

Town of Newtown, CT

3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE SUSTAINABLE ENERGY COMMISSION

9-18-2014

The Sustainable Energy Commission held a regular meeting Thursday, September 18, 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, Desiree Galassi, James Gulalo, Dave Stout

Absent: Fred Hurley, Barbara Toomey

Communications:

Ms. Quinn informed the Commission that Beth Young is stepping down from the Commission.

Ms. Quinn told the Commission about Connecticut's first wind turbine installation in Colbrook. There may be a second phase installed in Putnam.

Public Comments:

Mr. Jim Walsh, from St. Rose Church, and Ms. Mary Alice Kurtz, from General Motors (GM), attended the meeting tonight.

Mr. Walsh chaired a group of volunteers made up of parents, teachers, and community members to replace the playground at St. Rose School. The old playscape was donated to Kids Around the World and the playscape was inspected and erected for children in Haiti.

The group was tasked with creating a new playscape and outdoor classroom for the children at St. Rose. The outdoor classroom is designed to teach kids in an outdoor, natural setting with lessons focusing on solar power, rainwater use, and reusing and recycling. Mr. Walsh and team reached out to various local businesses, community members along with talking to GM. No one that was asked to help with the project refused.

The covering to the outdoor classroom is made up of solar panels that generate 4 to 8 kilowatts. This covering is the entrance to the natural habitat and butterfly garden.

Ms. Kurtz works on the Sustainability team at GM and works with dealerships and the community on various sustainability projects. For the project at St. Rose, Ms. Kurtz was able to get Timberock to donate the structure for the outdoor classroom and GM donated the solar panels as well as a rain barrel to help support the natural habitat and butterfly garden. To

celebrate the completion of this three year long project, there will be a ribbon cutting ceremony on Friday, September 19, 2014 at 10:00 am.

GM has been supporting schools and wildlife programs around the world in conjunction with local organizations and Earth Force to help teach children how they can make an impact. GM provides mentors to help support these programs and is looking to expand their programs into more schools in Newtown. Their programs focus on freshwater sustainability, renewable energy, and composting.

Acceptance of Minutes:

Mr. Borst made a motion to accept the minutes of the August 21, 2014 meeting minutes with the following correction: the spelling of the company Sephia. The company name is Cefia. Mr. Gulalo seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Old Business:

Budget / Grants

The final figures for replacing lights at Dickinson Park, Treadwell Park, Eichler's Cove, and the Elm Drive fields and courts have come in. The cost for working through CL&P is \$1800 more than the bid from USA LED.

Mr. Stout stated he had done some research into USA LED and found that some parts in their products are from China which is not as high in quality as the products used by the CL&P vendors. The products used by CL&P are all made in the United States and come with a 10 year warranty whereas USA LED has a 5 year warranty.

Ms. Galassi made a motion to use the \$10,000 grant towards the purchase of LED lights through the CL&P Small Business Energy Advantage Program. Mr. Gulalo seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

The remaining cost will be paid in installments on each month's energy bill from CL&P.

Energy Savings Programs

There will be a program at the library on October 30, 2014 for residents about various energy saving programs and options.

On October 28, 2014 Betsy Paynter from Economic Development will be holding a similar program about C-PACE and the small business advantage program at Tier One on Pecks Lane at 8:00 am. A mailing will be going out to businesses and non-profits in Newtown.

Both programs will be promoted together in the *Newtown Bee*.

Next Solar Projects

The solar frames have been installed on the maintenance garage. Future projects for 2015 are still being determined.

Energy Savings Performance Contract – IGA Status

Ameresco has released an electronic version on answers to the questions raised by Celtic. Ms. Quinn will forward the file to all Commission members.

Transition Movement

No update.

Municipal Energy Plan

No updated.

Energy Star Portfolio Manager

Ms. Quinn has a starting point to start loading the information into the portfolio manager.

Outreach to Schools

It will be valuable to sit down with the Newtown Superintendent of schools to discuss the St. Rose and see what his philosophies are regarding similar programs. It will also be important to compare the Common Core with the programs that are offered by GM but before moving forward with any program it will be necessary to make sure the Superintendent is supporting of these types of programs.

Adjournment:

Mr. Borst made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:24 pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sievel. The motion was carried unanimously.

The next regular meeting will occur on Thursday, October 16, 2014 at 7:00 pm at the Newtown Municipal Center in Shared Meeting Room 3.

Submitted, Jessica Smith, clerk.