

Hartford Energy Commission Meeting Minutes - Approved

November 17, 2016

Town Hall, 171 Bridge Street, WRJ, VT

Present: Peg Allen, Cathy Geiger, Martha McDaniel, Erik Krauss, Lynn Bohi
Rob Fish, Energy Action Network; Lori Hirshfield, staff; Alan Johnson, Selectboard liaison

Martha called the meeting to order at 6:28.

Dashboard: Rob explained and demonstrated the functions, goals and uses of the Community Energy Dashboard. The public can access it at www.vtenergydashboard.org. The Hartford Energy Commission (HEC) can use it to: showcase events; find and promote energy champions; comment on/critique contractors used to retrofit homes; highlight the HACTC Building Trades house story; document actions HEC has taken for the last five years; aid the VEIC consultants in finding good solar and wind sites; and link HEC webpage to the resources button on the Town Website. Hartford has access to an intern to collect and type stories.

Minutes: Some corrections were made to the October minutes. Erik moved and Peg seconded that the minutes pass as amended. The motion passed.

VECAN Conference: There is money in the HEC budget for members to attend. Members were asked to email possible workshop choices before Monday to Brenda Lamphere in the Planning and Development Office.

Climate Solution Conference: It is this weekend. Alan will attend.

REV Conference: Alan reported on the workshops he attended. VELCO has seen no load growth in the last decade. There is twice as much fiber optic as electric line. Vermont has 20% solar on the ground, which is the highest of any state in the U.S. It is possible that the cap for net metering will change. Credits may increase to 500KW per customer account and Hartford may be able to have several accounts. In Vermont, there are 264,000 households, with 30% being rentals. 90% of renters pay their own energy costs.

Weatherize Upper Valley: Several members attended the November 2nd meeting. The subcommittee met last week and will meet on November 18th to plan activities. On November 30th, all the towns will meet with the contractors. The public kickoff is January 18th at the Montshire Museum. Peg passed out a sheet of proposed actions. Cathy offered her house to tour, since they are in process of weatherizing.

VEIC Consultants: The subcommittee saw a draft outline of the Comprehensive Energy Plan this week. There were some items missing, such as sustainability and numbers. Hopefully, there will be an updated plan and a timetable within a week. For the five-year plan, Lori needs to give the consultants more information. On the audits, Erik, Lori and the VEIC are working with Len Brown (Director of the Bugbee Senior Program) on sorting through the energy improvements and pricing. This will be a part of the

current SB budget discussions, and if these need be spaced out over several years. The Public Safety building has energy spending in both the department's budgets.

Potential New Town Solar Sites: Norwich Technologies is finalizing the Certificates of Public Good for the five solar sites as spelled out in a Memorandum of Agreement. The projects may take a year to complete. HEC will want to discuss this in more detail soon.

2017-18 Budget: There is \$55,000 in the Town Manager's proposed budget for a full-time energy employee, \$7,100 for programming, \$500 for HEC's regular contribution to Vital Communities energy programming, (formerly to SERG), and \$150 for meetings and travel.

Button Up: HEC had received a \$2,500 grant from ButtonUp to create and upgrade a traveling kit of materials. Many of the materials will be purchased before the end of December. Given the additional time needed to develop the HEC logo, VEIC said the purchase of any items tied to the logo can be deferred until after January, and VEIC will fund this from another source. Martha received a dollhouse from Capstone that was used to demonstrate how to button up a house. Erik noted that it is very large and may take up the vast majority of the tabletop; however, it may draw many people to our table. He stated that it could be upgraded and labeled for use. An alternative suggestion was made to use existing online content and show on an HD screen. Erik will explore and report back to the ButtonUp Subcommittee. Erik also will let Lori know what items he needs to upgrade the HEC light board. The HEC will discuss at the December meeting what message to convey with the logo.

December HEC Meeting: The meeting will be on the third Thursday, December 15th. The agenda will include HEC work program for next year, what to do and how to accomplish these. Something to think about is how to update the group on the progress of the several subcommittees. One possibility is a paragraph on the agenda. Are there other methods? Another question is which things or category of things should be worked on as a group.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Bohi, Clerk