

Minutes of the meeting of the Gloucester Clean Energy Commission
Thursday, June 30, 2016.
(Approved at meeting of 10/27/16)

Attending:

Commissioners: Candace Wheeler, Linda Brayton, Tom Kiely, Paul McGeary, John Moskal, Robert Myers, Linda Stout-Saunders.

Staff: Matt Coogan.

Guests: Dick Prouty, Jerry Oppenheim, Theo MacGregor, Joe George, Tom Mikus (Rockport Green Community Task Force), Stefano Loretto (Good Energy LLP) and Larry Chretien (Mass Energy).

[Mr. Chretien and Mr. Loretto participated remotely by telephone.]

The meeting was called to order at 7:32 p.m. in the Pond Rd. Annex conference room by Ms. Wheeler, the chair.

Approval of the minutes

Approval of the minutes of March 24, April 28 and May 26 was continued pending submittal of the minutes.

Report on Microgrid conference held in Boston on June 29

The event was jointly sponsored by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC) and was attended by **Ms. Wheeler, Ms. Brayton, Ms. Stout-Saunders and Mr. Prouty**.

Microgrids are defined as small “islandable” electric heat and/or cooling systems that coordinate and distribute supplies to a network in a spatially defined area. **Ms. Wheeler** said most of the examples brought forth at the conference were so-called CHP (combined heat and power) steam loops. Typically, these are located at large institutions—college campuses, hospitals etc. **Mr. Prouty** queried whether a micro grid could be a way to provide heat/power for low income housing complexes. **Mr. Moskal** noted that there was a requirement for scale to make the system work effectively. **Mr. Myers** described his visit the Unitarian Universalist compound on Star Island of the New Hampshire coast, which has created a microgrid to power its facility. **Mr. Prouty** said Consolidated Edison in New York was establishing two microgrid “islands” in Brooklyn and on Staten Island. The idea, he said, is to create a grid-independent enclave in a defined geographical area. In our area, both Biogen in Cambridge and the Kendall Station are microgrids serving defined areas.

Mr. Prouty said the conference also discussed the financial instruments available to help create microgrids. Both the state Department of Energy Resources and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council have grants to assist in the development of microgrid projects, including feasibility studies.

Mr. Oppenheim noted that in implementing micro grids, we must recognize that National Grid would charge for stand-by capacity it reserves in the event the micro grid breaks down. This must be factored into financial feasibility analysis. **Mr. Prouty** said that

MAPC advised anyone pursuing micro grid development to talk with their utility early in the process.

Ms. Stout- Saunders noted that MAPC has looked into this and will be sending out notices to municipalities about what's available to support the construction of microgrids. Materials are available at the MAPC website. **Ms. Brayton** noted that the first step in this process is an assessment phase, and she gave forms and informational materials from the conference to Mr. Coogan. The next step in the process would be to apply for a feasibility study grant should this seem warranted.

Municipal power aggregation agreement

Discussion: Mr. Coogan outlined the basics of the agreement. The agreement has three tiers of participation.

Gloucester Basic: Under this plan no additional renewable or alternative sources of energy (beyond those that the utility already provides) would be included in a customer's mix of power sources.

Gloucester Local Green: Under this option an additional 5 percent of Class 1 Renewable Power Sources would be included in the power generated and bought by customers in this group.

Gloucester premium Green: At this level, 100 percent of all power provided to the customer would come from renewable or alternative sources,

By default, all current National Grid customers would automatically join at the "Gloucester Local Green" level of participation. Customers may opt to join at a different level or opt out entirely at the time of the plan implementation.

