



CITY OF CONCORD
New Hampshire's Main Street™
41 Green Street, Concord NH 03301
(603) 225-8570

CONCORD ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CEEAC)

MEETING MINUTES

January 28, 2026 @ 6:00PM

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

37 Green Street - Concord, NH 03301

Attendees:

Committee Members: Chair Rob Werner, Councilor Michele Horne, Councilor Mark Davie, Chuck Willing, Thomas Kolling, Miriah King, Nick Babladelis, Elise Foerster, Gerald Eaton, Allen Desbiens, Mark Fagan

Student Representative Elliot Clendenning

Absent Members: Jeffrey Evans

Staff Present:

Beth Fenstermacher, PLA, LEED AP, Director of Special Projects & Strategic Initiatives
 Stephanie McKim, Administrative Coordinator

Public:

Henry Herndon, Acting General Manager of Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire

The meeting was called to order by Chair Werner at 6:01 pm. The committee members made introductions and welcomed new members Councilor Horne, Councilor Davie, and Mr. Fagan.

1. Adoption of Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Kolling and duly seconded by Mr. Willing to adopt the minutes of December 03, 2026. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote. Ms. King reported she had opted-out of CPCNH before the holidays and had intended to opt back in at a later time. Upon review of her latest bill, she realized she is now on a variable rate until Unitil's next 6-month cycle. She was not aware that would occur when she opted-out. Ms. Fenstermacher reported that was Unitil specific and Mr. Willing reported the other utility companies do not place a customer on a default variable rate.

2. Municipal Project Updates

West Portsmouth Street Solar Project (Lodestar)

Chair Werner reported the groundbreaking event took place on December 15th. He reported this is a 5-megawatt solar project and the offtakers are the State of NH, Christa McAuliffe Discovery Center, and Exeter School District. He reported construction has begun. The Governor was unable to attend but did provide a letter of commendation in support of the project.

Solar Project at Landfill (Kearsarge Solar)

Ms. Fenstermacher reported this is a 5-megawatt project and the offtakers for the group net metering are City of Concord, Concord School District, State of New Hampshire Administrative Services, and Concord Housing. This will reduce the City of Concord's net metering agreement with Briar Hydro in February. She reported foundation pads are

1 in, wire baskets are being installed since they can not penetrate the landfill, and racking is being installed since they
2 had to stop with the foundation pads due to snow. She further reported construction continues to move forward with
3 expected completion by end of March. Ms. Fenstermacher reported Unutil will then decide when to make the solar
4 project go live. There will be an event in the Spring.
5

6 Ms. Fenstermacher reported that comments were made during the Lodestar event and there were some quotes in the
7 newspaper that the City makes it difficult to do solar projects in Concord. She requested to be on record that the City
8 made amendments to the solar ordinance when the W. Portsmouth St project first came about several years ago to
9 make it possible. The project did not move forward at that time because of financial reasons and not because of the
10 City of Concord. She would encourage members to assist in getting the message out to the community. It is a great
11 achieve to have 10 megawatts of solar power in Concord. Chair Werner reported this is the largest development in
12 the entire state.
13

14 3. C-PACE Update

15
16 Chair Werner reported the Commercial Project Assigned Clean Energy and Resiliency (CPACER) program is an
17 excellent financing tool to rehabilitate buildings and encourage new construction. This bill was one of the first laws
18 Governor Ayotte signed into law in this current term. Business Finance Authority acts as a facilitator for financing,
19 assisting with the administrative aspects of the program, and he further reported taking the financial risk off the
20 municipality essentially.
21

22 Chair Werner reported that this was presented to this committee and then sent to City Council for consideration. City
23 Council referred it to Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) and Fiscal Policy Advisory Committee
24 (FPAC) for review and recommendation.
25

26 Chair Werner went in front of EDAC to discuss CPACER and answer questions. EDAC endorsed the CPACER program
27 and will send its recommendation to City Council. He further reported FPAC meets February 17 to review and
28 discuss.
29

30 Ms. Fenstermacher reported a City Ordinance is required and that would be the next step if the City Council votes to
31 accept. Chair Werner reported there should be a decision hopefully by Spring.
32

33 COMMUNITY POWER

34
35 Chair Werner welcomed Mr. Henry Herndon of Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire (CPCNH). Mr.
36 Herndon exhibited a PowerPoint presentation which provided a comprehensive overview of CPCNH. This
37 presentation is attached. Specifically, the presentation explained a brief history of CPCNH, what factors are
38 considered when adjusting rates, strategy for rates becoming more competitive over time, history of CPCNH finances
39 and outlook for the future, and how customers can interact to make choices.
40

41 Mr. Kolling inquired about a comfortable reserve amount for CPCNH. Mr. Herndon reported they have a couple of
42 thresholds for reserves; they have a reserve policy that sets defined minimum and target operating reserves. The
43 minimum operating reserve level is a dollar amount equal to 60 days of operating expense which currently equates
44 to 30 million dollars. The target operating reserve level is 120 days of operating expense. CPCNH expects to achieve
45 the minimum operating reserve level by 2028. CPCNH's immediate challenge is cash flow/liquidity, then reducing its
46 financing expense and paying off its borrowing. CPCNH is currently expecting to end the rate period with about \$10
47 million in joint reserves (accrued). If CPCNH can achieve this and also accrue a similar amount of reserves in the next
48 rate period, CPCNH would be in a position to eliminate debt which will greatly reduce its operating costs. The
49 current rates are intended to help achieve all of these short-term and long-term financial objectives. Mr. Fagan
50 inquired about if these targets and rates are based on an assumption of 60% participation. Mr. Herndon reported
51 these figures are but will be adjusted as needed based on participation.
52

