

Gloucester Clean Energy Commission Meeting Minutes April 3, 2012

Present: Candace Wheeler, Tom Balf, Jill Buchanan, Sam Cleaves, Linda Brayton; John Rockwell attended remotely by phone.

Minutes: The February meeting minutes had not yet been circulated, so could not be approved at the meeting.

ESCO Update: John Rockwell updated us on the discussions around working with Ameresco. He held an early March meeting with Jim Hafey, Mike Hale, Suzanne Egan, Jeff Towne and Gregg Cademartori. Concerns were raised about potential pitfalls of the project and so the group decided to meet again for further discussion. John Rockwell had scheduled a second meeting but no one showed. He rescheduled another meeting for April 9 at 1:30 p.m.

The commission expressed concern about the lack of momentum on this project and the fact that it may be unclear as to who is the final decision maker on moving forward.

The commission agreed to invite a manager from a community that has effectively fleshed out concerns and can provide concrete advice as to potential areas of concern and contract negotiation. Towns that we know are proceeding with ESCOs include Topsfield and Melrose. John R. will research whether additional communities are moving forward on ESCOs, and what lessons can be learned from cities that had difficulties, such as Quincy.

Sam will invite Helen Aki, a staff person at MAPC, to address any concerns. Sam may also contact Topsfield town administrator Virginia Wilder, to discuss how this community managed to make the decision to move ahead.

It was also suggested we invite or at least speak to the lawyer who structured the innovative contract for the Gloucester Engineering project. John will follow up with Gregg C. to find out who that person is, with the idea that this person could be helpful in structuring the Ameresco deal.

Tom Balf will attend the upcoming meeting to inquire about what else the commission can do to help move the process along.

Green Communities: No progress has been made on spending down the Green Communities money. John R. has been in touch with the Green Communities regional coordinator to fill out the quarterly report, but doing so is proving to be difficult since most of the money has not been spent. In speaking with the regional coordinator, John R. determined that it is possible to reallocate how the grant money is spent. However, to do so, we would need to fill out the application form again and explain the new priorities.

Along these lines, Jim Duggan has recently requested, on behalf of Bill Sanborn, that John R. purchase a thermal imaging camera with CEC money. This raised concern about the lack of process being followed to spend and/or reallocate these funds. If funds are to be used differently, communication should first occur with the CEC explaining why this is a higher priority. To rectify the situation, Tom will send a memo to John R. for Jim Duggan with cc's to Mike Hale and Bill Sanborn explaining the necessary process for spending the Green Communities

money. We need to be clear on how money is being reallocated and why it is a higher priority. Tom will attach a copy of the original grant award and ask them to revisit the original Green Communities agreement and respond.

Street Lights: There are two separate items relating to streetlights. First, the acquisition of the lights: To acquire them, we need to draw up a transfer agreement. This could take some time, and there is concern that the offer could get lost over time (due to staff change, etc, at NGrid) if we don't make some move on this. It was suggested we begin this process now.

Second, the energy upgrade for streetlights: this could be managed by the ESCO or possibly by Green Communities money.

CEC strategic planning: There was a general sense that the CEC's lack of involvement/inclusion in the city's energy-related facilities management decisions needs to be improved. To address this we decided to invite colleagues in communities who have been through this developmental stage as a commission/committee and found an effective way through it. Jill will contact Salem's Energy Manager Paul Marquis to invite him and hopefully a long-standing member of their energy committee to speak at our next meeting. Sam will draft an outline of where we are as a commission and where we are struggling. John R. and Sam will set up a conference call with Carey Duques from Medford to discuss the issue.

Blog: It was agreed that because too many of the blogs might require full review by the commission that we would disassociate the blog from the commission. Jill will continue to host the blog, encouraging local participation and reporting on local energy issues, including those of the CEC.

Presentation Report: Gregg C. and Jim Duggan recently presented to the new Mass Municipal Energy Group (MMEG) about the innovative agreement made in establishing the Gloucester Engineering turbine, highlighting the win-win situation with clean energy and savings.

West Parish Elementary School Construction: A city committee has been formed to manage plans for construction of a new West Parish Elementary School. It was agreed that we will attempt to connect with committee members/leadership to discuss options for creating a Green building. Specifically, we will see if we can get Sarah Hammond Creighton, who chaired the construction project at Manchester High School to create a green school building, to present to this committee about how it is done. Jill will find out who is on the committee and Tom will contact Sarah Hammond Creighton to see if she's willing to present. John R. will also be a great asset to help evaluate options, if that committee is open to the discussion.

CEC Leadership: Because of significantly increased work obligations, Tom has requested to step down as committee chair.

There was a Motion to nominate Candace Wheeler to serve as the new chair of the commission. The commission voted unanimously in favor.

There was a Motion to nominate Tom Balf to serve as the Vice Chair of the commission. The commission voted unanimously in favor.

Next meeting: April 24 (additional option, in case our Salem colleagues cannot meet this day- April 25th)

ACTION ITEM SUMMARY:

AI: Tom to attend the meeting to help make a case for moving forward and vet what is holding up the process.

AI: John to provide benchmark information for us on what towns or cities are moving forward on ESCOs. What lessons are to be learned from problems in Quincy.

Investigate third parties who could vet pros and cons of the ESCO.

AI: Sam to contact town administrator Virginia Wilder in Topsfield to see how they came to decide to move ahead with the ESCO project there.

AI: John to ask Gregg C. who did legal review on the Gloucester engineering turbine.

AI: Tom will send a memo to John R. for Jim Duggan with cc's to Mike Hale and Bill Sanborn explaining the necessary process for spending the Green Communities money. We need to be clear on how money is being reallocated and why it is a higher priority. He will attach a copy of the original grant award and ask them to revisit the original Green Communities agreement and respond.

AI: Candace to get a copy of the final Green Communities contract.

AI: Jill to invite Salem Energy Manager Paul Marquis and another long-time commissioner to discuss how we can get past this stage development as a committee.

AI: John and Sam to try and set up a conference call with Carey Duques from Medford.

AI: Because the blog entries are bound to be controversial, jill will disassociate the blog from the commission.

AI: jill will ask Gregg for pdf of his recent powerpoint presentation to post on the blog

AI: : Jill will find out who is on the West Parish school construction committee and inquire as to whether there is anyone with expertise in clean energy. Tom will speak to Sarah Hammond Creighton about giving a presentation on how she managed the school project in Manchester.