Much of the discussion centered on whether or not the five percent "additionality" outlined in the proposed agreement would increase the proportion of renewable sources of energy being delivered to customers in Gloucester. **Mr. Oppenheim and Ms. MacGregor** pointed out that customers of National Grid already receive approximately 20 percent of their power from renewable or alternative sources. Since the proposed agreement referred only to a five percent increase in Class 1 Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) power sources, they wondered if when the five percent additional Class 1 RPS was added to the current requirement of 11 percent there could be a net reduction in renewable power sources. **Mr. Chretien** replied that the five percent additional Class 1 RPS's would be in addition to all renewable sources of power that any utility is required to provide (Class 1, Class 2 renewables, Class 2 Waste Energy and Alternative Power Sources). In 2017, the different types of renewable or alternative energy sources must by law total approximately 21 percent of the energy provided by any utility in Mass. The additional five percent of Class 1 RPS's would be in addition to that minimum. **Ms. MacGregor** urged that the aggregation plan document be amended to describe this more clearly

A second discussion focused on how to reach out to persons who have already opted out of National Grid electricity supply, to purchase their electricity from a competitive supplier. Such persons are not part of the group that will be included in the Municipal Aggregation agreement. **Mr. Oppenheim and Ms. MacGregor** both raised the issue of how to conduct outreach to such people and to ensure that they are aware of the opportunity to join in the aggregation once their current contract with the alternative power provider is ended. **Mr. Loretto** said that the current regulations preclude direct outreach to persons who are not customers of National Grid, but he suggested that a broad-based public awareness campaign would help ensure that Gloucester residents knew of the program and that Good

Energy would work with people who wished to switch to ensure that they made the decision in a timely fashion and without incurring penalties. Good Energy and the Commission agreed that the outreach and publicity program associated with the municipal aggregation agreement should be refined to take this requirement into account.

ACTION ITEM: Matt Coogan will liaise with the Commission and Good Energy to formalize and refine the outreach program to ensure that Gloucester residents who are not currently National Grid customers will be made aware of and receive assistance to join the Municipal Aggregation Agreement.

Ms. MacGregor raised the issue of language in the proposed language in Attachment 3 of the Municipal Aggregation Plan which reads: “The Mayor or the Mayor’s designee(s) shall be specifically authorized to enter into an Electric Service Agreement (ESA) prior to the receipt of bids from Competitive Suppliers under parameters specified by the Mayor.” She said she thought the phrase “prior to receipt of bids” could be construed to mean that an agreement could be entered into without the bidding process having been completed. **Mr. Loretto** explained that the language meant that a person should be designated to enter the contract prior to the bids being received, so as to be able to act quickly once a deal is negotiated. **Ms. MacGregor** asked that the language be clarified to eliminate the ambiguity.

ACTION ITEM: Mr. Coogan and Mr. Loretto will edit the language on Page 4 of Attachment 3 of the Municipal Aggregation Plan to make the interpretation offered by Mr. Loretto plain.

VOTE OF THE COMMISSION: On a motion by Mr. McGeary, seconded by Mr. Moskal, the commission voted SEVEN IN FAVOR, NONE OPPOSED to recommend that the City Council adopt the City of Gloucester Municipal Electric Aggregation Plan and to petition the state Department of Energy Resources and the state Department of Public Utilities for permission to implement the plan.

ACTION ITEM: Mr. Coogan, Ms. Wheeler and Mr. McGeary will attend the meeting of the City Council Committee on Planning and Development on **Wednesday, July 6**, to present the commission recommendation to that Committee for their recommendation to the full City Council.

CEC Strategic Plan

A brief discussion was held on the strategic plan, which has been in process for many months since it was voted upon. It was decided to amend the draft plan to limit the time frame of the plan to one year, beginning July 1, 2017.

VOTE OF THE COMMISSION: On a motion by Mr. Kiely, seconded by Ms. Stout-Saunders, the Commission voted SEVEN IN FAVOR, NONE OPPOSED, to adopt the Strategic Plan as amended.

[An updated version of the plan is attached to these minutes.]

Update on gas leak remediation

Mr. Coogan said that Gloucester was not chosen by MAPC as a partner in this program.

