

Jaffrey Energy Committee

Minutes of Meetings – 6/18/09, 9/17/09, 10/15/09, 11/19/09, and 12/17/09

Minutes of Meeting on 6/18/09 at 7 PM at Jaffrey Center Meetinghouse:

Present: Dick Ames, Harry Young, Ed Surprenant, Doug Clayton, Bonnie Mitchell, Rob Stephenson, Doug Starr, Sarah Harpster (guest), Wen Chu (guest)

Absent: Steve Dark, Margaret Dillon, Andy Jones

The Committee addressed the agenda as follows:

- Minutes of previous meeting. Approved.
- Streetlight Sub-Committee Report. Harry Young reported that the Selectmen decided to remove all but 16 of the lights recommended by the Streetlight Committee for removal. The other lights will be converted to 70 watt metal halide fixtures. An additional two lights may be removed in the Jaffrey Center Historic District – the Historic District Commission will hold a hearing on this proposal on June 25.
- Wind energy: Some Committee members will attend the Lempster wind farm dedication on 6/19. There was no new information available on a Jaffrey wind tower ordinance.
- Updates:
 - Pellet Boiler for Wastewater Treatment Facility. Doug Starr reported on the reviews that are underway.
 - Applications for Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction funds. Doug Starr reported that Jaffrey's application for solar energy feasibility study funds has been rejected but the application for energy audit funds is still under review.
 - Baseline energy usage project. Sarah Harpster and Wen Yu are available to help Doug Starr complete this project.
 - Energy conference in Concord. This is a conference that is being convened on 6/20/09 for NH energy committees. Harry Young will be speaking at the conference about our streetlight work.
- Priorities for Jaffrey Energy Committee for next year. Discussion of this item was deferred.
- Other Business: Dick Ames gave a brief slide presentation on "big picture" climate change and energy issues, based on excerpts from studies and reports available on the internet including the McKinsey & Co., 12/2007 report titled "Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions: How Much at What Cost" (part of the US Greenhouse Gas Abatement Mapping Initiative), the 6/16/09 "Global Climate Change - Impacts in the US" report of the US Global Change Research Program, and a recent report of the Sustainable Development Commission titled "Prosperity Without Growth – the transition to a sustainable economy.

Minutes of Meeting on 9/17/09 at 7 PM at 12 Blackberry Lane:

Present: Dick Ames, Harry Young, Ed Surprenant, Doug Clayton, Bonnie Mitchell, Andy Jones, Sarah Harpster (guest)

Absent: Doug Starr, Steve Dark, Margaret Dillon, Rob Stephenson

Due to cold weather, the meeting was moved from the Meetinghouse to the Ames residence at 12 Blackberry Lane.

The Committee addressed the agenda as follows:

- Status of streetlight removals. Harry Young reported that the Town's order for the removal of 71 lights has been placed with PSNH. The remaining lights will be converted early next year. Harry will try to reconvene the streetlight committee to look at other non-PSNH outdoor lighting.
- Status of baseline energy use inventory project. Sarah Harpster presented a preliminary report. There are still significant gaps in the data. She will work with Doug Starr to get the missing information.
- Implementation plan for \$16,250 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Fund grant, awarded by PUC on 7/30/09. Discussion of this item was deferred- New funding opportunities: NH Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program; others. Discussion of this item was deferred.
- Energy Commission Legislation. This new legislation establishes an "Energy Commission" option for towns. Members present agreed not to seek implementation of this option since the current Committee structure is working reasonably well.
- Biochar presentation. Doug Clayton gave an excellent, informative presentation on the history, science, and promise of energy systems that use biochar methodology – using pyrolysis of waste biomass to create fuels and decomposition resistant biochar (a form of charcoal that may then be added to enrich and maintain the fertility of soils). The process releases energy while sequestering the carbon that would otherwise add to the CO₂ in the atmosphere. Additional information is available at www.biochar.org, and at other sites that can be found on the internet.
- Next meeting. This was set for 10/15/09 at the Jaffrey Public Library.

Minutes of Meeting on 10/15/09 at 7 PM at Jaffrey Public Library:

Present: Dick Ames, Margaret Dillon, Steve Dark, Doug Starr, Rob Stephenson, Harry Young, Ed Surprenant, Sarah Harpster (guest)

Absent: Bonnie Mitchell, Andy Jones, Doug Clayton

The Committee addressed the agenda as follows:

- Implementation plan of PUC/GHGERF (Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Fund) grant. Doug Starr reported on the Town's plans to spend this \$16,250 grant. The grant will be used for energy audits of all Town buildings with the exception of the Town Offices building (see below). Doug is preparing a Request for Qualifications which will form the basis for the selection of the energy auditor. The Energy Committee will be involved in the implementation process.
- Report on Town Offices audit. Margaret Dillon gave a preview of the report that she is drafting of her pro bono audit of the Town Offices building. There are significant opportunities for energy savings.
- Status of NH Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program funds. Doug Starr and Margaret Dillon reported that state-level procedures for the expenditure of EECBG Block Grant funds are just about in place, and that grant proposals from towns may be due in January. Grants of up to \$400,000 may be available.
- Status of baseline energy use report. Sarah Harpster & Doug Starr continue to work on getting this job done.
- Streetlight & Other Lighting Issues. Harry Young will undertake to convene a lighting sub-committee to follow-up on non-PSNH lighting issues.
- Next Meeting - scheduled for 11/19/09 at 7 PM at the Town Library.

