

LEE ENERGY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

November 28, 2023

ATTENDANCE: Don Anderson, Carol Doering, Erik Johnson, Mary Woodward, Barb Wauchope

The minutes of the 10-24 -23 meeting of the Energy Commission were circulated and all present voted to approve. The next meeting date was voted on and approved for 12/19/23.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. The initial discussion was on the RFP for the new Town Hall, in which the rumored 2 responses was confirmed in the Lou Grondin meeting with the Town Administrator. Reviewed 1.4.8 and 1.4.9 from the RFP. A concern was raised about Solar Panels over the Parking lot fitting “Lee’s historic and rural aesthetic” and the discussion raised the wonderful comment that: “Lee has been farming the sun for many years already.” The commission, based on that, felt it was most appropriate.
2. Should the Energy Commission have a voice on the Town Hall review committee as an advisory body to the Select Board? It was felt we should at least ask. Barb Wauchope volunteered to call Andy and ask him. (She met with Andy right after the meeting and the Design / Build contractor had already been selected: Careno Construction Company, a Portsmouth Firm—Email of 11/28). Members of the commission are invited to attend meetings starting on December 4th. (Mary’s EM of 11/29 indicated she could do so.)
3. There was no update on the Library renovation at this time.
4. Regarding Consumer Power Aggregation it was confirmed that in order to get lower rates it would be put off until March.
 - a. There was no update regarding an announcement to the residents of Lee until something official from Standard Power was available through the Town of Lee.
 - b. Getting information from NHEC still needs written approval from the Energy Commission.
5. Regarding EV chargers some general items were shared as to the costs.
 - a. Level II (240 V requirements) chargers are just over \$5,000 for a commercial charger—possibly more with any advanced Wi-Fi features and a Level III (480 V requirements) would exceed \$50,000 per installation. Don will forward detailed information by e-mail.
 - b. After a discussion regarding which charging standard will be applied and the expected convergence starting in 2025, some of the range issues were discussed. The following details were provided by Erik:
 - i. Level I every hour of charge gets 4 miles, taking 14-17 hours to full charge.
 - ii. Level II every hour gets 44 miles, taking 5-7 hours to full charge.
 - iii. Level III every 15 minutes gets 200 miles.
 - iv. It was also noted that Tesla has a recommended charge rate of 5-6 miles / hour of charge to prevent degradation.
6. Local Energy Solutions (LES) conference was attended by Lou Grondin and Carol Doering, who reported the following:
 - a. Lou’s presentation on the success of the insulation of the PSC building was a hit with many questions during the Q&A follow up.

- b. Carol indicated that it was well attended and had a great energy level.
 - c. It was spoken that this may be a “once in a generation moment” for energy conservation due to the federal Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).
 - d. The towns of Peterborough and Bethlehem were using Block Power, a 3rd party who manages electrification projects for municipalities. Peterborough’s plan will “re-habilitate 250 buildings in the town over 3 years. Not just town facilities, but commercial ones as well.” Bethlehem determined they will be “100% solar within a few years.” It was noted that both of these towns may have more wealth than Lee to be so ambitious.
 - e. Carol reported many towns were developing “Solar Capital Reserve Funds” and / or “Grant Match Capital Reserve Funds” and that the Energy Commission should consider these for Lee.
 - f. The town of Exeter was one of 5 large New England Grantees for the purpose of energy upgrades to manufactured housing. Carol will try to connect with Kristen Murphy (Sp?) to determine how to go about this type of funding, which may also fit Lee. She may try to set up a Zoom conference for our next meeting.
 - g. Barbara knows people at the NH Community Home Fund that works to get Manufactured Housing Communities to become self-owned. They know all the parks in NH and may help determine if Lee communities might fit such grants. She will contact them.
 - h. Another recommendation at LES was to recruit young people, such as High School and Middle School students, for Energy Commissions.
 - i. Carol also attended a session with NH Legislators from which Natural Gas pipeline, Seabrook licensing, hopes for hydrogen, and a push for implementing heat pumps were discussed (there are 12 bills coming up in the legislature).
7. Barbara Wauchope pulled together Lee’s Energy Baseline (Great Job Barb!) and will continue to work with Andy on information from 2016 through to today. It will be in a calendar year annual format to build up from the prior report from 2007. We previously agreed the timing for the annual information to the Select Board is the Fiscal year from July 1st through June 30th each year, so additional manipulation may be required. Mary agreed to try and find when Energy improvements such as LED lighting and added insulation were implemented for impact. She has an Email track with Clay Mitchell on these changes.
 8. The Lee Energy Commission will bring to the Select Board’s policy team a suggested warrant article on how to put aside money to “buy out” the solar array on the Transfer Station over the next 5 years. Don Anderson will make a first attempt at the wording for the commission to review in the next meeting. (Barb Wauchope provided samples in EM of 11/28/23).
 9. There was discussion of the Annual Report required by the Commission to the Town needed to be ready for the March Town Meeting. Don volunteered to do up a recommended format based on past work by Lou as a template. One from the past was noted to be in a “goals to action item” format. (Barb’s EM of 11-28 provided 2018 and 2023 examples.)
 10. There was discussion of what would be the best investment compared to infrared sensors and how they would be applied through the Library Equipment Borrowing mentioned on the Library web site. Mary agreed to resend many of the possible items in a list for the Commission to review for an “Energy Tool Kit” available to town citizens. Considering the new concern

regarding fossil fuel appliances within a home Mary felt a VOC monitor would be a good inclusion.

11. There was a question as to whether the Library and Old Town Hall had automatic thermostats or not and Carol agreed to determine if and when they were installed.
12. The Commission's fund for Energy Efficiency request for \$1,000 for initial funding from the town. How will we know if or when it is approved?
13. Not discussed: Town Natural Resources Map.
14. Not discussed: Regarding the new "Starbucks" is there anything we can do?
15. Not discussed: Follow up question whether the Commission should recommend to the Select Board tighter building efficiency codes for Lee.
16. Not discussed: updating the town web site—still needed: CIP improvements (2017-2024), Energy Handbook, Homeowner guides and Energy Efficiency Road Map for the town buildings. No discussion. The goal is still prior to budget discussions at the end of the year.
17. Not discussed: the need to promote an ordinance for preventing taxation of solar arrays in the town and not just depend on the goodness of the assessor to not include it.
18. Not discussed: Training from local experts on heat pumps Matt Rusteika, and the possible tree expert for education, no discussion.
19. Not discussed: How we might initiate use of "mini and / or micro" electric transportation such as the use of Cargo E-Bikes or how to promote energy efficient transportation around our town.
20. Regarding an Electric Bobcat for the Recycling Center—tabled for future consideration.
21. Regarding Mast Way Solar: No update and tabled until new facility people hired.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Mary proposed that we recommend items as a commission that would "have the most bang for the buck" for the town such as transferring over to Heat Pumps in the PSB.
2. There was a discussion about Home Battery back-up systems where Mary brought up the Green Mountain Power initiative extended for homeowners to add them. Barb noted that the Tesla system for their home would have cost \$22,000 through Revision Solar. There was also a discussion on Sodium-Ion Batteries versus Lithium-Ion that we should be aware of for the near future. They are primarily large battery back-up systems for the electric grid at this time.

Next Meeting to be held 12/19/23.

Meeting adjourned at 12:05 PM.