

Concord Energy and Environment Advisory Committee

July 31, 2024

6:00 PM

City Council Chambers

MINUTES

Attendees: Rob Werner, Chair, Councilor Stacey Brown, Nick Babladelis, Carl Cooley, Dot Currier, Gerald Eaton, Chuck Willing (by telephone), Beth Fenstermacher (Director, Special Projects and Strategic Initiatives), Jennifer Punsalong-Cloutier, UNH Sustainability Fellow

Guest: Andrew Hatch, Community Power Coalition

Absent: Councilor Jeffrey Foote, Allen Desbiens, Jeffrey Evans, Elliot Clendenning and Frances Lesser (student representatives)

Present:

I. Welcome and Introductions

Rob Werner, Chairperson, opened the meeting at 6:26 PM

The draft minutes of the June 26, 2024 monthly meeting were previously distributed. A motion was made by Councilor Brown, seconded by Nick Babladelis, to accept the Minutes of the June 26, 2024 meeting. It was VOTED unanimously to accept those minutes.

II. Policy and Project updates

Solar RFP for the City Landfill – Beth Fenstermacher reported the City and Kearsarge continue work on of the lease and net metering agreements. The group net-metering agreement will be shared among the City, the School District and Merrimack County.

Application for permits have been filed for the 125 kilowatt solar power project to be installed at the waste water treatment facility on Hall Street. The installation must be complete by the Fall by requirements of the grant funding this project.

III. Community Power – Education and Public Outreach Discussion

Chuck Willing, Committee member and Concord's representative to the Community Power Coalition, began the discussion of developments for a launch in Concord on October 1, 2024. The Granite Plus rate (33% renewable power) will be lower than Unitil's and Eversource's default service rates.

The discussion was focused on a launch date in October 2024 with input from Andrew Hatch of Community Power Coalition. Letters will go out to all Concord customers on August 21 and 22. The web site where customers can opt out or change their selection goes live at the same time along with an 800 number for the same purpose. Public information sessions will be held on September 4 and September 17. Deadline to opt out/change rate is about September 26. In subsequent months, customers must make changes three days before their next meter reading date. The date is written on the customer's bill.

There was considerable discussion on whether committee members have a duty to inform groups with whom we were meeting to point out the availability of the Granite Basic rate (24.5% renewable), a lower cost rate available to Concord customers. There is a balancing of full disclosure and the possibility of confusion for some groups such as New Americans. Certainly, groups served by the CAP agency should be made aware of this lower cost option and the requirement to "opt down" to this lower rate. The power is backed by renewable power in the form of renewable energy certificates (RECS). The Community Power Coalition is sourcing New England RECS.

Andrew Hatch explained all the printed materials that could be made available. A thirty-foot banner will be placed over Loudon Road. We can have yard signs, posters, smaller banners. Other media outlets to be used would be Concord Monitor's David Brooks and Rob submitting a My Turn column. ConcordTV plans to develop an instruction video on how to navigate the web site. A press conference should be held. Bow and Hopkinton are also launching on October 1 with letters being mailed to those customers on August 23 and 21 respectively.

Chuck urged all committee members to reach out to our own channels and to opt up to the 100% renewable Clean 100 rate.

Jennifer Punsalang-Cloutier reported that she had completed 40% of the public engagement plan. She provided a helpful information sheet which committee members can hand out at meetings with customers.

IV. Miscellaneous

Rob reported that Jessica Forrest had developed a considerable amount of materials pertaining to the Weatherize Concord the Committee had planned before the utility programs were suspended. Those materials were stored under a separate web site which has since lapsed. Rob suggested and there was a consensus of the Committee to spend a small sum to reopen the website and recover those materials.

Upon MOTION by Councilor Brown seconded by Rob Werner, it was unanimously VOTED to adjourn at 8:15 PM.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, August 28 at **6:30** PM.