



**Town of Plaistow
Renewable Energy Committee
145 Main Street, Plaistow, NH 03865**

RENEWABLE ENERGY COMMITTEE MINUTES

MEETING DATE: Thursday, January 21, 2016 @ 4:00 pm

PRESENT: Julian Kiszka, Chairman; Geoffrey Adams, Vice Chairman; Tim Moore, Planning Board; Tony Costanzo, Resident; Greg Jones, Town Planner; Beth Hossack, Administrative Assistant; Sean Fitzgerald, Town Manager arrived at 5:00

EXCUSED: Cab Vinton, Jake Kennedy

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: 4:07 PM

Greg begins by thanking all those in attendance for coming. It has been difficult to get everyone together at the same time. Today's meeting will be an update on current projects.

Motion by T. Moore to approve the minutes of November 18, 2015. Second by G. Adams. No discussion Vote: 3-0-1 (T. Costanzo) Motion passes.

EXISTING PROJECTS

Solar Exemption Warrant Article – Greg reads the warrant article that was approved by the Budget Committee. This will be on the ballot in March at Town Meeting. Discussion ensues regarding the word qualifying in the last sentence of the article. Qualifying equipment will be identified in RSA 72:61-64. It is noted that solar energy equipment is not currently assessed in Plaistow.

New Hampshire Net Metering Cap – The current cap is 25. There is a new bill, SB333 that would increase the cap to 50. Senator Sanborn tried to amend the bill to increase the cap to 75 but the amendment failed. During the executive session of the Senate Energy Committee held on 1/20/16 the vote was "ought to pass" 5-0. This bill will likely go to the Senate Floor for a vote on 1/28/16. Then it will go to the House for another hearing. Utilities are arguing against this bill and the House Energy Committee is not supporting it. Greg hands out a copy of a press release from Governor Hassan urging the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources to support the bill. Greg would like to get an expert from the PUC (Public Utility Commission) and Ameresco at our next meeting to answer questions regarding this issue. Greg encourages the committee to support SB333.

Street Lighting Audit Project - The Town of Plaistow would like to purchase the street lights from Unitil and convert them all to LED fixtures. A meeting was held with representatives from Unitil for such a purchase but the outcome was not positive. Then the Town inquired if Unitil was willing to convert all the street lights to LED fixtures on their own. Their response was vague and a long time frame was indicated for completion, if in fact it even happened. The Town has received a revised scope of work provided by Tanko Lighting. The Town might hire Tanko

Lighting to provide a comprehensive GIS Audit and billing reconciliation. The information will help the Town with the possibility of procuring the street lights as it is not completely off the table. The PUC has been contacted and they did not agree with Unutil's time table on the length of time it would take Unutil to change all the fixtures to LED.

S. Fitzgerald joins the meeting at 5:00. He would like the committee to exert some pressure on Unutil. Plaistow and other municipalities would benefit from LED lighting as most municipalities are spending a lot of money on inefficient lights. LED's project light more effectively and in different ways than incandescent lights. Discussion ensues.

Future Site Visit - This had been postponed until spring.

OTHER BUSINESS:

SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING: Thursday, December 3, 2015

Greg Jones, Town Planner; J. Kiszka, Chairman; G. Adams, Vice Chairman, and T. Moore met at 5:00pm to discuss the finalization of language for the solar exemption Warrant Article in preparation for submission to the Board of Selectmen. The team was able to come to a consensus on the language for this submission which is as follows:

Establishment of a Solar Energy Systems Exemption

Article P-15- #: Shall the Town adopt the provisions of RSA 72:61-64 inclusively, which provide for an optional property tax exemption from the property's assessed value, for property tax purposes, for real property, which is equipped with solar energy systems intended for use at the immediate site. Such property tax exemption shall be in the amount equal to 100% of the assessed value of qualifying solar energy system equipment under these statutes.

(The intent of the tax exemption is to encourage the installation of solar energy systems. Solar energy systems can be expensive, and people who make the decision to install solar systems are primarily motivated by the larger environmental and economic issues associated with energy consumption. Similar tax exemptions already exist in approximately 63 towns in New Hampshire.)

SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING: Thursday, December 10, 2015

Greg Jones, Town Planner; J. Kiszka, Chairman; G. Adams, Vice Chairman, Sean Fitzgerald, Town Manager; and Jake Kennedy, Deputy Fire Chief met at 5:00pm to discuss an effort to purchase the Town's street light fixtures from Unutil in order to replace the existing incandescent fixtures with energy efficient LED lights. A discussion ensued with regard to the Committee's recommendation to the Board of Selectmen. After some dialogue, J. Kiszka and G. Adams decided not to make a formal recommendation until more information is presented.

J. Kiszka would like this committee to meet on a regularly scheduled basis. Then it could be posted on the web site, the Town calendar and the cable station. More residents would be informed and may participate in the meetings. Discussion ensues.

J. Kiszka motions to have the Renewables Energy Committee meet on the third Wednesday of each month at 5:00pm. Second by G. Adams. Vote: 4-0-0. Motion passes.

J. Kiszka mentions the Safety Complex Expansion may pass at Town Meeting. He would like the Renewable Committee to be involved in the selection of lighting and heating systems to

make sure the systems put into the building are environmentally sustainable. S. Fitzgerald states the committee can be involved in the process but cannot actually select the systems.

J. Kiszka would like to see an Action List established. He would like preliminary meeting notes sent to committee members via email at least the day before the meeting. Meeting minutes for the two short sub-committee meetings concerning LED lights and the Solar Warrant article should be completed and accepted by the committee. All minutes once approved should be uploaded to the Towns web site.

It is decided that we invite a PUC representative to attend the February meeting and the Timberlane Regional High School Facilities Manger attend the March meeting.

G. Adams suggests the Town Manger move forward with the hiring of Tanko Lighting for the Street Light Audit. An independent third party would provide better information than Unitil would.

S. Fitzgerald suggests the committee draft legislation to help other Towns save money regarding street lights.

| Renewables Committee Action Items | | | | |
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| Action Items | Date | Description | Due Date | Status |
| 1 | 1/21/16 | Street Light Audit | | Pending – the BOS approved money but it still needs to be taken from the budget somewhere |
| 2 | 1/21/16 | Committee involved with Safety Expansion Lighting/Heating Systems | | Must be approved by the BOS. Sean will recommend it to the BOS. |

J. Kiszka motions to adjourn the meeting. Second by T. Costanzo. Vote: 4-0-0. Motion passes.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 5:28 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Hossack,
Recording Secretary