

CEC Minutes, January 17, 2013 7:30 p.m.

Approved 5/16/13

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

Guest: Joe George from Cool Current Consulting, a solar energy expert.

September minutes were submitted by Candace. These need to be reviewed by commission members and voted on at next meeting. Also, the committee should review the November and October minutes for the next meeting.

Joe George explained that he is a solar project developer. He is interested in helping to educate Gloucester residents about clean energy options. Discussions could cover energy efficiency, integrated solar (pv and thermal) and small wind. His company would work with local banks to get them to provide low-interest loans. George says this investment is of value for anyone who will stay in their homes for more than 6-7 years, after which the loans have been completely repaid. Tom noted that there are also some existing programs that package financing for small solar installations, such as the Solarize program. The developer gets the investment tax credits and depreciation, while the homeowner gets the solar energy

A motion was made to have Joe give a full presentation next month; the committee voted unanimously in favor of this option. Candace will ask Joe to provide an outline of the presentation in advance.

Update on Wind Turbines: Candace explained that the mayor would be appearing at the Mass Municipal Association meeting on January 25 to speak to administrators **about** the turbines. Essentially, there have been no complaints about the turbines so far. Candace appeared on WGBH- Greater Boston show for January 10. On the show, most people expressed appreciation for the turbines.

Green Communities Update:

John R. says that he hears from the **B**uilding Inspector, Bill Sanborn, that it is difficult to enforce the stretch code, and that requirements are not being met. Contractors complain about it, don't know enough about how to implement it effectively, and bring in the HERS raters too late in the process. Bill Sanborn would like to meet with CEC soon to discuss the enforcement problems. Mike Hale and Jim Hafey (possibly Jim Duggan) will be invited by John R. to next meeting to discuss how we can improve the situation.

John R. has been working on tracking electricity savings for Green Community 20% reduction target. He has done significant additional work to obtain a baseline of municipal energy use, as well as use over the past year. His estimates so far show that the city has reduced energy consumption by 10%. However, it looks like we may need to amend our baseline information, as several city electric and gas

accounts were not included in the original baseline, and fuel consumption records on City vehicles was also not included. John R. is planning to contact the Viola Co., which manages the water/sewer plants, for the plant utility bill history. The CEC commended John R. for a big step forward in documenting energy savings to show Gloucester's progress toward Green Community target savings of 20%.

John would like to find an intern to support this work. Candace will make contact with internship office at North Shore Community College, and ask Susan St. Pierre whether she might know of someone. Tom mentioned that Peter Jenner and Sarah Hammond Creighton were contacts for possible Endicott College interns.

Review of ESCO discussion: Do we need one?

After attending an MAPC presentation on ESCO's and utility company efficiency incentive programs, Gregg Cademartori and Jeff Towne suggested that the utility incentive programs may be a better deal for many municipalities, as they pay a significant part of the improvement cost, so less municipal financing/bonding is required. Questions about ESCO have also been raised by Mike Hale and Jim Hafey because some energy efficiency work has already been done utilizing free money from National Grid, so those "low hanging fruit" quick-payback projects won't be available to roll into an ESCO. Taking on an ESCO will also allow us to use incentive programs, but not these particular National Grid incentives. The question is whether there will be enough fast payback projects (lighting, etc) to make the ESCO worthwhile, and offset the longer-payback projects like boiler replacement.

Mike Hale and Jim Hafey will be invited to attend our next meeting, where we can decide on whether to at least go forward with the investment grade audit, possibly utilizing Green Community money to pay for it. Once that energy audit is done, we'd have enough information to make an informed decision on whether to move ahead on the ESCO. We will also discuss the importance of improved communication between the commission and city staff so that we can find meaningful and more efficient collaborations towards energy improvements. Mike Hale had told John R. that regular reporting on the status of energy efficiency measures could be provided through Dave Anderson.

John R. will follow up with the Green Communities staff contact to find out if we could re-allocate our Green Communities funding to this use.

Streetlight acquisition/LED Lamp conversion: We discussed that the next step is for the city - Suzanne Egan- to communicate directly with National Grid in order to take ownership of our street lights. The City of Salem has paid a consultant (George Woodbury) to smooth out the process and make it happen. The question was raised as to whether we could skip this step and just get the paperwork for Suzanne Egan to review and sign off on. Tom had spoken with Mike Hale, who said he would have time before the spring construction season to look at the street light ownership issue.

John R. will contact George Woodbury to find out how he can help us move the process along, as well as associated costs.

Community aggregation- Candace has heard from Leo Sullivan of Global Corp., following up on his November presentation to the CEC, and has also heard from Peregrine Energy, who would like to present on community aggregation. We agreed to hold off on this until a future meeting, because it has a relatively small effect on energy cost savings for City residents, and we have several other items to resolve before taking on projects like this.

Tom Balf announced that Maritime Gloucester would be hosting a fundraiser event, and suggested that we create a flier about local and state-wide clean energy options. Jill agreed to make a flier about energy efficiency for the January 27 event.

Adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jill Buchanan