

Minutes of the meeting of the Gloucester Clean Energy Commission
Thursday, Sept. 27, 2018, City Hall
(Approved at meeting of 10/25/18)

Attending:

Commissioners: Candace Wheeler (chair), Paul McGeary (vice-chair), Linda Brayton, Linda Stout-Saunders, Debra Darby, John Moskal.

Staff: Jeremy Price.

Public: Dick Prouty, Tom Mikus.

Approval of minutes

The minutes of the meetings of May 31 and Aug. 9 were approved unanimously.

Member reports on conferences, meetings, etc.

Ms. Stout-Saunders reported on her attendance at the September meeting of the city's Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (EDIC). She noted that Carl Gustin, a member of EDIC, mentioned that **Mr. Moskal** may be a good resource to attend an EDIC meeting. **Mr. Moskal** then stated that he had met with Mr. Gustin and that they discussed some industrial park opportunities relative to renewable technologies and utility incentives/programs. He said the corporation saw green energy as a way of attracting tenants to its industrial parks. **Mr. Moskal** stated that he and Mr. Gustin have been acquainted for many years, Mr. Gustin having been in the utility industry. **Mr. Moskal** said he would speak with corporation members Mr. Gustin and Michael DiLascio to encourage the corporation to include energy discussions in the corporation's planning process.

Ms. Stout-Saunders noted that the corporation was studying the possibility of further industrial development off Route 128 in West Gloucester.

Ms. Darby suggested that Blackburn Industrial Park be reenvisioned as an "eco-industrial park" and suggested that waste-to-energy solutions might help make that possible. **Ms. Stout-Saunders** said she intended to attend the next meeting of the EDIC on Oct. 3.

Ms. Stout-Saunders said she had drafted letter to Rick Hersey of the Gloucester Harbor Community Development Corporation for an update on the corporation's development plans for the inner harbor.

Ms. Darby said she would attend the next meeting of the Clean City Commission.

Staff and Member Reports /Updates/Discussions

A scheduled discussion with Ron Beck of Offshore Renewable Safety consulting firm on status of New England offshore wind development and potential opportunities for a future Gloucester role as logistics port was postponed to our meeting of Oct. 25.

Mr. Prouty reported on joint efforts with TownGreen2025, noting that a Sustainability Fair was to be held on Sept. 29 at the O'Maley Innovation Middle School.

Ms. Stout-Saunders noted that Sue Hoague of TownGreen 2025 was advocating subscriptions to community solar power. **Mr. Prouty** said that TownGreen was working with Resonant Energy of Boston and Relay Power, a small solar power generator in western Massachusetts. He said Ms. Hoague had investigated Relay Power and determined that it was a viable alternative for persons seeking to increase the amount of power they receive from renewable resources. He said that Resonant Energy had a similar program.

Ms. Stout-Saunders asked how endorsing such a program would affect our Community Electricity Aggregation program, scheduled to be rolled out in the near future. **Mr. Moskal** cautioned against "selling too many things to the same group of people." He suggested we should focus on aggregation and that having too many offerings would confuse electric users.

Mr. Prouty responded that TownGreen was not making a formal proposal, just allowing the solar power companies to have a presence at the Sustainability Fair.

Ms. Stout-Saunders said she would talk to the vendors at the Sustainability Fair and that's why she had asked Ms. Hoague for background information.

Mr. Prouty said that TownGreen had vetted both Relay and Resonant and found them to be "legitimate."

Ms. Darby asked if any savings from solar power would result in a pool of money for the city. Mr. Moskal said it would not.

Mr. McGeary reported on the St. John's Episcopal Church community solar project. He said that St. John's was working with Resonant Energy to design a system for the church and its rectory on Gloucester Avenue.

Mr. Prouty noted that TownGreen was waiting on finalization of amendments to the city's zoning ordinance to facilitate independent solar installations before undertaking a larger community solar project.

Mr. Price noted that the solar ordinance is currently under discussion in the city's Community Development Department but the draft had not yet been shared with other departments and boards.

Ms. Wheeler asked if the consulting group Cadmus would assist. Mr. Price responded that they would be available if needed.

Mr. Price also noted that the city was making good progress on achieving "platinum" status for its energy conservation efforts and that the solar ordinance would be an important step in attaining it.

Community Electricity Aggregation status report

Mr. Price reported that three suppliers were interested in bidding to supply power. He said the bids would be received on Oct. 2 and that if favorable pricing was achieved, the program would begin shortly thereafter.

Ms. Stout-Saunders asked if the default option for the program was 5 percent additional renewable energy (over the state's default of 13 percent). Mr. Price said it was. He said our consultant, Good Energy LLC, would orchestrate the outreach and that National Grid Basic Service customers would automatically receive the default option for electricity generation. He noted that there would be a 30-day opt-out window once customers received formal notification of the program.

New Business

Ms. Stout-Saunders raised assignments of individual commissioners to the points of action under the CEC Strategic Plan, which had been discussed at a previous meeting. She said she would find the draft list and asked that it be included for discussion at our next meeting.

Ms. Stout-Saunders asked whether the city had done a cost-benefit analysis of the Big Belly solar power trash compactors. She said the question was raised by the DPW director from another city who was curious. No one could recall any such study having been done for the City. **Ms. Brayton** gave background information on the City's purchase and use of the compactors. The existing Big Belly trash compactors were purchased several years ago via fund-raising efforts of the former Gloucester Renewable Energy Task force for renewable energy purposes. Matching funds from National Grid were obtained for the promotion of the Green Up program in which residents elected to pay small percentage extra for the use of renewable energy sources for their electricity supply. Because the high cost of the compactors themselves, servicing them, and maintenance and repair, she said, the city has not prioritized further purchases.

Public comment

Tom Mikus spoke of using green plants to help sequester carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

Next meeting

The commission's next meeting is scheduled for **Oct. 25**.

Respectfully submitted,
Paul McGeary
Vice-chair