

Town of Essex
Energy Committee

Minutes

Wednesday, February 22, 2022

7:00 PM – 81 Main Street, Essex Jct and via Zoom

Present: Will Dodge, Dottie Bergandahl, Daniel Parkins, Michael Fink, Natalee Braun David Skopin, Tom Yandow.

NOTE: The minutes below represent an abbreviated version of the meeting. The meeting is available for viewing in its entirety on the Town of Essex – Official Channel on YouTube, using the following address: https://youtu.be/bv_mliVBcbI

ADMINISTRATIVE

1. Will apologized for the fact that the minutes were not yet ready, and promised a “triple play” for the next meeting in terms of December / January / February minutes.

SUBSTANTIVE

1. Town Meeting. A substantial portion of the meeting was devoted to the Energy Committee 2022 report, the upcoming town meeting, and the possibility of having an info table at the meeting. The Committee members discussed getting information (in lieu of schwag) from Efficiency Vermont and putting a list of rebates on the table for the event. Scheduling, mobilization, setup and teardown, as well as staff availability were also discussed, including the possibility of having a slide deck or video presentation at the town meeting with an updated version of the GHG presentation from January. The Committee also discussed a flyer or one-pager that would list the accomplishments of the energy committee and their future goals.

ACTION ITEM: Follow the plan as discussed to set up table to be staffed by a combination of Will, Dottie, and Daniel, with others to assist. Will to circulate list of accomplishments for editing.

2. GHG Evaluation Follow-Up. Mike briefly discussed the fine tuning work he planned to do on the GHG presentation in order to use in connection with the Town Meeting.

ACTION ITEM: Mike to circulate to the team in advance of Town Meeting day.

3. Revolving Loan Fund: Will and Tom summarized a discussion with Sarah Macy and Ann Janda, including the need to look for multiple sources of funding to start the RLF. **ACTION ITEM:** Will and Tom to continue to work on source of funds through additional net metering projects.

4. Champlain Valley Fair Weatherization Effort. The Committee discussed the possibility of doing an energy table at the Champlain Valley Fair to raise awareness, based on feedback Dottie had obtained. Ideas included the possibility of posting an invitation to a regional energy committee meeting on Front Porch Forum, and discussing the incentives and rebates available for residential items such as heat pumps and solar PV panels. Daniel agreed he would bring this to the attention of the regional energy committee at upcoming meeting in April. **ACTION ITEM:** Continue to coordinate effort through Ann Janda at Regional Commission, while also having Dottie continue to communicate with Mr. Quinn to reserve the spot.

5. Town Plan Subcommittee: Will provided an update on the Town Plan Subcommittee work. The Committee discussed the possibility of using Word Clouds to explain the subcommittee’s work, and the need to continue to fine tune the recommendations regarding climate change. **ACTION ITEM:** Continue to stay engaged, review word cloud, and look for opportunities to weigh in on specific provisions in the Town Plan regarding energy.

6. Landfill Solar. The Committee held a brief discussion regarding the absence of suitability of the Town landfill for solar due to risk of puncturing the outer liner.

7. Affordable Heat Act Proposal. The Committee discussed the latest edition the Affordable Heat Act, which would require fuel oil dealers to shift their customers to sub melts or pay a fine. It was determined not to take any specific position until the legislation is farther along in the legislative process.

Motion to adjourn accepted.

Next Meeting: Wed., March 15, 2023 at 7:00 PM