

MINUTES OF THE CLEAN ENERGY COMMISSION MEETING (“CEC”)

January 23, 2020

CITY HALL, 9 DALE AVENUE, 3rd FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM

(Approved at meeting of 6/23/21)

Members Present: Linda Brayton, Debra Darby, Linda Stout-Saunders, Candace Wheeler, Sam Ziergiebel.

Guest: Suzanne Altenburger, Phil Bolger & Friends, Inc.

Staff: Gregg Cademartori is out ill. See his report below for Community Development’s report.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: Minutes of the November 20, 2019 not available.

Ms. Wheeler provided an update of the Cape Ann Climate Crisis Action meetings. Specifically, the Renewable Energy Committee has developed a plan to organize a multi-community electricity aggregation program for interested Cape Ann communities (Gloucester, Rockport, Essex, and Manchester) plus Beverly and Salem and perhaps more. A larger block of electricity consumers could get both a lower electric rate and a better mix of renewable (versus fossil fuel) sources for the electricity, than a single community. Gloucester and Salem both have existing aggregation contracts which could either run out or be amended for a multi-community program. Cities not yet with a contract would need to go through the approval process before participation. A meeting will be held on January 28, 2020 (location to be decided) at 12 noon to 2pm. Representatives of Cape Ann communities, Beverly and Salem, MAPC, **Gregg Cademartori** are expected to attend. Good Energy and Green Energy Consumer Energy Alliances will be presenters.

Ms. Darby: Noted that the EDIC Agenda for meeting next week’s meeting included energy efficiency at the business parks. She may attend this meeting.

Ms. Darby: Mentioned that the Mass CEC is accepting applications for the Clean Energy Activity Day Program. The program funds a one-day specialized activity date for elementary and middle school students. She will follow up with the O’Malley Middle School and Jonathan Pope and forward the information to TownGreen.

Ms. Wheeler will circulate a recent update of the state of the battery industry. **Mr. Ziergiebel** also has a video concerning the Town of Sterling that he will try to present to CEC members.

Ms. Altenburger provided her thoughts on gas storage, hydro, methane and various technology options.

Ms. Darby discussed potentials of anaerobic digestion for the city.

Mr. Ziergiebel mentioned the Resonant Energy/Town Green Big Roof Program and that there has not been much traction under the program for which Cazeault Solar and Home Energy Advisors has been chosen as the contractor.

Staff and Member Updates and Discussions

1. Community Development Update: Report from Mr. Cademartori:

“We met the deadline for the submission of our annual report to the **Green Communities** program. In the analysis of our fuel use, we have seen some individual increases, but this is mainly attributed to the

fact that as we have mapped our systems and put controls in place, we also started to replace a lot of failed equipment. We are awaiting feedback from Green Communities on the draft report and I will forward the Final Report when complete.

'The **energy efficiency projects** currently funded are nearly complete. The two projects this round included lighting upgrades at GHS and completion of the Energy Management System networking at GHS. The lighting project is complete and has been well received. The EMS equipment is ordered and will hopefully be installed shortly. This is important because we cannot apply for the next round of funding unless all funds are expended, and the work is commissioned. So we are pushing our contractors to meet this deadline. The facility that would be the target of the next round will likely be the O'Malley Middle School. We are working on a scope with Public Works to prepare for the next round.

'The **Aggregation Program** transition to the NGrid winter rate came and went without much concern/inquiry from the public. I have not had any report from Good Energy with new concerns or complaints. I think the delta between the negotiated rate and NGrid winter rate is being appreciated. I look forward to the meeting on regional aggregation. I think things are becoming more and more competitive, which can provide an even greater advantage to the City. I have recently received an alternative supply offer with a more competitive 3-year rate than our aggregation rate. I think the suppliers are feeling the impact of aggregation, which could produce an even better green portfolio and rate with a regional approach.

'Finally, we have completed the first round of interviews from a relatively small pool of candidates. We will be regrouping next week to review and decide on the next round.'

2. **Future Act** (proposed state legislation for gas utilities to transition to renewable energy and manage gas leaks). The bill has been circulated for review. **Mr. Ziergiebel** thought it did not seem to dive into many specifics. **Ms. Wheeler** mentioned the focus on the Merrimack Valley gas leak event; giving municipalities more participation in DPU decisions; compliance with Global Warming Solutions Act; and incentives to switch to renewable energy supply. **Ms. Stout-Saunders** reminded members of a presentation made by 350.org (Marcia Hart and Ellen Lehman) in 2017 and that we may want to obtain their opinion of this Act before the Commission makes any recommendation to the city. **Ms. Wheeler** will contact Ed Woll, the individual who has been advocating for "The Future Act" legislation which the CEC reviewed in November 2019, to invite him to our next to make a presentation to the Commission.

3. **Electricity Aggregation:** See Community Development Report above.

4. **Update on SolSmart Program Silver Certification and Solar Zoning Ordinance:** tabled until **Mr. Cademartori** is available.

5. **State funds for Sustainability Coordinator positions in local governments:** This is a potential bond bill that is probably a while away. Several months ago Ms. Brayton had circulated some information concerning this.

6. **CEC Vacancy:** **Ms. Wheeler** was contacted by an interested party who she referred to the Mayor's office. **Ms. Stout-Saunders** has a lead that she will contact to determine a level of interest.

7. Update Report to Mayor and City Council: Ms. Brayton and Ms. Wheeler are working on the summary (which will cover approximately five years). How we collaborate with non-profits is still an outstanding question. Ms. Brayton suggests that finalizing the bullet points by the next meeting is an achievable goal.

Other:

Ms. Darby: Asked if the Commission could offer support to the city concerning outreach to the community relative to clean energy?

Ms. Stout-Saunders suggests that we go back over our Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2020 through 2022. Members agreed to put this on the Agenda for next month's meeting to review the list of the previous draft of assignments to CEC members of specific goals. See June 2019 Minutes.

Guest Suzanne Altenburger:

(1) Discussed Audi's g-tron cars which run on compressed natural gas (CNG) as well as gasoline; running on natural gas emits less carbon dioxide per mile. The g-tron is also capable of running on the "e-gas" fuel Audi manufactures in-house. It's a synthetic natural gas produced in England and Germany since 2013. Using renewable wind energy, Audi splits water into oxygen, which is released back in the air, and hydrogen, which is retained. The hydrogen reacts with CO₂ extracted from the atmosphere to form methane, which is then routed into the European gas grid. For more detailed information see:

https://www.greencarreports.com/news/1112301_audi-a5-sportback-g-tron-first-drive-of-natural-gas-luxury-sport-sedan

(2) Commented that as America's oldest seaport we have a role to play and that innovations, such as hull design, catch-methods and water efficient vessels, have been frozen for decades. Ms. Altenburger references Federal register, Vol.59, No. 40 under CFR 651 and especially pages 9886-7 in her Report-25 Years of Needless Damage to a lot of New England's Fishing Industry and Ecology. This report has been distributed to the Mayor, Senator Tarr, and the Fisheries Commission among others. A copy of this Report can be obtained by contacting Ms. Altenburger at philbolger@comcast.net.

Next Meeting: The next meeting of the commission was set for Thursday, February 27, 2020.

Adjournment: The Commission unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Stout-Saunders