

August 6, 2020, 5 :00 p.m.  
Northfield Energy Committee Meeting Minutes

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

**Agenda**

Meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

Do we want to apply for a Mass Energy TA grant or see if UMass Clean Energy Extension can do an audit?

- Lauren Mattison of UMass Clean Energy Extension mentioned on recent FRCOG call that they can do energy audits of buildings. When I asked her about doing one for Highway Department, she spoke with Ben Weil and he indicated he couldn't do something until Spring.
- Judy will work with Susan and Jim to send in a META grant for an audit of the Highway Department by August 20, 2020 . We will be back and forth via email to complete.

**Green Communities grant**

Debrief Green Communities grant experience

- July 7, Mark Rabinsky said we would hear about grant in 2-4 weeks. Still no word.
- Susan will draft a letter about our experience before next committee meeting. She can draw from the email that already went to Mark Rabinsky. Include that EMCOR was unwilling to provide an audit perhaps without engineering study. Judy mentioned that Ben Weil's system approach might be ahead of the approach Green Communities has. Susan will also ask Mark Rabinsky or Kim Kiernan for feedback on why we didn't get any incentive from Eversource. When the letter is ready, we should send to FRCOG, UMass Clean Energy Extension, DOER Green Communities, and to Mark Rabinsky.

What needs to happen if we get grant? If we don't?

- For NES, we would work on Heat recovery ventilators which is valuable to improving ventilation system now with COVID-19 to improve air quality. When Susan asked Ben Weil what is a good level of air exchange, Ben shared some information in a July 14 email that we should pay attention to as the work goes forward: *" Ideally, (according to the new ASHRAE guidance) we need 6 air changes per hour. There is benefit in reduced virus load as we get more air changes all the way up to 12 ACH, but the marginal benefit of each additional air change decreases. All of the HRVs I specified are capable of supplying more than enough air to satisfy the 6 ACH requirement. It's also the most energy efficient way to do it. Ideally, you would be able to install all the new HRVs for the school, and operate them at their highest rate during school hours, plus one hour before and after regular school hours. The existing unit ventilators would be closed off and sealed at a later date, but for now could be allowed to operate providing additional ventilation during the covid threat period if it is determined that more ventilation than the HRVs can do is still needed. The filters that are currently in the unit ventilators/fan coils are probably MERV 8. They should be changed out to MERV 13 or greater. For the air handler that serves the gym, the fresh air portion should be maximized and MERV 13 or higher filters should be applied to any recirculated air."*
- Also at NES, Changing out pneumatic system and thermostatic valves.
- ASHP at Library
- Incentive for Police hybrid vehicle
- Anti-idling
- If we don't get the grant, we could still do the anti-idling policy and possibly look into

supporting Mass Save efforts.

#### Committee tasks for the year ahead

- Annual Report. August: Town Accountant to get reports on all fuel consumed previous fiscal year or call vendors and enter into MEI website. The website is updated 24 hours after changes are made. Annual report is typically due first week of December and is a complicated task. Alyssa LaRose is very helpful. Susan will work with another committee member so more understand how to do this.
- Share fuel efficient vehicle policy and anti-idling policy for Northfield Municipal vehicles: December.
- Annual Town Report: March 1. Sandra, Town Secretary usually sends template.
- Green Communities: Quarterly reports due Sept 30, Dec. 31, March 31, June 30. Susan O. has instructions. Final report will also be due.
- Monthly: read the PV production for the town hall from the meter.
- Create agenda and deliver to Town Clerk at least 48 hours ahead
- Lead meetings
- Take minutes and have approved. Take to Town Hall.

#### Updates:

- Aggregation
  - Dynegy will have initial enrollment numbers to us by the end of this week, with final enrollment figures by August 17. These numbers won't include who opted out or people whose mailing was returned.
- Hazard mitigation: Alex Strycky and Judy Wagner will meet with the person who reached out to the committee and Alex would like to continue with the work of this committee. This effort is a joint effort with town of Warwick.
- Any additional items.
- Susan has had an email exchange about the electrical work and data with Marc Riel from Earthlight. Susan sent this email June 4: *"I have been tracking the electrical use at Northfield Elementary School and also at PVRS. I have attached the data so far. 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. Why do you think we haven't seen the savings that we anticipated?"* July 7 response from Marc Riel: *The COVID-19 has skewed the energy consumption of a number of projects to the point that we don't have a true idea in some cases as to what the new consumption is. This is one of the reasons Eversource is suspending the repayment of loans until January. By then we hope the virus will be history and we can evaluate your project correctly. I am available to meet at your next meeting if necessary.*

Meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m. We decided to wait and set next meeting when we hear about the Green Communities grant, perhaps after September 5 when Jim returns home.