

Town of Newtown, CT

3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE SUSTAINABLE ENERGY COMMISSION

8-21-2014

The Sustainable Energy Commission held a regular meeting Thursday, August 21, 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 7:02 pm.

Present: Chairman, Kathy Quinn, Mark Sievel, Joseph Borst, Charlie Copp, Fred Hurley, Barbara Toomey

Absent: Desiree Galassi, James Gulalo, Beth Young, Dave Stout

Communications:

The Newtown Arts Festival is being held on September 13th and 14th, 2014. Ms. Quinn stated the Commission has had a booth at the Festival and needs to let the Festival committee know if the Commission wants to have a booth this year as well. The booth for the Commission could just hold flyers about different programs that are currently going on. Ms. Quinn can also reach out to the Home Energy Solutions vendors to see if they would like to participate as well. The cost to participate is \$100.

Ms. Toomey made a motion to use one hundred dollars (\$100) to fund a table at the Newtown Arts Festival in September 2014. Mr. Sievel seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Public Comments:

Two representatives from USA LED attended the meeting, Scott Schaake and Gene Bloaxsom. Mr. Schaake had read an article in *Voices* about some frustration with the contractors working on the Energy Savings Performance Contract (ESCO). USA LED installed the LED streetlights in Heritage Village and they believe the technology is present to always use LED lights. USA LED uses math to calculate savings rather than paying a premium for a performance contractor like Celtic. There is technology now to put a wireless relay into each LED head and transmit the performance of each device to an online portal. Once the relay is running, a dimming schedule can also be set up for each device.

USA LED volunteers to install a few free, no strings attached samples to show their ability and the made in the USA products they can install.

The frustrations that are currently being experience with Ameresco and Celtic are that the LEDs are ready more than ever and the cost of the LEDs on the proposal is very high when the prices

have been dropping. Concerns regarding these costs are being raised by numerous parties but the LEDs are needed in the proposal because the savings will offset other projects that are being proposed.

Street lighting has not been covered in the ESCO, only the lighting in the schools and municipal buildings. Street lighting is a project that is a possibility but has not been explored yet. The streetlights on the state roads are owned by the state so some research will need to be done regarding these lights before conversations can get started. Mr. Schaake has a contact at the state Department of Transportation who may be able to answer some questions about the state road streetlights; he will pass the contact information along to Ms. Quinn.

Acceptance of Minutes:

Mr. Sievel made a motion to accept the minutes of the June 19, 2014 meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Borst seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Old Business:

Budget / Grants

One possibility for some of the funds to use some on the replacing the lights on the flagpole with LEDs as well as replacing lights in four locations, Dickinson Park, Treadwell Park, Eichler's Cove, and the Elm Drive fields and courts, managed by Parks and Recreation with LEDs. The replacement cost for the lighting needs of Parks and Recreation is roughly nineteen thousand dollars. If the replacements are done with a small business loan from CL&P the cost would be about thirteen thousand dollars. In order to use the small business loan to complete the project, a CL&P approved vendor must be used. The way the small business loan works is that as the electricity usage decreases, the equipment is paid for on the CL&P bill each month. Once the entire project is paid for, the savings will be evident on the CL&P bill. Ms. Quinn will send the information on these four projects to the Public Works Department for review and / or approval.

Ms. Quinn stated she needs to look further into replacing the flagpole lights with LEDs.

Another possibility is to possibly put an electric car charging station at Lexington Gardens.

Energy Savings Programs

Residential

Ms. Quinn received some information from Sephia regarding a post Solarize CT program that looks at other energy saving measures. Letters would be mailed to all program participants as well as residents who were interested in participating but were unable to due to the restrictions of their properties.

The commission needs to decide if they want to continue working with a few selected vendors or if they want to open the program up to all qualified vendors. Mr. Hurley recommends that the

Commission open up the program to all qualified vendors as all are vetted by the state and residents need to be aware of all options open to them within this program. The commission could put out some general information to the public and include information about EnergizeCt.com which has how-to and informational videos about energy saving options.

Ms. Quinn shared the idea of having an informational meeting at the library about different energy saving options open to residents with representatives from state to speak and answer any questions about the various programs available. Ms. Quinn will check with the library on date availability.

Commercial

The Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) program mailing is being planned for sending to all commercial and non-profit property owners in Newtown.

Next Solar Projects

Brackets are being installed on the maintenance garage and animal shelter and the solar panels should be installed and operational within a month. This project was a part of the small zero emission renewable energy credit (ZREC) program.

The state is currently on its third round of the small ZREC program, less than 100 kilowatts, and the funds have not been exhausted yet. There are many applications that are submitted but are not approved.

Future project possibilities are the Sandy Hook School once it is ready. This coming fall requests for proposal (RFPs) will be sent out for a large system on Reed School, about 600 kilowatts, and the landfill with a system of about 1 megawatt. The Bachelder brownfield site is also a possibility for a future solar panel site.

Mr. Hurley suggested having one or two people from the commission sit with him while he is preparing the RFPs so he is not the only one who knows how to prepare the document.

Energy Savings Performance Contract – IGA Status

A reply from Ameresco is currently being waited on after Celtic raised 86 questions about the proposal.

Transition Movement

No update.

There is a possibility to combine a film with the informational session about energy saving programs that is being planned at the library in the fall.

Municipal Energy Plan

Ms. Quinn has broad outline of the plan, she is waiting to see how consumption is being reduced before finalizing the plan.

Energy Star Portfolio Manager

No Update

Outreach to Schools

There is a new website, Sustainablect.com, that contains case studies regarding the actions of different towns around the state. Newtown is being featured in one case study. There is a section of case studies on school outreach that could be helpful in this project.

Adjournment:

Mr. Sievel made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:14 pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Borst. The motion was carried unanimously.

The next regular meeting will occur on Thursday, September 18, 2014 at 7:00 pm at the Newtown Municipal Center in Shared Meeting Room 3.

Submitted, Jessica Smith, clerk.