

Final Approved Minutes

Lyme Energy Committee meeting, October 17, 2016

Present: Sue MacKenzie, Matt Brown, Robin Taylor, Scott Nichols, Mark Bolinger

Mark called the meeting to order at 7:35.

1. The draft minutes for the July 18, 2016 meeting were approved as circulated. Action: Mark to send in to town.
2. Sue asked if we could change our regular meeting time to some other Monday (other than the third Monday of each month), as our current schedule conflicts with CT River meetings that she needs to attend. We agreed to switch to the second Monday of each month. Mark will communicate this to the town webmaster.
3. Sue mentioned that the Fire Department is starting to plan for an overhaul or rebuilding of the fire station, and suggested that the energy committee contact Fire Chief Mike Mundy to see whether we can help in their planning. Mark will contact Chief Mundy about this.
4. The annual NH Local Energy Solutions conference is coming up on Saturday, November 19 in Concord. Scott will be attending as an exhibitor; other committee members are encouraged to attend if interested.
5. Matt and Mark reported only marginal progress on researching/proposing zoning regulations to govern ground-mounted PV projects in Lyme. This remains a "to do" item, though timing is a little unclear.
6. Sue reported that EEI (Energy Efficient Investments), an energy services company that partners with Eversource on performance contracting, had visited both the town office building and the highway garage to conduct audits of existing conditions. The idea is that they will come back with a proposal to replace the boiler and lighting in the town offices (as well as adding solar), and perhaps lighting and other things in the highway garage, at no up-front cost to the town. Instead, the cost will be paid out of the energy savings realized by the investments. No proposals had yet been received at the time of the meeting, so we tabled this discussion until we have the proposals in hand and know exactly what they are proposing.
7. We spent the remainder of the meeting discussing the proposal from ReVision Energy to install PV on the town office roof and sell the solar electricity to the town for six years, after which the town would buy the system from ReVision at ~30% of the original cost. This third-party owner arrangement (known as a solar service contract, or power purchase agreement) can be advantageous to tax-exempt entities like the town that are

unable to use federal tax benefits provided to solar projects. A number of questions arose and were discussed, including:

- a) Can we move the tree that is currently in front of the building, and perhaps replace it with a dwarf variety that would not shade the roof? [Sue will look into potential issues surrounding the tree.]
 - b) What would we need to bring before Lyme residents at town meeting, given that there would be no up-front cost to this arrangement? [Sue will look into this.]
 - c) How many competing quotes do we need? [Mark will contact a few more solar companies to see if they offer third-party ownership arrangements and whether they're interested in proposing.]
 - d) Is it feasible to seek out someone local to own the system, who might be willing to earn less of a return than ReVision Energy seems to require? If so, this could potentially result in a better deal for the town—particularly if we could also successfully secure a USDA REAP grant that would pay up to 25% of system costs. [Mark will think more about this and perhaps reach out to some local prospects.]
 - e) Are the equipment warranties easily transferable at the time of the buyout? [Answer: yes they are.]
 - f) How much space is still available in Eversource's net metering program? [Answer: Eversource reports that there are still 19,000 kW available under the "small project" bucket (where this ~20 kW project would fit), but that they've been going through 300-400 kW per week recently, which means only about another year before the cap is reached (at current pace, which could slow or—perhaps more likely—speed up as the cap draws closer).]
8. Although, as reported above, we agreed to change our meeting time to the second Monday of each month, our next meeting is currently scheduled for Monday, November 28, as the second Monday in November is problematic for some members.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM. Next meeting is scheduled for November 28, 2016 at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted

Mark Bolinger