

MINUTES OF CLEAN ENERGY COMMISSION
February 10, 2022, 5:00 PM
Approved at the meeting of October 12, 2022

This meeting was conducted remotely through ZOOM. All votes were conducted by roll call.

A full recording of this meeting is available at: <http://www.gloucester-ma.gov/1195/February-2022-Past-Meetings>

Members Present: Linda Brayton, Debra Darby, John Moskal, Linda Stout-Saunders, Candace Wheeler

Absent: Sam Ziergiebel

Staff: Gregg Cademartori, Gemma Wilkens, of Community Development; Intern, Cammi Cooper

Guests: Van Du, Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)

Public: no one spoke

Meeting Minutes: September, October, and November 2021 and January 2022 remain outstanding

Member Reports:

Ms. Wheeler and Ms. Brayton attended two meetings: the Salem Alliance for the Environment (SAFE) Zoom meeting on February 3, describing the offshore wind project that is underway with collaboration by the city of Salem, the Mass CEC, and the private developer Avangrid Renewables. On February 9 they listened to a presentation to the North Shore Technology Council by Bruce Carlisle, Managing Director of Offshore Wind for the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC) who discussed the status of offshore wind, its opportunities, and challenges for the states of Maine, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Mass CEC is the coordinator/facilitator for potential projects that require deep water ports.

The Salem project is known as “commonwealth wind”. Salem will become the second marshalling port for the workforce and construction of the turbines, staging the assembly and the home port for the boats bringing construction elements out to the turbine development sites. The schedule for port construction is between 2022 and 2025 and staging will begin in 2025 to 2030. The Question is if Gloucester can play a support role for any of these potential projects and identify the economic opportunities and employment opportunities.

Mr. Moskal commented that none of these projects are anywhere near our area being all south of Martha’s Vineyard and Nantucket in federal lease areas; that these projects have not received full regulatory approval such as Clean Air Act permits and that any projects are years out; and that the Gloucester fishing industry opposes these projects. He also pointed out that a large part of the port infrastructure exists in New Bedford, much closer to actual construction.

Ms. Saunders attended a Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) presentation concerning the new Stretch Code and that this is an item we should keep on our radar screen. Mr. Cademartori will circulate the link to CEC members to view this presentation. The DOER is releasing a Straw Proposal containing proposed updates to the existing Stretch Code and a framework for a new Opt-In Specialized Stretch Code for stakeholder review and comment. DOER will hold a virtual briefing on the Straw Proposal on Tuesday, February 8th, 2022. Community Development will look at it.

Staff and Member Topics

1. Climate Action and Resilience Plan (CARP): Van Du provided an update. The second workshop to develop goals was held on February 2, 2022. A recording of the workshop is available at the Community Development Clean Energy Planning site. A summary of the goals will be available at the next workshop to develop strategies to be held on February 24, 2022. Prior to the workshop a written list will be provided of the recommended goals under seven focus areas: Buildings, Energy, Infrastructure, Natural Resources, Public Health and Safety, Mobility, and Solid Waste.

2. Transition to Electric School Buses: Ms. Stout-Saunders discussed the decision and procurement process, timeframe, and next steps for transitioning to electric school buses. The current school bus lease expires the summer of 2023. Mr. Cademartori will set up a meeting with Gary Frisch, School Committee Chief Financial Officer, to develop additional information, opportunities, and expectations.

Still to be researched are procurement options, finance programs, infrastructure requirements, charging/interconnection, and resiliency opportunities such as microgrids and solar.

3. Large Propane Storage Tanks: Councilor Jason Grow made an inquiry to Ms. Wheeler concerning large underground and aboveground tanks for propane used for residential and commercial property. Councilor Grow was speculating if we should have any role in the regulation of these. Apparently, they are inspected by the Fire Department.

Mr. Moskal has recused himself from the meeting concerning the discussion of the following TownGreen Projects.

4. TownGreen projects with the EPA and the Harvard Graduate School of Design: Per Mr. Cademartori, nothing new to report. Perhaps end of March/April there will be an update. Ms. Brayton pointed out that their Newsletter has a lot of information.

Next Meeting: March 10, 2022

Meeting Adjourned: 6:05pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Stout-Saunders