

Jim Nourse called the meeting to order at 7:32 pm. Committee and public access at UberConference [888-919-7047 or 603-506-6463].

1. Jim announced that this telephonic meeting complies with the Governor's Order #12.
2. Roll call taken of members present: Mark Bolinger, Matt Brown, Jim Nourse, Dan O'Hara  
  
Members of the public joining: Harry Higgs
3. Approved the minutes of our July 13, 2020 meeting. Matt moved; Dan seconds. Motion unanimously approved by roll call.
4. Updates on NHSaves and weatherization: Both Eversource and NHEC have increased weatherization rebates (to try and expend annual funding not fully spent due to COVID) for projects that can be completed by November 15, 2020. This will be discussed at a webinar on Monday, August 17 from 12-1. Martha Tecca from Community Care of Lyme emailed saying that there are still Lyme Foundation dollars (\$1500) for weatherization efforts in town. Jim will follow up with Vital Communities, Martha, and NHSaves to find out further details of the current offer, and will craft an email to the listserv advertising the enhanced savings.
5. Updates on Town Highway garage: Jim circulated Matt's report on the pellet boiler situation in advance of the meeting. We discussed Matt's write-up, and our ability (or lack thereof) to discern between the competing proposals. Dan raised a question about maintenance issues, and Matt discussed the two competing technologies—which sound similar from a maintenance perspective. As a result of the discussion, Matt will revise his write-up to emphasize the committee's strong endorsement that the Select Board choose one of the two pellet boiler bids, citing four key reasons: (a) the direction from the Town at our most recent Annual Town Meeting to move towards 100% reliance on clean renewable fuels for thermal needs by 2050, (b) advantages to a reliance on locally developing sources for energy solutions, (c) advantages to keeping dollars "in-state" by using biomass rather than fossil fuel solutions for heating, (d) the likelihood of future volatility in propane costs exceeding that for wood pellets.
6. Prioritization of future projects/initiatives: We briefly discussed Jim's list of possible future projects on the path to 100% renewable energy. As it was apparent that not all members had previously looked at the list, Jim asked each of us to look it over in advance of next meeting, and try to prioritize a few projects that are high visibility and/or that can generate excitement among townspeople—whom we might then enlist to help in our efforts.

7. CleanEnergy NH: Jim raised the possibility of joining this advocacy/trade group as a municipal member (\$250/year fee). Mark suggested revisiting this topic at a future meeting when both Mike and Scott are present, given that their respective companies are both corporate members and so they will be able to speak to the possible value (or not) of municipal membership.
8. Communication with the Town: Jim raised the question of how best to communicate with the Town, and discussed the possibility of a “dashboard” on our web page. Apparently Lyme’s website is fairly primitive, and may not be able to handle what Jim has in mind. Jim contrasted the approaches of Hanover and Norwich in this regard – Hanover has a very detailed/comprehensive website where all materials are housed, while Norwich houses official business (agendas, minutes, etc.) on the town web site, but has a separate web site for public engagement. Mark noted that both Hanover and Norwich’s energy committee budgets likely far exceed our budget, which might limit what we can do (absent pro bono web design work forthcoming from a Committee member or resident). At least for now, it probably makes the most sense to start with the listserv, and try to couple that with strategic outreach when appropriate (e.g., to relevant heads of various committees and organizations throughout town).
9. Thayer School webinar summary: Dan summarized last week’s webinar, which featured Thayer School grads who now work in energy companies that are focused on improving the efficiency of the grid.
10. Adjournment. Dan moves; Matt seconds. Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Next meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 14 at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mark Bolinger, Secretary