

Town of Essex
Energy Committee
Minutes

Wednesday, June 16, 2023

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

Present: Will Dodge, Dottie Bergandahl, Daniel Parkins, Natalee Braun, David Skopin, and Tom Yadow.

NOTE: The minutes below represent an abbreviated version of the meeting. The meeting is available for viewing in (almost) its entirety on the Town of Essex – Official Channel on YouTube, using the following address: https://youtu.be/sa8_GEfMo0

ADMINISTRATIVE

1. Minutes of May 12, 2023: Will reported that these are not quite finished but should be available at the next meeting.
2. Will noted that there remains a vacancy for Essex Energy Committee but the notice is posted.
3. Will noted the request to have the Selectboard produce a letter thanking Mike Fink for his service.

SUBSTANTIVE

1. Champlain Valley Expo. The group discussed that Mr. Quinn at CVE offered the last five days of the 2023 Fair (instead of the 10 days, meaning the booth would be staffed from Wednesday Aug. 27 through Sunday Sept. 3, but at the same price as for 10 days. David offered to address this incongruity. It was recognized that staffing would still require some legwork, but agreed that it would be worthwhile given how far we have come. Discussion was had regarding try to fill the remaining slots, including asking other committee members who had volunteered to shift times, all to make sure there's sufficient staffing but also to foster cross-pollination in terms of working across municipalities. It was noted that CVOEO was willing to participate, and has substantial information on weatherization (including a potential truck that would help to demonstrate how to properly insulate homes). The team also addressed the duration of each volunteer shift during the

event. The fee for the application to CVE was also discussed, and it was agreed this would get referenced at the upcoming Selectboard meeting on June 26th. The rest of the discussion was largely devoted to specific logistical aspects of planning the event. **ACTION ITEMS:**

- (A) David Skopin to speak with Mr. Quinn to address price (\$450 plus \$40 for electricity), as well as the question of whether we need to bring our own tables.
- (B) David to work on communicating with other Energy Committee members on shifting time slots (with shorter overall slots).
- (C) Daniel also to contact CVOEO on whether they are committed to participating.
- (D) Application fee placed on the Selectboard agenda for approval (via Tom).
- (E) Work on making sure the crew can set up at 8:30 on Aug. 30th anticipating that the bulk of materials can remain for five days (plus a cleanup crew on September 3).
- (F) Use the July and August meetings as preparation sessions to work on advertising, swag, information, and personnel.
- (G) Scheduling preparation sessions for beginning of August and closer to the event (e.g. August 23rd).
- (H) Contact Allison Poulette in Williston re: window-based weatherization.
- (I) Determining if there's a location at CVE where items can be stored at night after close-up.
- (J) Address Certificate of Insurance with the Town in order to provide to Mr. Quinn.

2. NEW MUNICIPAL BUILDING. Tom provided a report regarding a new site for a municipal building in Town of Essex that would replace 81 Main Street. This ties in to the search for a revolving loan fund (priority of the EEC), which in turn ties back to potential interest in third party solar development. Tom provided information on potential parcels off of Old

Stage Road owned by the Town (Parcel 207-067-12141) that might be suitable for solar development. **ACTION ITEM:** Will to contact Kirk Mayland regarding alternative parcels for solar development.

3. Community Fund. The group briefly discussed the idea of setting up something akin to a community fund (similar to the Conservation Fund) that might be able to accept donations towards energy development / climate change, and serve as a starting point for funded projects.

ACTION ITEM: Inquire further with Town of Essex on specifics of the Conservation Fund.

4. Discussion with Other Volunteer Committee Members and Selectboard. [The group discussed several potential items that should be addressed in an upcoming meeting with the Selectboard and volunteers from other committees, including the Coordinator Position on the Planning Commission. **ACTION ITEM:** Nothing at this time; Will to report back after meeting.

5. Electrify America Letter. Daniel and Will discussed rekindling the idea of a letter to Electrify Americans re: charging at Essex Experience. **ACTION ITEM:** Will and Daniel to work on letter.

6. Legislative Update. The members agreed that a legislative update from Rep. Leonora Dodge and others sometime in September / October would be a welcome way to help set priorities for the Fall and Winter. Specific discussion was had regarding the 30 v 30 law, as well as the Affordable Heating Standard. **ACTION ITEM:** Will to organize a legislative update.

Motion to adjourn was made, voted on , and passed by unanimous vote.

Next Meeting: July 18, 2023 at 7:00pm.