

**MINUTES OF THE CLEAN ENERGY COMMISSION MEETING (“CEC”)
APRIL 24, 2019
City Hall, 1st Floor Conference Room, Dale Avenue
(Approved at the meeting of 5/23/19)**

Members Present: Candace Wheeler, Linda Brayton, Debra Darby, Paul McGeary (by phone), Linda Stout-Saunders

Members Absent: John Moskal, Mike Nolan

Public: Tom Mikus, Rockport Green Community Task Force

The meeting was called to order by **Ms. Wheeler** at 7pm.

Roll Call Vote: **Mr. McGeary** joined the meeting by telephone. All members present verbally consented. Further actions throughout this meeting that required a vote were conducted by formal Roll Call vote.

Ms. Brayton pointed out the need for a correction in the wording on the posted agenda for this meeting. Item 2 reads "Update on letter to mayor re: joint project with Town Green2025 to offer Big Roof Solar program..." She said that this was misleading since the CEC has not agreed to recommend a joint project but only to explore the idea of a possible endorsement/ letter of support or use of the City seal and to inform the **Mayor** of this proposal. Chairperson **Wheeler** then stated for the minutes, "Let the record reflect this correction."

Approval of Minutes: Minutes of February 28, 2019 unanimously approved. November 2018 Minutes remain outstanding. **Ms. Wheeler** will be providing a draft of those Minutes.

Member Reports: **Ms. Brayton** and **Ms. Wheeler** attended the National Grid Community Initiative award ceremony on April 1. The City received an award for its participation. Approximately 669 home energy audits were completed over the past year; 607 had been completed in 2017. They were introduced to Marcy Reed, President of National Grid, Massachusetts and the National Grid Community Liaison for Gloucester, Joe Muraco and others.

Ms. Wheeler mentioned the electric bus demonstration at Cape Ann Transportation Authority (CATA) on March 22 sponsored by MASSPIRG, Proterra (a bus manufacturer) and Green Energy Consumers Alliance. CATA is applying for a grant for the first electric bus in Gloucester. **Ms. Stout-Saunders** mentioned that the Martha’s Vineyard Transit Authority has some electric buses already in service. **Ms. Darby** thought that we should also pursue electric school buses.

Ms. Stout-Saunders attended the EDIC meeting of April 2. It was mentioned that Dick Prouty of TownGreen 2025 had met with EDIC board members **Carl Gustin** and **Jerry Oppenheim** to outline the Big Roof Solar program. **Ms. Stout-Saunders** summarized the program for the EDIC members in attendance.

Ms. Wheeler mentioned that she had been contacted by Courtney Hayes a local resident who is working on climate change issues and education and to raise local awareness of the Green New Deal through “The Sunrise Movement” a national organization formed under a grant from the Sierra Club. Ms Hayes has been in touch with Mayor Romeo Theken, Rachel Rex (Gloucester Public Schools), Susan Hoague (TownGreen 2025, Val Gilman (City Council), Tom Mikus (Rockport Green Community Task Force), and

Sam Cleaves (Metropolitan Area Planning Council “MAPC”). She hopes to organize an event sometime this fall around the theme of local citizen action on climate change issues.

Ms. Stout Saunders brought up a reminder, referring to **Ms. Wheeler’s** email of February 20, 2019, that we should follow up with Amanda Nash concerning Representative Ann-Margaret Ferrante’s sponsored climate legislation and a possible meeting for May. **Ms. Brayton** pointed out that there might be common goals and overlap between these two planned events and that the planners might want to consider coordinating. She said she would take responsibility for follow up with Representative Ferrante re: both events.

Ms. Darby reported that she had attended a conference in Washington DC that focused on the reduction of green house gas from transportation and pollutants in drinking water. She noted that toxic PFOS chemicals are now showing up in compost.

