

Gloucester Clean Energy Commission Meeting Minutes: December 20, 2011

Present: Tom Balf, Linda Brayton, Jill Buchanan, Candace Wheeler, John Rockwell

Minutes: By vote of the CEC, minutes of Oct. 25, 2011 were accepted with **Tom's edits**, and minutes of Nov. 22, 2011 were accepted with correction of **spelling of Suzanne Egan's name**. From now on, **John Rockwell will give** a set of corrected minutes to Gregg Cademartori for the City website, and file a set with City Clerk Linda Lowe per the public records laws. When John R. receives the agenda for the next meeting, he will submit a room request (unless we find that we can reserve for several months ahead).

Note: (**AI) means the preceding sentence is an Action Item.

Tracking Energy Consumption of Municipal Buildings: Gregg C. showed John R. the B2Q reports on **BTU's** consumed per square foot of building space. Tom noted that John Moskal and Susan St. Pierre did the gas and oil consumption analysis, and that Jim Hafey has the school energy consumption data. Dave Anderson may also have electric usage data. A baseline measurement of City energy use was done for our Green Communities application, and we need to be able to document 20% savings from that baseline amount over 5 year period. Jill said we should have energy consumption data before and after building retrofits. One way to track energy use is a computer application that dumps electricity consumption data from national Grid accounts into tracking system. CEC needs to assure that a tracking process is in place, and that someone is responsible for it. **(**AI)**

Tom said he spoke with Cape Ann resident Carl Gustin, whose company, Grounded Power Inc., was bought by Tendril Co. , and has gone from making energy-tracking hardware to making a smart-grid application system. Tom will look into a presentation or conference call about how this technology might be used toward energy efficiency in Gloucester. **(**AI)** Linda B. will send CEC members information about a webinar on the Tendril technology. **(**AI)**

Building Retrofits (Green Communities Funds): Tom and John R. both reported continuing problems with contacting Facilities Manager Jim Hafey about completing the building retrofit projects at **O'Maley/Rink**, proceeding on converting street lights to more efficient bulbs, and determining best possibilities for building upgrades via the regional ESCO. CEC needs **Hafey's** feedback to include in quarterly reports to the Mayor. CEC agreed that Tom and John R. will both e-mail Hafey, and Tom will follow up with Mike Hale, DPW Director. **(**AI)**

John R. said that the roof insulation at the Talbot Rink was upgraded to R-13, which is not a high level of insulation. Tom had heard that no insulation was

planned for the rink, so a small improvement is good news.

Thermal Imaging/Residential Retrofit Program: John R. reported that he had discussed this program with Sue Patroia (Hamilton-Wenham Energy Coordinator), and Paul Marquis (Salem Energy Coordinator), but Green Communities Regional Coordinator JoAnne Bisetta said State had no more funding for other communities to do the program at this time. ARRA stimulus funds will dry up in March 2012, so unless other funding can be found for imaging/retrofit (**AI), CEC cannot move forward on this.

Deep Energy Retrofit Program: John R. reported on a local example of this program, which provided over \$30K, matched by homeowner, for insulation, weatherization, and highly efficient HVAC equipment and controls, to achieve a very low net energy use for the home. National Grid provides the incentives, funding 75% of the energy upgrades to a maximum of \$34K. John R. suggested idea of piggy-backing deep energy retrofits on the housing rehab. loans that are made through the CDBG grants managed by Community Development Dept. (**AI) John has 8 applicants in his file for rehab. loans, **but can't process them all** at once. National Grid funding deep energy retrofits is expected to end at close of 2012, but Action may have money from other sources that could achieve same results. (People on fuel assistance usually also eligible for HUD loans for rehab.) Other approaches to retrofitting homes include installation by volunteers through HEET program (Belmont did this), and creating a municipal revolving fund for weatherization loans (Salem did this). HEET program offers training of volunteers, and students at Brown and Yale have done energy-saving retrofits under this program. John R. will send all CEC members a link to HEET program (or try heetma.com), and will look for new grant sources. (**AI)

Linda B. asked if some of the savings from energy-conservation in municipal buildings could go to create a revolving fund for energy retrofits. However, some of those savings go to amortize the capital improvements, and some are already earmarked for other municipal needs, so another funding mechanism is needed.

ESCO Program: Through the MAPC regional ESCO procurement, the AmerESCO Co. was selected from three finalist vendors. All finalists were asked **to audit a sample school, and judges compared each firm's approach.** (Thanks to Linda Saunders for all the work she did as a member of the MAPC review panel for the ESCO selection). Now that a vendor has been chosen, Gloucester should decide ASAP whether to proceed with an ESCO project, and choose the building(s) to work on. (**AI)

Outreach/Website: Jill reported that the website is up and running. (Thank you Jill for accomplishing this goal!) Tom, Linda and John R. have all looked at it, and provided their suggestions and questions. There should be some clearer **indication on the homepage of the site's** purpose/mission and its owner, plus a link to the City website. (**AI) Linda B. noted there may be some Open Meeting Law issues raised if CEC members have a dialogue through the website. We

have to think about whether CEC comments will be part of the site content, or **whether it is more an information clearinghouse, like Weston's site, announcing events and funding opportunities, and news updates.** Tom said he would talk with Suzanne Egan to see what constraints are required by law. (**AI)

Jill asked all CEC members to think about who we want to have as blog subscribers. (**AI). Some suggestions were: homeowners, renters, businesses, municipal and Action employees/volunteers, energy activists both local and from other communities. Blog subscribers can comment on items posted by blog administrator, but administrator must approve comments before they become available to other readers. CEC will try to find out if there are other Mass. towns with energy blogs. (**AI).

Some possible topics for blog: Get to know the CEC. Information re the Fuel Assistance Program, rehab loan program, Energy Retrofit programs. Information about energy events/activities on North Shore. CEC members agreed the emphasis should be local.

Gloucester Engineering Turbines: The City Council voted to approve the power purchase and escrow agreements and authorize the Mayor to sign it. No press coverage yet as of Dec. 20. The City could make over \$400K through the credit for the energy it uses, and the sale of any surplus energy produced above the baseline amount that the City has committed to purchase. City will also get \$40,000/yr. in property taxes. The City is also protected via the escrow agreement, which will reimburse the City if the market cost of power drops below the price the City is paying to the turbine company.

The Gloucester Engineering project makes a City-owned turbine project quite unlikely. City would have to find another community to consume power produced by City owned turbines.

O'Maley School Turbine is up and running. Amy Donnelly and Dave Brown should have gotten more credit for making this happen, as news coverage gave the impression that the Gloucester Education Foundation was the prime mover of the project.

The CEC voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m. The next meeting is Tuesday, Jan. 24, 2012.

Respectfully Submitted,

Candace Wheeler