Handbook, Homeowner guides and Energy Efficiency Road Map for the town buildings. No discussion. The goal is still prior to budget discussions at the end of the year.
 15. Not discussed: the need to promote an ordinance for preventing taxation of solar arrays in the town and not just depend on the goodness of the assessor to not include it.
 16. Not discussed: Training from local experts on heat pumps Matt Rusteika, and the possible tree expert for education, no discussion.
 17. The issue regarding the use of "mini and / or micro" electric transportation was discussed noting other towns are using the snowmobile paths for ATV use in the summer.
 18. Regarding an Electric Bobcat for the Recycling Center—tabled for future consideration.
 19. Regarding Mast Way Solar: It was noted a new superintendent was hired but still tabled until new facility people hired.
 20. Regarding the recommendations that will have the "most bang for the buck" heat pumps and Battery back up systems were **not discussed**.

NEW BUSINESS:

Next Meeting to be held 2/20/24.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 Noon.