MassSave Initiative

Mr. Coogan reported that he had found data on the level of MassSave program use in Gloucester, which could be used as a baseline for the proposed CEC effort to encourage Gloucester residents to take advantage of MassSave free energy audits and financial incentives for home energy efficiency improvements.

Next meeting

The Commission will next meet on **Thursday, Aug. 11**, at 7:30 p.m. in the 2d Floor Conference Room at the City Hall Annex, 3 Pond Road.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Paul McGeary

Attachment: CEC Strategy and Goals statement

CEC Strategy and goals for Fiscal Year 2017 Approved by the Commission 6/30/2016

CEC Strategy Statement for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2016

During 2011-2015, the CEC focused on tracking progress of the City's Green Community plan, including helping to identify municipal energy efficiency opportunities, providing support to City leaders, departments, and staff for municipal energy reduction projects, and helping to identify funding opportunities. Many of these activities are now fully integrated into the City Administration (led by Community Development and DPW). During the next year, the CEC will augment City efforts by focusing on the following:

- **Advise.** Continue to provide support to City leaders and departments on energy efficiency and clean energy topics, and engaging City Leaders in discussions on ordinances and plans that could progress clean energy goals over the next decade.
- **Catalyze.** Operate as a coordinating and support mechanism for private clean energy efforts in the City.
- **Lead.** Identify and explicate tools and programs that can help drive behavior change viz municipal energy usage (e.g., technologies to better understand energy consumption patterns, which can inform change efforts; adoption of measures to incent change; etc.
- **Inform.** Engage and inform the community – including city government, staff, committees and residents -- on public and private efforts to improve sustainability locally, including municipal achievements against Green Community Goals, climate change and coastal resilience, and opportunities for transitioning from less clean to more clean energy sources. Channels for outreach include the website, regular reports from the commission, articles and social media, and coordinating with/supporting other organizations hosting programs and events.

Within the context of this strategy, the CEC will prioritize the following issues during Fiscal Year 2017:

- Complete the purchase of City street lights, and transition them to energy efficient lighting
- Assist City in developing a solar ordinance
- Conduct public education on solar energy/solar challenge
- Reengineer the CEC web site to make it more informative for citizens and easier for to navigate
- Energy aggregation opportunities for residential and commercial energy users
- Behavior change, particularly using performance analytics and data, to influence the broader community engagement in energy efficiency, stimulate new ideas and innovation, and seek innovations that could be usefully scaled.
- City in-reach and public out-reach on clean energy opportunities

2016 COMMISSION MEMBERS

Candace Wheeler, Chair
Linda Brayton
Paul McGeary
Tom Kiely

Bob Myers
John Moskal
Linda Stout-Saunders

MANDATE: Clean Energy Commission

Sec. 2-515 The Commission shall pursue the following tasks:

- Propose and develop strategies to reduce energy costs of city-owned facilities and vehicles through energy conservation, efficiency and renewable energy measures. The strategies may include electricity, vehicle fuel, natural gas and oil conservation and may identify innovative cost-saving measures.
- Recommend citywide programs including participation in federal or statewide energy initiatives, such as the Green Communities Program, to promote and facilitate smart energy strategies for Gloucester citizens on both public and private real property.
- Work with appropriate city departments to track energy usage and costs associated with key assets and operations of the City.
- Identify climate adaptation and mitigation issues and strategies to safeguard the long-term economic and cultural vitality of the City.
- Follow emerging federal and state mandates, as well as initiatives and funding opportunities for energy conservation, renewable energy, or climate adaptation and mitigation strategies. Recommend strategies to comply with applicable mandatory or voluntary standards.
- Provide guidance, in the form of education or information, to the Mayor, City Council and key city departments and personnel, to support their decision-making on recommended strategies and clean energy opportunities.
- Serve as a communications and information resource on clean energy issues and city initiatives for the public through:
 - Meetings and sponsored events;
 - Maintenance of an active web site;
 - Regular communications to interested parties; and
 - Public/private partnerships.