

Town of Newtown, CT

3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE SUSTAINABLE ENERGY COMMISSION

10-16-2014

The Sustainable Energy Commission held a regular meeting Thursday, October 16, 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, Charlie Copp, Desiree Galassi, Dave Stout, Fred Hurley, and Barbara Toomey

Absent: Joseph Borst and James Gulalo

Communications:

Ms. Quinn informed the Commission she saw an article written by Andrew Zumwalt-Hathaway from Steven Winter Associates, Inc. She sent a copy of the article to the Commission members to peruse. She invited him to the meeting to discuss his involvement in the Newtown schools. He has conducted some programs regarding sustainable energy within the school system. This is something the Commission has been attempting to accomplish itself and Ms. Quinn wanted Mr. Hathaway's input.

Public Comments:

Andrew Zumwalt-Hathaway arrived after the meeting began. He discussed his involvement with the school system in Newtown. Mr. Hathaway approached the past two superintendents of Newtown with his ideas of educating students on Sustainable Energy. He was not successful until he began meeting with Superintendent Erardi. The Superintendent was receptive to the idea. At first, Mr. Hathaway thought about Green Apple Day of Service, but it occurs at the end of September. This is a difficult time of year to interrupt the flow of school work.

Mr. Hathaway met with a group of Newtown High School students from various student organizations such as the environmental group and the engineering group. They discussed what a green building is and how it works.

He also had plans for a 4th grade assembly which was canceled due to the bomb scare. It has not been rescheduled yet.

He also has met with students from Mr. Ramsey's technology class at the Middle School. The students he met with were given infra-red cameras. They were taught how to use them and were able to determine where the school was losing energy. Mr. Hathaway felt the students enjoyed the program and learned a lot from it.

Please see below: Outreach to schools section for additional information.

Acceptance of Minutes:

Mr. Sievel made a motion to accept the minutes of the September 18, 2014 meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Stout seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Old Business:

Budget / Grants

All grant paperwork for the park lighting has been sent to CL&P. The lights will be completed this year. Someone from CL&P will contact Mr. Hurley to set up a staging area if needed. A project manager will be assigned and a site review will be conducted. At that time, any adjustments will be made if necessary to the plan. Then installation will take place. The project is now in the hands of CL&P and the electrician.

Energy Savings Programs

Ms. Quinn will contact Bob Wall regarding the proposed program at the library on October 30, 2014 for residents about various energy saving programs and options. They have not connected regarding the program. The library is reserved at this time. Ms. Quinn hoped to have an answer tomorrow.

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. The town earns points when people get involved in the program which can then be used for grants.

Next Solar Projects

The solar frames have been installed on the maintenance garage. The agreement for the Dog Park is back , while the agreement on the other garage is due back soon.

Future projects for 2015 are still being determined. The solar on Reed School would bring about 500-600 kilowatts to the grid while the closed landfill would be about a megawatt. The landfill system would have to be a ground mount installation since land penetration is not possible at this location.

The best scenario would be to start the approval process now through the various zoning, wetlands and planning boards. There may be a land use issue for the projects, especially on the landfill site. Once approval of the plans are done then RFP will get the permit to build. Mr. Hurley stated that there are preliminary designs done for zoning.

The High School and the Police Station do not have roofs appropriate for solar. The Garage is part of Reed School and could generate only 100 kilowatts. The Ambulance Garage is questionable due to the number of trees around it.

Energy Savings Performance Contract – IGA Status

Mr. Stout did an analysis of CL&P versus Ameresco. He stated that each building is its own project. There are rebates from CL&P if the project falls under the small business program and if some of the projects are combined it may qualify for a larger rebate of about 50% with 0% financing. The small business program is utilized by non-residential entities which include municipalities. C-Pace is for commercial and non-profit entities.

The town has started to rethink these projects because they do not impact the bond cap, as no capital funds are being used. The costs are paid by the savings they provide.

Mr. Stout also was discussing the types of lighting between the two proposals and the different types that may be available. Mr. Hurley mentioned that the technology available to the town today was not there 18 months ago. Mr. Stout was also questioning the mark-up percentages. Mr. Copp asked if the Celtic review found these differences. Mr. Hurley said they did realize the differences but he would bring their concerns to the meeting he has with Celtic on Monday.

Transition Movement

No update.

Municipal Energy Plan

No update.

Energy Star Portfolio Manager

No update.

Outreach to Schools

Ms. Quinn stated they the Sustainable Energy Commission has tried to reach out the schools in the past and has had little success. She thanked Mr. Hathaway for attending the meeting and providing his insight. He stated that he is to have a debriefing meeting with Superintendent Erardi soon regarding his programs at the Middle School and High School.

The Commission would like to partner with Mr. Hathaway in any way that would educate the students on Sustainable Energy. Ms. Toomey suggested a time frame around Earth Day. Mr. Hathaway said he would bring it up with this meeting with Superintendent Erardi and report his findings back to the Commission.

Mr. Hurley stated the Newtown will have four different types of solar systems in town. The Commission said that it would be a great field trip for students to see and learn about the different types of systems.

Mr. Hurley mentioned that all the schools have recycling programs at the schools. He stated that the programs work well at first but compliance slows down. He suggested that these programs be reviewed with the student body periodically to keep compliance steady.

Adjournment:

Ms. Galassi made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:28 pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sievel. The motion was carried unanimously.

The next regular meeting will occur on Thursday, November 20, 2014 at 7:00 pm at the Newtown Municipal Center in Shared Meeting Room 3.

Submitted, Elizabeth Smith, clerk.