

Clean Energy Commission Meeting Notes 5/22/14

(Approved at 7/10/14 meeting)

Members present: Candace Wheeler, Sam Cleaves, Linda Stout-Saunders, Linda Brayton **Staff member:** Matt Coogan **Guests:** Dan Hubbard, U. S. Coastguard, Tim Sanborn, Cazeault Solar and Home, Eric Magers, Manchester-Essex Regional High School

The meeting was called to order by Candace Wheeler at 7:30 p.m. The minutes for 4/16/14 were unanimously approved with amendments.

Invitation to public comment: None. (Eric Magers attended for the scheduled presentations.)

Presentation on the status of tidal energy generation projects in New England: Dan Hubbard, Chief of Maritime Energy and Marine Planning for the U. S. Coast Guard gave a PowerPoint presentation that addressed the topic of New England's potential for marine hydrokinetics. He provided an overview of the various projects he himself oversees (both ocean and river based) stretching from near the Canadian border to New Jersey. He is the only person with this job title and his particular duties. His background is as a lawyer, but he stressed that his role is neither as a proponent nor a detractor. His focus in this presentation was on the process of establishing tidal projects, the Coast Guard's role in this endeavor, and some of the experiences with hydrokinetics to date.

He also spoke about the Coast Guard's overall mission. Now a part of Homeland Security, the Coast Guard's responsibilities and duties span several different fronts, and energy development is seen through the lens of 11 statutory obligations. The Coast Guard is the Lead Permitting Agency for such projects. Mr. Hubbard went over some of the regulations and legalities, the permitting process, and challenges to be overcome in researching and developing marine hydrokinetic projects. In particular, he referred to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Bureau of Ocean Management (BOEM) and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to clarify jurisdictional matters regarding renewable energy projects in offshore waters on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). The intent of the MOU is to develop a cohesive, streamlined process that would help accelerate the development of wind, solar, and hydrokinetic (i.e., wave, tidal, and ocean current) energy projects. Mr. Hubbard gave Candace a hard copy of this MOU, and also said that it could be readily found online.

Mr. Hubbard spoke in detail about two projects in particular which are in the experimental phase and which he believed might have the most relevance to Gloucester: 1) a tidal generation unit with a helical design, that is held in place on the ocean floor in Coobscook Bay in Maine and 2) a model suspended over the ocean floor which is being developed by Verdant Power, LLC and located near Roosevelt Island in New York City. For each, he talked about the process, pros and cons, the challenges faced, development and policy issues, etc. So far, the projects being developed are small scale, and they are diverse. There is an overall need for project developers. The main challenge to reaching commercial viability at present is around the transmission of the energy produced.

Mr. Hubbard graciously agreed to provide an electronic copy of his extremely comprehensive PowerPoint to CEC members via Candace for future reference. He will also send a list of relevant links and a list of projects, and he also suggested looking online for the Northeast Ocean Data Portal for marine hydrokinetics information and grant possibilities.

Informational briefing on residential/commercial solar program: Tim Sanborn from Cazeault Solar and Home spoke to the Commission about his company's experience with solar installations and roofing for homeowners and businesses. He has been giving presentations on this subject at the Building Center, Townsend Oil and other locations locally. In his briefing, he mentioned that Massachusetts is second only to California this year in solar production. He compared and contrasted his company's approach to that of other vendors including Mass CEC and the Solarize MA program, and explained the advantages he believed the City would have with direct control of terms, vendor selection, management, etc. He also spoke about solar aggregation, various financing methods and incentives, net-metering and SRECs (Solar Renewable Energy Credits.) Finally, he showed photos of solar projects in which common, costly mistakes were made.

Streetlight Acquisition: Matt reported that National Grid has formally responded to the Mayor's letter requesting the transfer of streetlight ownership to the City. The company has approved the transfer of the lights at \$0 each and \$1 for the transfer itself. There is a meeting scheduled for May 23rd for City officials from relevant departments (e.g. Legal Office, DPW, Finance, etc.) and also the hired consultant, Steve Wiesman of Peregrine Energy, in order to review the documents and determine next steps.

Update on Grants: The acceptance of the Electronic Vehicle Incentive Program (EVIP) grant from DOER/Green Communities Division to go toward a full electric or hybrid vehicle and a dual charging station has been referred by City Council to its Budget and Finance Committee where it will presumably be approved and sent back to City Council for a final vote. It is anticipated that that this project will have a 5 year payback. The \$250K Green Communities grant (to be used for O'Maley boilers, gas conversion, etc.) should be following the same acceptance process shortly.

On-going and new items:

- Matt reported that there is no word yet on the status of the CEC's letter to the mayor requesting that additional Inspectional Services staffing be considered for inclusion in this year's budget. He will check with Tom Daniels on the status of this request.
- Matt and Sam are exploring the Mass Department of Energy Resources' (DOER's) newly announced Community Clean Energy Resiliency Initiative, a \$40 million grant program designed to help municipalities maintain critical services using clean energy: e.g. waste water treatment, battery backup, etc. Municipalities and regional public entities, like MAPC, can apply for funding for project implementation or for technical assistance to help identify and design projects. Communities that receive technical assistance will have the opportunity later to apply for funding for project implementation.
- Candace said that Mass Consumer Energy Alliance (Mass Energy) representatives would like to speak to the Commission about outreach to Gloucester residents and about how our Commission's mission and role might fit with Mass Energy's. Although Mass energy is a non-profit, it is also a vendor in that it is selling RECs and fuel. Candace will invite representatives to the June CEC meeting to talk about what they are proposing.
- Candace also reported that members of the Unitarian Universalist church are planning how to be active in renewable energy initiatives, and they have held meetings recently on this subject. Guest, Eric Magers, attended a recent meeting, and he said that the UU church is considering putting on a community event at the church itself. The Commission discussed ways in which we might interface with these interested individuals and groups.
- Candace and Linda B. stated that work on the website, annual reports, as a means of education and outreach is progressing. They and Tom K. have met and are each working on specific tasks.

- Tom B. was not present to report on the Strategic Plan update or the Climate Change forum sponsored by Maritime Gloucester. Candace, Sam (discussion leaders) and Linda B. participated in the well-attended and well-received forum which is expected to be a catalyst for further community action.
- John M. was not present for a report on the gas-line extension research, and so this will be discussed at a later date.

Action Items:

- Matt - Check with Tom Daniel on status of Inspectional Services staffing increase request
- Matt and Sam – Investigate possibilities re: Community Clean Energy Resiliency Initiative
- Candace - Invite Mass energy representatives to June meeting
- Tom K., Candace and Linda B. – Continue work on website development , annual reports, and posting of previous agendas and minutes

Agenda items continued from 5/22/14:

- John M. – Obtain copies of or access to National Grid gas line maps and check for possible National Grid gas incentives
- Tom B. - Review 2011 Strategic Plan for updating purposes
- Matt - Check CO2 reduction potential for O'Maley project
- Matt – Explore potential solar initiatives: a) legalities, etc. of renting city roof space to other communities b) what would be involved in obtaining a solar feasibility study and c) possible funding to host an educational event on solar energy.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:02 p.m. The next meeting will be held Weds. , 6/18/14 at 7:30 p.m. Location is to be determined.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Brayton