

Northfield Energy Committee Meeting
June 4, 2020, 6:00 p.m.

Attending: Andrew Vernon, Alex Strysky, Judy Wagner, Jim VanNatta

Planning Aggregation education effort

Here are the options selected:

Default selection – MA Class I Recs – RPS +5%

8/1/20 – 1/1/20 (5 months) @ 0.08898

1/1/21 – 12/31/23 (36 months) @ 0.09432

Option 1 (lower) – Standard Retail Electric Supply

8/1/20 – 12/31/20 (5 months) @ 0.08710

1/1/21 – 12/31/23 (36 months) @ 0.09243

Option 2 (higher) – MA Class I Recs – RPS +25%

8/1/20 – 12/31/20 – (5 month) @ 0.09649

1/1/21 – 12/31/23 (36 month) @ 0.10190

Debrief Green Communities grant experience (and final requests)

- We started in June 2019 to get an audit done and on advice from FRCOG, reached out to Kim Kiernan at Eversource who referred us to Earthlight. Earthlight provided a proposal in August for low-hanging fruit, mostly on lighting. They had us meet EMCOR who could do the HVAC work for us. We never got a broader proposal from Earthlight or EMCOR. We invited Ben Weil to do a walkthrough in November and he identified a range of strategies. When we got the grant proposal at the end of January, we reached out to Earthlight and EMCOR. They seemed unsure about how to approach the strategies Ben Weil suggested, and after 3 weeks, only provided us with costs, with more of a focus on demand controls. We said we couldn't consider that unless we also saw cost of an ongoing contract for demand controls. Then we moved onto Gates, recommended by FRCOG and on the Clean Energy Center's list of approved HVACR installers. After 3 weeks, they also provided only project costs. Ben Weil quickly put together analysis we needed on energy savings, cost savings and payback period. (In hindsight, we should try to apply for a META grant, though would likely need to be matched by town dollars.
- We still have not heard back from Eversource on our incentives. We started asking for assistance on April 14. Susan requested help from Mark Rabinsky, Regional Green Communities coordinator for help. On May 18, Kim Kiernan at Eversource said they would have incentives back to us the next day, that the work had never gotten started, and had gotten lost in the shuffle. She said they would cover the cost of the project to make this right.

Planning anti-idling campaign

- Use materials from DEP anti-idling toolkit to modify for local use for presentations, a press release, post on Town website and town list serve. Explore the possibility of inserting a notice in tax bills.

- Hold a training session for municipal employees and school bus drivers that have not had the Mass DEP training.
- Send materials to parents at the schools, and encourage signing pledge forms.
- Install anti-idling signage with about 10 signs to place around town (10 signs at \$20 per sign).

Brainstorming other efforts by reviewing Deerfield Adoption of a Green Infrastructure and Climate Resiliency Policy. Which of these ideas might we want to pursue?

- Evaluate new municipal projects based on the policy
- Install new and replacement culverts that are designed for fish and wildlife passage, and sized to handle larger storm events expected with climate change;
- Use green street and parking lot designs with tree box filters, permeable pavement and curb-less planted medians and shoulders;
- Purchase electric or hybrid municipal vehicles and install electric vehicle charging stations and prioritize electric vehicle parking spaces;
- Support “Solarize” neighborhood programs to incentivize group solar panel purchases;
- Conduct energy audits for all municipal buildings, and use MassEnergyInsight data to track and reduce energy use;
- Expand green practices at existing and new municipal buildings, schools and facilities, such as incorporating rain gardens, green roofs and porous pavement;
- Install LED lighting for traffic lights, street lights and municipal buildings;
- Install green storm water infrastructure in public green spaces;
- Work toward having the town generate its own green power using solar or wind installations;
- Work with power companies to bury power lines to reduce vulnerability to storm-related power outages.

Updates

- UMass Heat Pump Training
- Additional updates
 - Electrical project: There have been issues with the electrical work. Deb Kern identified 2 small items that still need work and Dennis Ring from Earthlight is communicating with her to get those done. In addition, Susan reached out to Earthlight on May 17th because the MEI data on electrical use hasn’t gone down in the way estimated,. We had anticipated saving 71,239 kWh at NES per year, and while we are still waiting for charges for April, May, and June, it doesn't look like we have reduced kWh by very much, and that is even knowing that the school shut down March 13. By March 2019 we had used 131,920 and by this March 126,360, which is only a 5,560 kWh decrease. Marc Riel, Sr. got back to me today and said they have a theory and are waiting from communication with Eversource.

- Highway department: Tom Walker reached out to see if he could apply for a wood chip boiler through Green Communities. Susan responded that the grant has gone in for this year, and sent him some information that Mark Rabinsky shared. *First of all, the building would need to be weatherized prior to this strategy. Then it has to meet criteria like only using clean wood chips or wood pellets; meets all applicable ASMC and UL safety certification, achieves fuel conversion efficiency ratings above 80-85%, and utilizes control technology to reduce air emissions. Mark said we might want to consider air source heat pumps.*
- Change in leadership
 - Increased my work hours, work is unpredictable, and I have opportunity to be part of the effort to build back better. Priority.
 - Might want to consider co-chairs. One person needs to be available during the day as a lot of the communication with Town Hall, schools, or vendors happens during the day and also seems to be unpredictable.