Minutes of Meeting on 11/19/09 at 7 PM at Jaffrey Public Library:

Present: Dick Ames, Margaret Dillon, Doug Starr, Rob Stephenson, Harry Young, Bonnie Mitchell, Andy Jones, Doug Clayton. Guest: Jeff Bennett.

Absent: Steve Dark, Ed Surprenant

The Committee addressed the agenda as follows:

- Wastewater Treatment Pellet Boiler Update. Doug Starr reported that this project will now proceed, having been approved at the recent special Town Meeting.
- Report on and discussion of work of new Town Facilities Committee. Dick Ames reported on the work of the new Jaffrey Facilities Committee. Dick is one of 6 members. Also on the Committee are 2 former selectmen and the current Town Moderator. The Committee is reviewing the Turner report on the condition of the Town's facilities. Dick expects that all energy issues relating to these facilities, except for the Town Offices building, will be referred for analysis as part of the RGGI funded energy audit.
- Town Offices building. The Committee reviewed the Town Offices audit report that was submitted to the Town earlier this week by Margaret Dillon. A copy of this report will be posted on the Energy Committee web site. Improvements identified in this report could potentially be funded through the EECBG but the long-term future of the building (questioned by the Turner report and by the Facilities Committee) needs to be resolved before proceeding with major upgrades. Assuming a reasonable long-term plan for the building can be identified, perhaps one that would be contingent upon the Town's receipt of grant funds, Committee members felt that the Town should seek EECBG funds for all levels of energy upgrades as identified in Margaret's report.
As an outgrowth of the Town offices discussion, the Committee voted to recommend adoption by the Town of the following standard: "Any new Town building or major improvement to a Town building should be designed and built to follow the principles of integrated design for high performance buildings." The Committee expects to further explicate this standard in due course, and, to that end, expects to review the Epping ordinance on new construction standards.
- Implementation plan for PUC/GHGERF (Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Fund) grant. Doug Starr reported that the RFQ is about to be finalized and issued.
- Status of NH Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program funds. Application protocols have not yet been issued by the state.
- Status of baseline energy use report. Sarah Harpster & Doug Starr continue to work on finalizing this report, which will be an important component of the Town's application for EECBG funds.
- Streetlight & Other Lighting Issues. The Committee felt that an inventory of non-PSNH lights needs to be developed. Doug Starr offered to help with this. Harry Young will discuss this project with the Town Manager.
- Other business. Dick Ames reported that the Southwest Region Planning Commission is convening at the Dublin Public Library on 12/10/09 a meeting of members of energy committees in the Monadnock region. Dick will send a notice around to all Jaffrey Energy Committee members.
- Next Meeting - scheduled for 12/17/09 at 7 PM at the Town Library.

Minutes of Meeting on 12/17/09 at 7 PM at Jaffrey Public Library:

Present: Dick Ames, Margaret Dillon, Doug Starr, Rob Stephenson, Harry Young, Bonnie Mitchell, Andy Jones, Doug Clayton

Absent: Ed Surprenant, Andy Jones

The Committee addressed the agenda as follows:

- Copenhagen. There was a very brief discussion of the “big picture” issues presented by the UN convened conference of world leaders in Copenhagen. A continuing question for the Committee is how best to counter the climate change skeptics and deniers who surface repeatedly with false claims in the newspapers and other media.
- Report on 12/10 meeting of Monadnock Region town energy committees in Dublin convened by Southwest Region Planning Commission. Dick Ames, Margaret Dillon and Doug Clayton reported that there appeared to be at least 10 energy committees who were represented at the Dublin meeting and who reported on their work. Interesting and varied work is being done across the region. Some committees are working with the schools. There may be an opportunity for us to join hands with the Rindge energy committee to work on Jaffrey-Rindge school issues. Another interesting initiative reported at the Dublin meeting offers a way of financing major private sector energy improvements. To accomplish this, legislation has been introduced to establish a system by which municipalities would finance private sector energy improvements and then recoup the investment through assessments levied in conjunction with property taxes. The repayment obligation would pass to successor owners and would be structured to be less than the owner’s savings in energy expenditures that would result from the energy improvements. [See HB 1554, “An Act allowing municipalities to establish energy efficiency and clean energy districts.”]
- Town Facilities Committee update and discussion. Dick Ames reported that the Facilities Committee is likely to recommend that most of the energy issues identified in the Turner report, except for those relating to the Town Offices building, be addressed as part of the upcoming energy audit of town facilities. Options for the Town Offices building are still being developed.
- Status of baseline energy use report. This is still not complete.
- Streetlight & Other Lighting Issues. Harry Young reported on his meeting with the Town Manager regarding non-PSNH lighting issues. Financing changes in lighting is an issue. Harry and Dick will follow-up.
- Other business: After reviewing the Epping ordinance on “energy efficiency and sustainable design,” the Committee discussed and reaffirmed the “high performance building” standard as voted at the November Committee meeting, making clear that the focus of this proposed standard would be Town buildings.
- Next Meeting - scheduled for 1/21/2010 at 7 PM at the Jaffrey Town Library.