

# Stratham Energy Commission

## Meeting Minutes

Date: February 13, 2013

Commission members present:

John C. Dold

Michael Gorman

Matthew O'Keefe

James Schlough

Also Present: Megan Barry, Bradley Parsons (Stratham resident)

Absent:

Michael Welty

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM.

Review and Approve Minutes: Minutes of the January 17th meeting were approved.

Chairman Dold introduced Megan Barry, a UNH senior who performed data entry and data manipulation in Portfolio Manager, the Environment Protection Agency's online energy use analysis tool. Megan was employed by the town for the commission for \$500. She performed her tasks in December and January. Megan made a presentation to the commission about her experience visiting town buildings and gathering supplementary information to complete the entry of energy use information. Most of the data for the past ten years are in the town's profile, though there are some remaining gaps in energy consumption for early years. This affects some of the baseline numbers used for comparative evaluation of annual trends. Megan is a Sustainability and Anthropology double major and commented on the positive benefit of this experience.

Matt O'Keefe noted that the U.S. Department of Energy is developing a complementary program with a larger data base of building types that can better reflect the efficiencies of buildings being evaluated.

One town building of particular interest is the highway garage. There is some question about the proper assessment of square footage for different areas of the building and the correct assignment for heating sources. The use of waste oil for heating certain areas in the garage also may be distorting the results.

Megan was thanked for her efforts and excused from the meeting.

The commission discussed actions to follow up on the assessment made of the Historical Society building at the January 17th meeting at that site. John noted that he has informed Town Manager Paul Deschaine of the need to have a professional service call performed for the furnace in the building. It has not been performed since 2005. The biggest need seems to be the correction of air infiltration issues. There was additional discussion on the use of "blower door" testing to magnify such leaks and make them more readily detectable. The source of funding for such a test was discussed. Use of the current commission budget of \$1500/year was

considered. Other funding options may be discovered through the municipal energy use webinars and meetings conducted around the state.

John reported on his attendance at a Local Energy Work Group event in Concord earlier that day. The emphasis was on increasing awareness of how much money municipalities can save by paying attention to their energy consumption. He noted that one presenter from the solar energy industry explained that solar power efficiencies in New Hampshire can rival installations in Arizona because the cooler weather in NH improves the efficiency of the equipment.

John proposed that the commission have its next meeting at one of the town buildings to conduct another assessment. The highway department garage was chosen as the preferred site and John will check with Paul to see about a workable date and time in March.

John made note of a report he had received from Paul entitled "Solar Powering Your Community: A Guide for Local Governments." It suggests that one of the first steps a community should make is to take a survey of existing solar installations and place this information on a map. There was some question about how to gather that information. John stressed that as a committee, we should be looking to promote solar and other renewable source energy projects in the town. Matt commented on his experience with this issue at a town meeting about five years earlier. Though a solar initiative was approved, he said there was surprising resistance to it.

John proposed that the committee might have some presence at the Stratham Fair this summer to make more residents aware of the commission's existence and to promote energy savings options. This will be discussed in future meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:27. The next meeting date and location are yet to be established based on arrangements to perform an energy use assessment at the highway garage.