

Concord Energy and Environment Advisory Committee
Wednesday, July 26, 2023
6:00 PM
City Council Chambers
MINUTES

Attendees: Chair, Rob Werner, Councilor Stacey Brown, Councilor Byron Champlin, Nick Babladelis, Jessica Forrest, Carl Cooley, Dot Currier, Gerald Eaton, Jennifer Galbraith, Chuck Willing, Frances Lesser (student representative) Beth Fenstermacher (Director of City's Special Projects and Strategic Initiatives)

Absent: Carl Cooley, Jeffrey Evans, Jonathan Weinberg, Grace Ciu (student representative).

I. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair opened the meeting at 6:00 PM. The Draft Minutes of the June 28, 2023 meeting were reviewed. Upon MOTION by Councilor Champlin and seconded by Chuck Willing Chuck Willing, the minutes of the Meeting on June 28, 2023 were APPROVED unanimously.

Rob welcomed Beth Fenstermacher to the Committee as the City's new liaison with the Committee – Director of Special Projects and Strategic Initiatives. Beth explained her new position created during the Council's most recent reorganization of certain positions during the budget process. She hopes to have greater opportunity to interact with the Committee than she previously had while staffing the Conservation Commission and the Tree and Trails Committees.

It was announced that Jennifer Galbraith will soon be assuming a new position as Climate and Energy Programs Manager at the Air Resources Division of the State Department of Environmental Services. Among other duties, she will oversee the grant applications for the Volkswagen Settlement funds and the Planet Action Plan funds.

II. Municipal Projects

Power Community– Rob Werner reported that the Community Power Committee met for the first time in June. The Committee created a small group (including Rob and Chuck Willing) to review the various templates of community power that have previously been approved in municipalities that have moved forward with community power. Examples are the Town of Canterbury that was part of the Community Power Coalition and the City of Keene that took an independent path to approve community power. The remaining communities are Hudson, Portsmouth and Hanover. At least twelve community power plans have already been submitted and approved by the NH PUC. Representatives from these communities' power committee may be invited to address the full Committee. Based upon review of these plans, the sub group will present a draft plan to the entire Committee in September. A final draft plan will be submitted to the Council. There must be two community meetings where the public can learn more and ask questions. The Committee must register with the NH PUC and notify the utilities that serve Concord. An approved plan must be sent to the PUC to ensure that the statutory requirements

have been met. The CEEAC discussed ways to inform the public and city councilors. The Committee is still looking for members from the environmental justice community and the Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce.

Solar RFP for the City Landfill - Five firm submitted proposals. A single finalist has been selected, Kearsarge Solar, and negotiations are expected to wrap up in a month before a final contract will be submitted to the City Council. The lease contract is for a term of twenty years with a payment in lieu of taxation. The facility will be five megawatts, the statutory limit for municipal net metering. The largest municipal net metering generator in New Hampshire currently is a 3.2 megawatts facility at the former Manchester land fill. The panels will be a newer design, more efficient with increased output per square foot. The Briar Hydro net metering agreement with the City allows the landfill output to displace some of the Briar Hydro output; however, the Concord School District is interested in participating the output from the land fill project as well as the output freed up from Briar Hydro. Legislation is pending which may allow municipalities to participate in net metering projects located outside the municipal boundaries. If the legislation becomes law, Merrimack Valley School District could also participate in net metering from the Concord landfill project.

III. Concord Stocktake Review – A small group will meet with Concord Community Greenspace to explore other opportunities for public discussion following the Stocktake discussion session in May.

IV. Policy and Project updates

Solarize Concord Initiative – Jessica reported that four firms seem interested in participating. The project would be more likely to succeed if we had part time marketing intern. There may be funds (\$4,000) available in the City budget for a sustainability intern. The four participating companies would also be asked to participate. A budget figure for the intern and marketing of \$8,000 seems reasonable. Councilor Brown and Jessica will flesh out a description of the intern position and a proposed budget. NH Technical Institute may be a likely place to recruit an intern.

The CEEAC was approached for advice as to how to fund solar power for the new Beaver Meadow Golf Course clubhouse. Beth will explore.

A discussion was centered on the possibility of installing solar power for the sheds at Concord High School parking lot which are being retrofitted to house Concord Coaches.

Upon Motion by Councilor Champlin, seconded by Jennifer Galbraith, it was unanimously VOTED to adjourn at 7:25 PM.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, August 23th at 6:00PM at which we will discuss a Fall planning retreat.