

Hartford Energy Commission Meeting Minutes

October 27, 2016

Town Hall, 171 Bridge St. WRJ, VT

Present: Martha McDaniel, Lynn Bohi, Erik Krauss, Peg Allen
Lori Hirshfield, staff; Leo Pullar, Town Manager; Karen Douville, Hartford Conservation Commission, Alan Johnson, Selectboard

Martha called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM

Changes to Agenda: VEIC's (Vermont Energy Investment Corporation) presentation of the Energy Action Plan and budget discussions were moved to the beginning of meeting to allow Leo to speak.

Energy Action Plan (EAP): Martha reported that VEIC's (Town's consultant) presentation to the Selectboard on the five-year EAP was well received, and the board was impressed with the presentation. The outline of the draft plan was clear about where savings could be achieved. A question raised was why the plan didn't include more information on community consumption, not just Town government. It was noted that currently, it is difficult to get data other than electricity usage for all sectors of town. This may change with more information coming from Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission, Hartford's participation in the pilot dashboard project, and weatherize program. The plan shows actions to take and the payback of each. The item about electric busses needs thought, since Hartford does not currently own the school busses. However, there may be some state money to buy electric busses. Leo would like to hire a full time town energy coordinator, possibly for three to four years, and is going to put it in his budget for presentation to the Selectboard.

Budget: Leo asked for the Commissioners' input on the qualifications and salary for the energy coordinator. He noted that the consultant also could work with the schools. He saw two models for the focus/background of the energy person: emphasis on project/building specific project implementation (building manager) or someone immersed in the energy community with good project management skills, but not necessarily hands-on building trades experience. The preference was to go with an energy community contact person. Leo noted he did not anticipate a payback in the first one to two years, but it will be there. Leo said that the good work reflected in the energy action plan should not be put on the shelf. Martha noted that Superintendent DeBalsi is interested in working with the consultant. It was suggested that if funded, to reach out to the HACTC Building Trades alumni to participate with demonstration projects. If the position is funded, Leo envisions the person starting July 1, 2017 and the salary being covered in part by the enterprise funds since these are areas identified in the EAP savings.

The HEC and Town Manager also discussed the building improvements the Bugbee Senior Center Director, Fire Chief and Police Chief had included in their budgets to address some of the recommendations in the energy audits.

It was noted that VEIC will soon have a new loan program with interest rates from 1% to 3% for residential and commercial buildings, which covers a broad spectrum of energy improvements. Details

should be public in December. Also, Green Mountain Power will be offering “on bill” financing for more items.

The following are other budget items that were discussed:

- Electric vehicle (EV) charging station: It was noted that the new power that would be generated from one of the five town solar sites currently being pursued will meet the Green Mountain Power new power requirements to cover the EV stations. There also was discussion about the best financing mechanism for installing the chargers being a monthly lease given it covers maintenance and upgrade.
- Wood burners for WABA and public works garage: This is one of the recommendations in the five-year EAP. The first step for FY17-18 would be a feasibility study for the energy coordinator to carry out for \$5,000 to \$10,000.
- Items the energy coordinator would take charge of: EAP and energy audit implementation, outreach, feasibility study above, solar projects, and weatherization.

Minutes:

August - Peg moved and Erik seconded that the Minutes be approved as amended. The motion passed.

September- Peg moved and Erik seconded that the Minutes be approved as presented. The motion passed.

Events and Updates:

a. November 2 - Weatherize Upper Valley: This is a meeting of all towns to share ideas. The Hartford, Pomfret, Woodstock and Hartland group will convene shortly thereafter. Woodstock should have some good ideas that Hartford could replicate. The Hartford Team needs more non-HEC people. Mike Heeremans and Liv Lapierre were suggested. Lori is available as needed.

b. November 12 Button-Up: HEC has arranged to have Capstone’s energy van at the Town Solid Waste and Recycle Center from 9:30 – 11:30. A table will be set-up with information packets from Meghan Chambers of Efficiency Vermont (EVT), so people can sign up for the CEEP project. The “van” is a full size replica, in a tractor-trailer, of several rooms showing the most common places for air loss, and insulation techniques. Brent Mellen has been asked to be the official spokesperson, since he has been a speaker at Hartford Button Up programs before. Peg will ask CATV if they can film and maybe make a You Tube type video about the trailer. HEC members Martha, Erik, Lynn, and possibly Peg, Lori, and possibly Bob Vahey, Solid Waste and Recycling Manager, will be there.

The PR plan will be: **Peg**- CATV, local broadcasters, Valley News, listserv (and Daily UV), community energy listserv, and social media; **Lori** - Town website, 2 tables with Meghan information, sandwich boards; **Martha** – find presenter; **Lynn**- letter to editor of the Valley News.

c. Button-Up Grant for Exhibits: The Button-Up grant that the Town received will allow the update, organization and display of HEC’s traveling energy exhibit at events. The approved grant includes

banner, sign, foldable 6 foot table, 3-panel display board, giveaways/event prizes, outreach materials, upgrade of demonstration light board, logo tote bags, and Hartford's portion of the energy van driver for the November 12th event. The grant is for \$2500.00. There was discussion about having a logo professionally redesigned. The team working on this is **Erik and Peg**, with Lynn as backup.

d. Energy Action Network Community Energy Dashboard: Martha reported that there will be a demonstration of the "dashboard" next month. The dashboard is a planning and tracking tool with data from a variety of sources. It contains information on current renewable energy sites, and will track new facilities, contractors, who used what, maps with sites that might work for wind and solar, wetlands data, yearly data from power and electric companies, state level information on transportation and heat generalized by population, and people can enter their energy story for others to read. It could be useful with the Vital Communities weatherize program. Sally Bellew and Dawn Pullar should be invited for next month. Hartford has been selected as part of the pilot project, and will have access to an intern to find stories.

e. VECAN Presentation: Lori stated that the Town/HEC has been asked to present at the VECAN annual statewide conference in December for a capital improvement session. It is for 15 minutes. The focus would be on the planning process around building energy use and changes made, EAP and CEEP, and/or municipal efficiency measures. It was decided that Martha and Lori would be the presenters.

f. Regional Energy Plan: Lori reported that this is on the third draft. The RPC will be deciding in December if it is ready to go into the public hearing process. The plan is on the TRORC website as the October 5th draft.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Bohi, Clerk

