

Northfield Energy Committee Meeting Notes from January 27, 2020

Attendance: Susan O'Connor, Annie Chappell, Judy Wagner, Alex Strysky, Andrew Vernon, Jim VanNatta

Meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m.

We reviewed the meeting minutes from January 2, 2020 and approved them with noted changes. Judy moved and Andrew seconded and unanimous.

Update on Green Communities grant process

- Application is due March 27, 2020. There is a webinar on Thursday at 2:00 which Susan will attend. The maximum award is for \$200,000 this year, which is \$50,000 less than we could request for our 2018 competitive grant. We need cost estimate, Eversource incentives, payback period, and other matching funds for each project.
- We are in good standing for it, though waiting for any corrections we need to do on the Annual Report which is being reviewed within Green Communities. These additions have to be completed by February 14, 2020.
- Green Communities will be looking at reduction in energy use and greenhouse gas emissions, favor any matching funds, no non-compliance issues like with anti-idling policy. They allow 10% for administration, for a max of \$10,000. Last year, we used this for a clerk-of-the-works position to oversee quality assurance.
- \$7,000 for a charging station is the max. We may look into idle reduction strategies, given that our vehicle use is high.
- Email Mark Rabinsky to look at our data and ideas about how we can get closer to our 20% reduction goal. Also, ask Mark for ideas about how to approach high vehicle use, and what towns have good strategies. Also, make sure he knows that EMS data was high because we are regionalized now and doing runs to Bernardston and other towns.
- Renewable: Air Source or Ground Source Heat Pumps. Judy found that GSHP would take 500-foot loop of piping for a 3,000 square foot building, so it would be expensive and very complicated to do GSHP. Ben is working on a tool for how to manage ASHP and when to use system and when to switch.

Potential projects and related information

- Northfield Elementary School. Earthlight indicated that sub-contractor EMCOR is doing cost estimate on HVAC work at NES. Susan will send an email to EMCOR clarifying what we need and that we need information by March 1.
 - heat recovery ventilators
 - Air Source Heat Pumps: prefer to do all at once, but ask Mark if a group does an audit and whole plan goes over \$100,000, do we have to put it out to bid, especially if we apply as 3 separate projects.

- Thermostatic valves (replace pneumatic): this is urgent
 - Winserts
- Other possibilities
 - Vehicles: Data collection effort or Educational effort, police hybrid vehicle, charging station at Town Hall. Look on Green Communities web site on projects. \$5,000 contributions or \$7,500 electric.
 - The committee discussed the idea of a survey about vehicle use, but decided it might be best to start by meeting with departments and share MEI data and gain their thinking.
 - Highway Department: Ben, Why the increase with wood heating and are there strategies that would work?
 - Library
- Dividing up tasks
 - Judy, Susan, and Jim will work on NES
 - Jim will take over Solar panel data tracking with guidance from Annie
 - Judy will explore library strategies
 - Vehicles (Alex and Andrew): Education? Police department hybrids, charging stations
 - Susan and Andrew will review Ener-G-Save curriculum

Updates

- Outreach to State Senator and State Rep on aggregation: Senator Comerford and Representative Paul Mark have heard from all participating towns about our concern for the delay in approval of the DPU application. They have sent a letter on our behalf to the DPU. We haven't heard yet about a response.
- January 7 PVRB Building and Grounds Committee: Janice Kurkoski attended this meeting. She reported that Tom Strunjo is now working for Walden Asset group and presented an MOU on a Purchase Power Agreement on solar array, which was then sent along to the school's counsel for review. The lengthy 25-year lease period was an issue we cautioned about with the last MOU in the summer. Janice also forwarded to the committee a proposal from Kearsarge Solar on a 10% reduction through a net metering approach. She hasn't heard back yet from the committee or from the school.
- January 14 FRCOG meeting of Energy Committees
 - Stan Rosenberg presented on Grinspoon Foundation's Ener-G-Save curriculum and outreach program. Participants in science fair fill out a carbon tracker so we would know what promises would lead to what carbon savings.
 - Brian Sullivan, Director of Green Communities (and former mayor of Westfield) and Mark Rabinsky (our new regional representative) were there. They reported that the state is focusing on electrification of heating sources, electric and hybrid vehicles, and VRFs. They will be pushing us to meet our 20% goal as western MA is