

Town of Essex
Energy Committee
Minutes
Wednesday, June 15, 2022
7:00 PM – 81 Main Street, Essex Jct

Present: Will Dodge, Phil March, Dottie Bergandahl, Michael Fink, Natalee Braun, David Skopin, Tom Yandow. Absent: Irene Wrenner,

ADMINISTRATIVE

1. Approval of meeting minutes from May 25, 2022: passed unanimously.
2. Vacancy: Phil March confirmed that he will be stepping off the committee on June 1. Vacancy is reported to Deanna Stoneback. The Committee will have a social gathering to thank Phil for his service.

SUBSTANTIVE

1. Lowe's Event for June 18th

A substantial portion of the meeting was spent on the logistics of organizing for the weatherization promotion event at Lowe's. The Committee members looked through and sorted materials to be used, made adjustments to the handouts, discussed items to bring (including food) and finalized the staffing arrangements (including Brian Gray participation), and final arrangements for publicity.

2. Rotary Club Letter re: Solarization: Will discussed the fact that the letter has not gone out, but also that based on [excellent student reporting in the Vermont Digger by Anna Hope](#), there has been more work done within Essex Westford School District on solar than anyone knew. Action Item: Contact Anna Hope to have her come and speak with the Committee if she is willing. It was pointed out that a separate Essex High School student -- Gianni Maffessanti -- wrote an equally great article for the Vermont Digger regarding the [Obstacles to Electric Buses at Essex High School](#). She

ought to be invited to speak as well.

ACTION ITEMS: (1) Reach out to invite both authors as speakers for the committee and to brainstorm what can be done with respect to advocacy before the EWSD School Board; (2) consider contacting STEM coordinator at the High School to send interns to assist the Energy Committee with volunteer activities.

3. Planning Commission X-Disciplinary WGs. The Committee recapped communications and meetings that have occurred to date, noting that there has been no follow-up on staffing and meetings. **ACTION ITEM:** Will to request a general update from the Planning Commission.

4. Legislative Wrap-Up. The Committee briefly discussed the status of the Housing legislation, as well as dollars for weatherization efforts in the budget bill. The Committee also discussed the US Department Energy's new standard to have all new boilers at 95% efficiency for natural gas, or switch to electric. **ACTION ITEM:** Natalee to send around H.518 (Act 172) summary for analysis of whether there are actions municipality can take to implement.

5. GHG Analysis for Essex. With assistance from Mike, initial brainstorming began on trying to determine how we would go about determining the total GHG output of Essex, including based on thermal and transportation. Use of high school interns was floated as a potential idea to involve a greater part of the community.

6. Biomass Discussion. Based on an email from Dottie, the Committee briefly discussed problems with the McNeil plant in Burlington and the general low efficiency of biomass facilities.

7. Tom Yadow Summary. Tom described various efforts with respect to the cooling tower at the police station, and the possibility of geothermal heat for the building.

8. Other Business. The Committee recapped the meeting times and plan for the Lowe's event.

Motion to adjourn accepted.

Next Meeting: Wed., July 13, 2022 at 7:00 PM unless otherwise postponed.