53 Councilor Davie inquired about outreach to landlords. Mr. Herndon reported notices are mailed to all accounts to
54 encourage sign up for email communications and additionally encourage reaching out to CPCNH staff.
55

1 Mr. Willing distributed and reviewed a Community Power report to the CEEAC dated January 28, 2026. This report is
2 attached.

3
4 Mr. Fagan inquired about risk to the City if CPCNH fails. Mr. Herndon reported the City and any general funds are not
5 at risk.

6
7 A brief discussion ensued around CPCNH financial health, CPCNH refresh customer base, rate adjustments, updates to
8 website regarding opting out to Unital's variable rate, and community reaction to rate adjustments.

9
10
11 **4. RESILIENT BUILDINGS GROUP ENERGY EFFICIENCY COLLABORATION (RGB)**

12
13 Chair Werner reported that two members of the subcommittee for Energy Efficiency/Weatherization are no longer
14 members of this committee and as a result, there is no update to report. He further reported a brief history of the
15 weatherization and energy efficiency programs and RGB collaboration to the committee. Chair Werner reported
16 there are utility partners that have expressed interest in working with the Concord Community on their energy
17 efficiency needs and would like to inquire if any member of this committee would like to volunteer to work on the
18 subcommittee. Mr. Fagan and Ms. Foerster volunteered to join Mr. Kolling and Chair Werner on the subcommittee.

19
20 Mr. Desbien inquired how this program differentiates from what the Utility company offers. Chair Werner reported
21 RGB helps identify contractors and they would work with NH Saves to identify potential savings. Ms. Foerster
22 reported this is more of a marketing campaign to bring awareness to the program and they may be able to help
23 identify grant funding to subsidize NH Saves.

24
25 A brief discussion ensued around the NH Saves programs, partnering with RGB and outreach to the Concord
26 Community.

27
28 **5. POLICY AND PROJECT UPDATES**

29
30 a) ICLEI-USA Update

31
32 Chair Werner reported this the City is a member of ICLEI-USA. He provided a brief history of ICLEI-USA and
33 further reported they have provided technical assistance over the years with sustainability fellows and
34 greenhouse gas inventory. Ms. Fenstermacher reported this is a paid membership and in return they
35 provide up to 10 hours per year of technical assistance. She reported this may become beneficial when the
36 City discusses the strategic action plan because they can provide feedback.

37
38 b) UNH Sustainability Fellow Institute Update

39
40 Ms. Fenstermacher reported the committee will have another sustainability fellow this summer. She
41 reported this incoming fellow will be working on a city-wide tree inventory to better understand what the
42 total tree canopy is and what was lost for urban tree canopy since 2000. Ms. Fenstermacher wants a GIS
43 student so they can assist with other mapping projects for the city. Applications are due in the following
44 week and Chair Werner and Ms. Fenstermacher have interviews by the end of February will a fellow
45 starting in June. She further reported UNH has made cuts to this program but she was able to secure a
46 waiver to enable Concord to have a fellow this year. This year the applicants are limited to UNH Students
47 only.

48
49 A brief discussion ensued around the tree canopy count through GIS analysis, carbon sinks, forest
50 management plan, and how valuable this information is across committees.

51
52
53 **6. New Business/Announcements**

54
55 Ms. Foerster reported she is now on the New Hampshire Energy Expo committee stepping in for Ms. King who has
56 resigned. She reported the next expo will be in the spring of 2027 rather than the fall with the goal of increasing
57 vendors, attendance, and community capacity building in central New Hampshire.

58

1 Ms. Fenstermacher reported there is an extensive amount of proposed legislative bills that negatively impact energy
2 and environment and she inquired if a member of this committee could consider monitoring for negative legislation
3 and discuss at future meetings. City Staff does not have the capacity and she reported this would assist in keeping the
4 community informed.

5
6 Ms. Foerster reported there is an event hosted by Eversource at the Concord Hotel on March 12th. It is a networking
7 event to meet the Commissioners and Executive Council.

8
9 **7. Other Business**

10
11 Mr. Kolling reported the "living lab" transactive energy project that is underway and equipment has been installed at
12 his home. Mr. Willing reported the project was under enrolled and could accommodate a few more household if any
13 committee member would be interested in applying to the program.

14
15 **8. Next meeting:**

16
17 February 25, 2026 at 6:00 PM.

18
19 A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Babladelis and duly seconded by Mr. Fagan. The motion passed by
20 unanimously voice vote.

21
22 **9. Adjourn:** Meeting adjourned at 7:47 PM.

23
24
25 Respectfully Submitted,

26
27 Stephanie McKim, Administrative Coordinator

28

