

Energy Committee Minutes

May 6, 2020

7 PM

Remote meeting, via Zoom

In Attendance: Matt Burke, Rebecca Foster, Suzy Hodgson, Deirdre Holmes, Doug Paton; and Gerald Boucher, Planning Commission Liaison; Matt Krasnow, Select Board Chair; Mike Yantachka, State Representative; Catherine Hughes, Charlotte Resident.

- 1) Review agenda.
- 2) Unanimous approval of 4/23/20 minutes without changes.
- 3) Library/Town EV charger grant update. Dean is working out details with ChargePoint and Cummings Electric after expressing a desire to understand pricing and record-keeping better. The town's obligatory 10% portion of the total cost, which includes the concrete pad, will be divided between the Library and the Town. Doug and Rebecca will continue to monitor progress. Thematically related, Drive Electric Vermont and Waterbury LEAP are hosting a free webinar on May 20 about EVs at 7 pm.
- 4) Community Energy Dashboard proposal for the Library. As the CEC has often discussed, the Dashboard, created by Energy Action Network, is a useful way to track and monitor the town's progress toward its energy goals as well as engage community members in the process through the Stories portion of the Dashboard. No other town to date has tried what we are going to try and EAN is excited that we are providing a model. EAN is willing to support Charlotte's efforts with technical assistance and information-sharing. After conferring on details with Margaret Woodruff, Rebecca drafted the following resolution, which was unanimously passed. (Rebecca will share the resolution with Dean so that it can be considered/approved by the Select Board due to newly instituted austerity budget procedures.)
 - a) The CEC will allocate up to \$900 of its 2019-2020 budget to the Charlotte Library for the purchase of a computer that will provide a focused location at the Library for activities concerning energy and related environmental issues, such as the Community Energy Dashboard, which encourages community participation in tracking the town's progress toward its energy goals as described in the updated Town Plan approved November 5, 2019. The Library will provide technical support and with the CEC develop programing around the resources the new computer will provide.
- 5) Town, library, and community solar update.
 - a) In continuing to explore options for town solar, Deirdre discovered an opportunity to reconsider a PV system on the newly expanded library roof. Discussion about correct process, and, if a relatively small rooftop-scale system is pursued, which level of the town's purchasing requirements would apply. Discussion with Matt K about Select Board preferences. Matt K agreed to draft and present a Letter of Commitment from the Select Board outlining its interest in town solar to present to

potential developers. Discussion of a proposed timeline—if the Select Board were to sign such a Letter of Commitment—centered on pursuing a rooftop system for the library first, followed by an RFP for a net-metered agreement for the remaining town meters.

- b) CCRPC preferred sites analysis. Matt B discovered that CCRPC is able to provide the CEC up to 12 hrs of free technical assistance and build off of and improve the existing maps of preferred town and state sites. Sites will need to be visited and checked. The CEC is appreciative of Matt B working with Melanie at CCRPC to get as much helpful information as we can. It was suggested that Matt consult also with Jim Donovan.
- 6) Food shelf weatherization project. This is a reinvigoration of CEC’s 2015 project. Rebecca and Suzy are the committee members who will reach out to various people, such as Bill Kallock, David Pill, and Matt Sargent, for assistance in brainstorming priorities for the most helpful final list of goods to purchase. The following resolution was unanimously passed. (Rebecca will share the resolution with Dean so that it can be considered/approved by the Select Board due to newly instituted austerity budget procedures.)
 - a) The CEC will allocate up to \$1000 of its 2019-2020 budget to the purchase of items to be used for the weatherization and increased comfort and efficiency of low-income Charlotte homes, including those we can reach through the Charlotte Food Shelf. This is a project that will be a collaboration between the CEC, Transition Town Charlotte, and the Food Shelf.
- 7) The “Think Resilience” course has been made available online for free by the Post Carbon Institute. The funds that the Library could add to this community educational program could buy 1 hour with Richard Heinberg; the value of that is still uncertain. The CEC will co-sponsor this free course by working with the Library to organize it for the Charlotte community. Matt B will also reach out to Transition Town Charlotte for co-sponsoring. If the group would like more participants then its members can decide on a logic for further outreach, i.e., neighboring towns, VT energy committees, etc.
- 8) Charlotte News—the CEC has been invited by the editor to make regular submissions. At the next meeting we will discuss a plan for rotating around authors and topics. Meanwhile, this month Rebecca will work on a short piece about the CEC’s support for Transition Town’s Window Dressers program.
- 9) VECAN email group—deferred until next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm
Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Foster