

Concord Energy and Environment Advisory Committee
August 28, 2024
6:00 PM
City Council Chambers
MINUTES

Attendees: Rob Werner, Chair, Councilor Stacey Brown, Councilor Jeffrey Foote, Nick Babladelis, Carl Cooley, Dot Currier, Allen Desbiens, Gerald Eaton, Jeffrey Evans, Chuck Willing, Beth Fenstermacher (Director, Projects and Strategic Initiatives), Elliot Clendenning and Frances Lesser (student representatives).

Guests: Miriah King, Joe Kwasnik

I. Welcome and Introductions

Rob Werner, Chairperson, opened the meeting at 6:34 PM

The draft minutes of the July 31, 2024 monthly meeting were previously distributed. A motion was made by Councilor Brown, seconded by Nick Babladelis, to accept the minutes of the July 31, 2024 meeting. It was VOTED unanimously to accept those minutes.

II. Policy and Project updates

Solar RFP for the City Landfill – Beth Fenstermacher reported that the City and Kearsarge Power participated in a pre-application meeting with the Department of Environmental Services. A mid to late September filing with DES is anticipated. There is a 120-day minimum processing period. Commencement of construction on the project is anticipated to be April 2025.

The Lodestar facility proposed for West Portsmouth Street has received conditional approval from the Planning Board.

III. Community Power – Education and Public Outreach Discussion

Beth Fenstermacher and Chuck Willing began the discussion of developments for a launch in Concord on October 1, 2024. Letters have been sent to all Concord customers. The street banner is up. We have lawn signs placards, smaller banners and other collaterals.

There was a general discussion of the questions and comments received from members of the public and how Committee members might respond. Does the City have the authority to change providers? (Yes, per the Community Power statutes enacted during

recent legislative sessions.) Some commented that the default power option chosen by Concord Community Power is not the lowest cost rate available. The CEEAC had previously voted to set the default power option at 33.3% renewable power to reflect more strongly the City Council's goal of moving to 100% renewable electric power by 2030. Other communities which have launched before Concord also set their default rate at the 33.3% renewable power level. The choice of the 33.3% as the default rate and other details were included in the plan approved by the City Council and the NH Public Utilities Commission.

The deadline to opt out/change rate prior to launch was discussed. After launch, customers wanting to make a change in subsequent months much do so at least three business days before their next meter reading date. The date is written on the customer's bill.

The Committee should continue outreach to explain how customers can select other rate options. A discussion cleared up where signs can be legally placed during this election season. Public information sessions will be held on September 4 and September 17. Chuck urged all committee members to reach out to our own channels and to opt up to the 100% renewable Clean 100 rate.

IV. Miscellaneous/ New Business

Miriah King reported that the NH Energy Expo will be held October 26 at the Bow Central School from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm. Does the Committee want to have a table at the Expo?

A group of New England states have created a heat pump coalition and received a grant to enable installation of heat pumps. Perhaps this money can be used for a revolving loan fund.

Rob Werner met separately with School District Fiscal officer Jack Dunn. Mr. Dunn mentioned the District will be applying for funds to reimburse the District's purchased of electric school busses. Concord Schools may partner in this effort with Merrimack Valley School District.

Councilor Brown suggested we reduce emissions and lower the number of automobile trips by encouraging bike riding.

Nick Babladelis reported that he has been appointed to a sustainability committee advising the School District on the planning of the new middle school. He suggested

that federal funds from the Inflation Reduction Act could subsidize the installation of geothermal heat for the new school.

Upon MOTION by Councilor Brown seconded by Nick Babladelis, it was unanimously VOTED to adjourn at 8:05 PM.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, September 25 at **6:30** PM.