

CITY OF CONCORD
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF JUNE 23, 2021

The Concord Energy and Environment Advisory Committee met at 7:00 p.m., on June 23, 2021, virtually.

Attendees: City Councilor Rob Werner, Carl Cooley, Henry Herndon, Chuck Willing, Dot Currier, Jerry Eaton

Absent: Jennifer Galbraith, Jessica Forrest, Nick Babladelis

Staff: Sam Durfee

Guest(s): None

I. Welcome and Introductions

Carl moves to accept May EEAC minutes. Jerry seconds. Unanimously Approved.

II. Municipal Properties Update

- Solar projects: no updates
- LED Streetlight project awarded to a contractor: Real Term Energy out of Maine. The City has ~2,100 streetlights that are currently High Intensity Discharge (HID) and need to be upgraded to LED to save money and carbon.

III. Legislative Update

- House Bill 315 has been amended to include the quintupling of the allowed size of renewable energy projects municipalities and political subdivisions of the state can develop under net metering (up to 5 megawatts). Now the bill is both Community Power and Municipal Net Metering Expansion. Honorable Clifton Below, Assistant Mayor for City of Lebanon, was instrumental in getting the good legislation passed through Committee of Conference, where it had become threatened by politics. Senator Jeb Bradley called on the Honorable Clifton Below to present amendment language that had been worked out collaboratively.
- If the Governor signs House Bill 315 (which he is generally expected to do), Concord will be able to develop net metering solar projects up to 5 megawatts in capacity for the benefit of municipal, school, and other public off-takers. The small hydro generators in Penacook / Boscawen can also benefit from this new policy. This could enable Concord to procure all of its municipal electricity from renewable resources that are within the City borders, or at least very local.

- Rob: “Thank goodness for Senator Bradley and Clif Below.”

IV. Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire

- Concord has received formal invitation from Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire (CPCNH) leaders to join the new public nonprofit as a member.
- Rob spoke with City Manager Aspell who is generally supportive, but joining CPCNH deserves a public hearing. Membership with CPCNH would be noticed in July and held in August.
- There is also an opportunity for a “Meet and Greet” between Concord Mayor, City Manager, Staff, Councilors and CPCNH leaders such as Nashua Mayor Donchess, Lebanon Assistant Mayor Below.
- Jerry: Documents seem to be routine. Articles of Agreement does not talk about membership, that is detailed in the Joint Powers Agreement and the By-Laws.
- Jerry: If we lose a gorilla of an energy user like Dartmouth or State of NH, how will that affect things? It is important to have large energy users on board. Altogether the document is very well detailed and the nonprofit corporation has lots of powers to do what it needs to do. Its dissolution clause is acceptable. Liabilities and assets cannot be taken by directors or members. Has good conflict of interest clauses.
- Henry: Large energy users are mostly on competitive supply so they wouldn’t be automatically enrolled in the Community Power program. Communication with large users is an important part of community outreach process during and after plan approval to let them know they may choose to opt-into the program if they wish (which would benefit the program).
- Chuck: The way this works, you join as a Member, without committing to going forward with a Plan (which launches the program if City Council approves). So no commitment, no cost, the only commitment is that each Member appoints a Director to the Board. Joining gives us access to resources of Lebanon, Hanover, Nashua – ask the questions Jerry is getting at – use the resources, all of this before we are committed to sharing any of the costs. Low risk step forward to join the Coalition. We can then use their resources to figure out details, look at plans, and decide if we want to move forward. As a concept this makes perfect sense – we can find cheaper power, renewable power, but when we take that step we can decide in the future.
- Jerry: Clear difference between joining the organization, and then later, joining joint proposal for power supply. That could be just one or two members, not necessarily all. Concord could choose to stay out if Nashua and others are moving forward before Concord is ready. We can just go to meetings and listen, and do nothing for 2 or 3 years if we want, and just be learning.

- Henry: CPCNH is correcting one minor detail in the Joint Powers Agreement. In the current version, By-laws 4.5 (page 23) conflict with By-laws 5.6 (page 24); the former states a "plurality" of votes to elect Directors, the latter states a "majority." The By-laws are being corrected to reconcile the conflict, likely by replacing "majority" with "plurality" in By-laws 5.6.

Jerry Motions that EEAC recommend City Council vote to join the Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire by authorizing the City Manager to enter into the Joint Powers Agreement. Carl Seconds. Rob, Chuck and Dot vote "yay." Henry abstains. Motion carries 5-0-1.

V. State Energy Strategy Comments

- Chuck worked on behalf of Concord and EEAC to draft comments on the State Energy Strategy. Rob is working with the City to get the comments approved for submission.

Henry motions to authorize Rob to submit the comments on the State Energy Strategy to OSI on behalf of the City of Concord, Carl seconds. Unanimously approved.

VI. Other Business

- Concord will be assigned a consultant from International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI-USA); EEAC members may be available for an initial consult
- Market Days! EEAC has a booth, August 19, 20, 21. Concord has almost 100 people on a waitlist for residential energy efficiency upgrades because of the Public Utilities Commission's failure to act on the Energy Efficiency Plan.
 - i. What to talk about? What to put on a 1-page handout?
 1. LED Streetlight Project
 2. Hall Street Project – get people to write letters of support to the Planning Board
 3. Community Power
 4. House Bill 315
 5. EEAC Facebook Page
 6. Suggestion Box
- Revisiting our menu of things we want to work on. We could do something like this in September, early morning, evening something like that. Good to plan 2 months out so we can plan when and how it works, get people noticed and get them involved.

Carl motions to adjourn, Jerry seconds, unanimously approved.