Updates and Discussions

1. The Department of Community Development Senior Planner **Jeremy Price** has taken a position with another firm. **Mr. Cademartori** provided an update on March 28 of the status of projects **Mr. Price** was coordinating for the CEC: Gloucester will not be participating in amendments to a new edition of the International Energy Conservation Code due to required staff time; the Green Communities projects from last year have been closed-out and the annual report has been completed; an application for funding has been submitted to Green Communities for two new energy efficiency projects including lighting replacements at the High School and tying in several energy management systems. Other initiatives will be discussed after this position has been filled. **Ms. Brayton** (quoting from an email to CEC from **Ms. Wheeler**) stated that the various projects that **Mr. Price** was currently working on include the National Grid Community Initiative, Solar Zoning provisions, SolSmart program, Big Roof Solar program and Community Electric Aggregation.

Mr. Cademartori also provided an update on the Community Electricity Aggregation (CEA) program via a 4/23/19 memo, which **Mr. McGeary** read aloud. Good Energy Inc. (CEA facilitator) notified the City that 580 mailings had recently been sent out to newly eligible rate payers who had previously been buying electricity from 3rd party vendors, to invite these customers to join the CEA. If any CEC members are contacted with CEA questions, they can be referred to Good Energy (call 866-456-8232) or check the CEA website (<https://gloucester-cea.com/>). **Ms. Stout-Saunders** noted that the CEA website may not have been updated to show the comparison of N-Grid summer rates with the CEA rates.

2. Big Roof Solar Program (the Program): Discussed the various drafts of the letter to the **Mayor** recommending that the CEC investigate the Program with a view towards making a recommendation to the City to endorse and/or partner with the Program. (See CEC Minutes of February 28, 2019 for Motion.) A draft of the letter has been reviewed by **Gregg Cademartori** although without the list of businesses that have been contacted by TownGreen2025 and that have expressed an interest. **Mr. Cademartori** wrote to Chairman **Wheeler** on 4/22/19 to “go ahead and forward your request to the Administration for consideration”, and noted that City concerns will include competition with local solar installers, demands on City staff, and compliance with procurement requirements. **Ms. Wheeler** has contacted MAPC for their advice on how procurement rules for energy services would apply to collaboration with Resonant Energy on the Program.

Also discussed was the possible use of the Gloucester Green website, Gloucester Green Facebook page and Innovate Gloucester Facebook page which have been established for the promotion of the City of

Gloucester endeavors and related news. Another possibility might be promotion through the Cape Ann Chamber of Commerce as an added program to their “Cape Ann Saves Energy “CASE” for businesses (<https://capeannchamber.com/cape-ann-chamber-launches-energy-saving-program-for-local-small-businesses/>). **Ms. Brayton** noted that the process of defining what, if any, role the City would play in the Big Roof Solar program is still ongoing, and she expressed concern about protecting the City from responsibility/liability if problems arise in a program delivered through a non-City organization like Resonant Energy. **Mr. McGeary** pointed out that we want to encourage people to reduce their carbon footprint as a community effort by making them aware of available programs in general, whether or not it is an official city program.

3. Cape Ann Carbon Footprint Baseline Project: At the February 28, 2019 CEC meeting, it was agreed to participate in a joint meeting with MAPC and interested Cape Ann communities to take a look at the Carbon Footprint Proposal. On March 26 Sam Cleaves, MAPC Principal Planner, wrote that MAPC Data Services needs more time to develop the modeling for this type of project and will update us in June to see where they stand on being able to move forward. He also pointed out that there will be another round of MAPC technical assistance funding starting with the new fiscal year on July 1, which might be a better fit timing-wise as a way to help fund this.

4. Community Solar: St. John’s Episcopal Church is awaiting final approval from National Grid. The project consists of 60 solar panels on the roofs of its parish hall and rectory. Projected savings are \$100,000 over 25 years plus incentives. This project was developed with the guidance of TownGreen2025 and Boston-based clean energy advisory group Resonant Energy. Although originally anticipated to be developed as a community solar project which allows any single customer to transfer electricity generation credits to other customers for full retail credit, due to the size of this solar project sufficient shares for a community solar arrangement were not sold. The Church is paying for the \$60-70,000 project cost. TownGreen2025 will continue to investigate other suitable sites for community solar projects.

5. Earth Day: Although on April 22, **Ms. Brayton** mentioned that the Great Gloucester Cleanup is scheduled for April 27, 2019 with six specific areas of the City identified for group efforts. This event has been organized by the Clean City Commission with additional support from Ocean Alliance, Cape Ann SUP, One Ocean One Love Shop and One Hour at a Time Gang, and all the volunteers. **Ms. Brayton** and **Ms. Darby** intend to participate.

