

Town of Newtown, CT

3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE SUSTAINABLE ENERGY COMMISSION

4-17-2014

The Sustainable Energy Commission held a regular meeting Thursday, April 17, 2014 in shared meeting room 3 of the Municipal Center located at 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT 06470.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Kathy Quinn at 7:01 pm.

Present: Chairman, Kathy Quinn, Mark Sievel, Joseph Borst, Charlie Copp, Barbara Toomey, Desiree Galassi

Absent: Fred Hurley, James Gulalo, Beth Young

Communications:

Ms. Quinn sent out a copy of a webinar of the stakeholders meeting given by Sephia about the status of their programs.

Acceptance of Minutes:

Mr. Sievel made a motion to accept the minutes of the March 20, 2014 meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Copp seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Old Business:

Northeast Utilities – Diane McCarthy – Bercury

Newtown has been awarded a Bright Idea grant which can be used on saving the town money through energy efficiency. The Commission will need to complete Appendix B in the grant paperwork stating what they will use the grant towards. It must be applied to an energy saving project. One example of this is what the town of Madison did with their grant. Madison installed an electrical vehicle charging station for town resident usage and also used part of the funds but down the co-pays for LED products as a part of the Home Energy Solutions program. The commission will wait to see what the status of the microgrid is before making a decision on what to use the grant for.

There are two separate programs that Newtown can earn grants from. The first program rewards Newtown for renewable energy. One kilowatt of energy is earned per 100 points. The points can be banked to install a larger system or anything that applies to renewable energy like a solar powered trash compactor or street lights. The second program is based on the home energy solutions and small business programs. The town earns points based on participation in the programs. The earning of 100 points equals a bright idea grant and the amount of the grant is based on the size of the town. The size of Newtown earns a \$10,000 bright idea grant. The bright

idea grant can be used towards any energy saving project like window insulation, light bulbs, or outreach to promote different energy saving programs. There is one type of project that qualifies for both types of grants and that is a geothermal project.

Diane told the Commission about dsireusa.org that lists all federal and state tax incentives for clean and renewable energy.

In the future, Northeast Utilities will begin upstreaming rebates which means the installers or vendors would get the rebates in order to buy down the cost of the high efficiency appliances. This will allow the installers and vendors to offer the high efficiency appliances for a cost that is practically equivalent to the basic appliance.

One possible event for Newtown to hold in the future could include representatives from CL&P (Connecticut Light and Power) who can answer residents' questions about different energy saving options in regards to water heaters, heating and cooling systems, and many others. This event could be geared towards both small businesses and residents. Summer may be a good time to hold this event and then possibly hold a library speaker series in the fall about various different topics. To target the small businesses it would be a good idea to connect with the local Chamber of Commerce, the Economic Development Commission, and / or local business associations to target their different types of businesses and target specific types of outreach. This could also be packaged with C-PACE (Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy). Both municipalities and non-profit organizations can participate in C-PACE.

Diane has offered to assist the Commission with any marketing materials they may need like banners, tablecloths, and brochure stands to use at events and for around town marketing.

Northeast Utilities is looking to do a case study on an energy task force to use as an example for other task forces. Newtown would be leading by example for other towns.

Diane will begin working on a timeline for the outreach programs discussed earlier for the residents and commercial businesses of Newtown.

There was a zero energy challenge in the state of Connecticut to build a home that doesn't use any energy. The winner gets \$15,000. There were 25 homes in the competition this year. There are incentives that home builders can use during new home construction and remodeling.

The Energize CT Program is being featured on the Today show and they are running a contest to win new appliances that are energy efficient.

Newtown ended 2013 with 12% of their residents having participated in the Home Energy Solutions program. The next step for Newtown after the Home Energy Solutions program is looking at a deeper project such as insulation, air barriers, air flow, etc. There are incentives to support these types of projects as well negotiated pricing.

There is a program for educators, eesmarts, that offers training on conservation, energy efficiency, and clean energy. The program is no charge for teachers and integrates into the

Connecticut curriculum and standards. Teachers of all grade levels can attend this training. Another program to implement into the schools is to create a green team or club at the schools which can focus on benchmarking and different projects. The school can also earn Bright Idea grants. The students can participate in competition with their projects and be eligible for prizes.

Solar Projects

Brownfield Sites

The town has received a grant for the remediation of some Fairfield Hills buildings.

Reed School

The plan is to focus on the Reed School for the next round of large projects in the PPA (power purchase agreement) and wait on the landfill. The next round has not started yet, the state hasn't given the go ahead for the release of the RFP (request for proposal).

Maintenance Garage & Animal Shelter

The maintenance garage and animal shelter both have signed agreements for a total of 112 kilowatts.

Energy Savings Performance Contract – IGA Status – Microgrid

Ms. Quinn attended a meeting on April 16, 2014 about the current status of the energy savings performance contract and the investment grade audit (IGA) that is currently being worked on. Ms. Quinn sent a copy of the current status to the commission. There will be further discussion of status at the Building and Site Committee along with other various town departments. There is still some fine tuning that needs to be done to the IGA.

The Celtic representatives are looking into the possibility of a microgrid at the site of the new Sandy Hook School.

Earth Day

The Earth Day event will be April 26, 2014. The Commission will have a booth to promote the different programs that are ongoing as well as the projects that have been completed. Barbara Toomey will have a table in the children's section and will set up her solar oven if the day is sunny for marshmallow toasting.

Transition Movement

The next meeting will be Monday, April 21, 2014 at 4:30 pm at the Victory Garden. If there is bad weather, the meeting will be at Parks and Rec.

Energy Savings Plan

Ameresco has energy data to load into the portfolio manager to start tracking energy savings. Diana has an independent contractor firm to help set benchmarking and enter data around the end of May. She will need a commitment from the town to participate. If Kathy can get access to the

Green Button account, she can access the electricity bills and extract that information to Excel and then manipulate the data in Excel to upload into the Portfolio manager as the downloaded data is not the correct format.

5 Kilowatt System at Reed School

This system is up and working.

Adjournment:

Ms. Galassi made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 pm. The motion was seconded by Ms. Toomey. The motion was carried unanimously.

The next regular meeting will occur on Thursday, May 15, 2014 at 7:00 pm at the Newtown Municipal Center in Shared Meeting Room 3.

Submitted, Jessica Smith, clerk.