

Draft Hartford Energy Commission minutes
February 25, 2016

Present: Alan Johnson, Lynn Bohi, Martha McDaniel, Cathy Geiger; Sarah Simonds, Vital Communities; Peggy Allen, guest; Erik Krauss, guest; Lori Hirshfield, staff

1. Agenda adjustment: add two meetings
2. Minutes: Martha moved and Alan seconded that the minutes pass as presented. The motion passed.
3. Strategy: work on the RFP and what documents will the consultant need. See below.
4. News and Events:
 - a. Table at upcoming meetings: The only meeting for which anyone may be available is Town Meeting on March 26. Peggy and Alan are looking at it.
 - b. VECAN: the takeaway impressions were the crowd keeps getting bigger, the topics and audience are more sophisticated, and the scope of ideas has expanded.
 - c. Climate Economic Summit: Sarah and Alan attended. The policy focus was not energy. Interesting items included: a turbine was added to a reservoir when a valve system was replaced. IT is making more energy, and thus money, than was spent for the bond; methane capture on a sewage treatment plant ; and investing 10% in Vermont encourages towns to call about energy projects, money is from VEDA and Agency of Commerce and Community Development. Also interesting is that more people work in solar companies than in coal.
 - d. NOAA: The Climate Prediction Applications Science Workshop is holding their annual meeting in Burlington on March 22 to 25. Expected topics include environmental hazards and risks.
 - e. Net Metering: The proposed Vermont bill is very new and no one has a deep understanding. So far, there are different regulations for large and small projects, rooftops and brownfields and other non- agricultural sites are preferred sites for solar projects. Additionally, if RECs are sold out of state, the owner is not eligible for the six cent adder. The name “adder” may be changed to sliding scale net metering.
 - f. Bennington decision: This is new and more information is expected from the regional planning omissions. The decision is based on regional plans. It is believed this will set precedent for solar siting. If a Town Master Plan discusses solar sites, and includes screening and landscaping regulations for all industrial sites, then the Public Service Board will listen to the Town Plan. Regional Planning Commissions are looking at their towns and mapping sites that might work as solar sites.
 - g. Town Solar: Everyone saw the information sheet from Rich Menge about the solar on the landfill. The aquatic Center is expanding and also adding solar, which has been approved. Grampy’s gravel pit still needs Public Service Board approval. There have been concerns about the community solar that Steve Davis is proposing off Christian Street. The application was not complete, so more will be coming. Cathy can put all town solar sites on Google 3D. This will be a great project to take to Town meeting next year. For more solar sites, visit Vermont Energy Atlas website.
 - h. Solar Expo: Tad Nunez, Becca White and Sarah are talking about having a solar expo at WABA. The concept is “touch-a-truck” idea with someone bringing a tracker, another bringing an inverter, and others bringing all the other parts of solar. The idea is to have people learn all they need about solar. It would be 3 to 4 hours on a Saturday in May. We wondered if it could be timed so that high school students could also see the exhibit. There will be more information next month.
 - i. Building Permit review: no news

- j. Solar EV charger: Not much is happening on finding a possible solar match for the grant. There is another grant from the Agency of Commerce and Community Development for downtown chargers.
 - k. Downtown Efficiency Program: Hartford is in the second set of towns. Efficiency Vermont and the downtown association are working together. The first get together is hoped for March. Cathy and Gary are the HEC members working with Lori. All other HEC members would like to know the date and several may attend. The kickoff is in July and work will start then.
 - l. Energy efficiency contractors meeting: has been postponed from March 2 to a morning at the end of April. The intent is to talk about what is happening, how to collaborate, and how to create more work for everyone.
5. Energy Consultant RFP: the RFP has gone out with responses due March 14. Lori would like to meet that week for the winnowing process. Lori will develop a matrix for evaluation. Alan and Martha volunteered to read applications. HEC went over the items in the January minutes that the consultant will need on day one. Becca talked to the school board about the consultant's work. Superintendent DeBalsi said much work has been done, which they are happy to share with the consultant. HEC felt that we would like a list of what has been done in the last 5-10 years, and to ask if there is a future plan and what projects are in the works. The applicants may ask for a list of what information is ready for them. Lori and Alan will work on this. After the person is hired, there should be a press release. '
6. Schools and VECP: VECP has continuing education credit courses available in June at Lake Morey. Alan will send the information to Superintendent DeBalsi.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Bohi, Clerk