6. Report to the Mayor on activities and progress: **Ms. Wheeler** and **Ms. Brayton** are working on a Report for annual year 2018. **Ms. Stout-Saunders** stated that the last Report to the Mayor that is on the CEC website is the summary report for years 2012-2014. **Ms. Wheeler** believes a more recent report was issued that may have been published under the Department of Community Development’s website. The CEC website does include strategy and goals for Fiscal Year 2017. Concerning the Strategic Plan for fiscal 2019, it was agreed that **Ms. Stout-Saunders** would forward to **Ms. Brayton** for posting on the Clean Energy Commission’s website. The items in the Strategic Plan agreed to in the CEC August 9, 2018 meeting had been generally agreed upon, but **Ms. Brayton** said that she had not received a copy of a final document in its approved (with date of vote) form (e.g. with formatting, introductory statement, establishing ordinance, etc. included and without naming any CEC member assignments). It was agreed that a separate Strategic Plan would be sent to the CEC members with the most recent assignments noted. **Ms. Brayton** pointed out that naming assignments on the published Strategic Plan was not appropriate. **Ms. Brayton** further pointed out that the CEC website <http://gloucester-ma.gov/index.aspx?NID=130> , GloucesterGreen.org, and Gloucester Green Facebook page require an

update and that there are other sites such as, Innovate Gloucester and the Department of Community Development's Clean Energy Planning page that are highly relevant to the CEC also. **Ms. Brayton** has access to the CEC website. However, the other sites are maintained by City staff. Per Strategic Plan assignments she was to work with **Mr. Price** on promoting the CEC through social media, but that it is unclear now as to whose responsibility this will be until **Mr. Price's** replacement is found. **Ms. Brayton** stressed the need for letting the public know about the City of Gloucester and the Clean Energy Commission's many accomplishments in clean and renewable energy. The updated annual report will serve as a good basis.

7. Scope of CEC Ordinance: **Ms. Stout-Saunders** requested that the CEC members review the Gloucester Code of Ordinances, Div. 13, Sec. 2-242-2-544 since in several past CEC meetings questions have arisen as to whether certain opportunities that the CEC contemplated pursuing are within our Charter/Ordinance. It was concluded by all members that the Ordinance is sufficiently broadly written to cover both municipal and community (residential and commercial) opportunities; projects related to climate change mitigation, carbon sequestration and resiliency; and relationships or collaborations with community groups that have interests that are compatible with the City's priorities on a situation by situation basis. **Ms. Stout-Saunders noted** that CEC had received a letter from the **Mayor** dated 4/17/19 thanking volunteers on City Boards and Commissions for their time and energy in service to the City and announcing an upcoming meeting to explore how our work comes together. The **Mayor** invited input on agenda items for this meeting. **Ms. Brayton** expressed her intention of writing about the benefits derived from earlier events sponsored by the Plan 2001 Implementation Review Committee some years ago. These events served to thank volunteers, to inform them of City happenings, to allow for net-working opportunities and the sharing of ideas, etc.

Ms. Brayton gave some history and background re: the CEC's establishing ordinance. She explained that the intention was to acknowledge the commission's unique relationship to the City of Gloucester as a governmental entity and to give priority to municipal needs while also allowing some flexibility for pursuing other selected activities with a broader scope. She also recounted the careful thought that went into the decision by CEC's predecessors (Gloucester renewable energy task force, etc.) to recommend becoming a City Commission by ordinance and she delineated some of the differences between being a governmental entity and being a non-profit or an informal group of activists.

Public Comment: **Mr. Mikus** mentioned a recent webinar sponsored by the League of Women Voters "Driving Down Emissions: The Transportation and Climate Initiative" that he thought might be of interest. **Mr. Mikus** also mentioned that Green Communities holds regional meetings that **Mr. Price** had been attending. **Ms. Stout-Saunders** will contact Neal Duffy, Gloucester's regional Green Communities Coordinator, to obtain the meeting schedule.

Next Meeting: May 23, 2019 at 7pm.

Meeting adjourned at 9 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Stout-Saunders