

CLEAN ENERGY COMMISSION MEETING
March 24, 2016
(Approved at meeting of December 8, 2016)

Members present: Candace Wheeler, Linda Brayton, John Moskal, Bob Myers, Linda Stout-Saunders. **Staff:** Matt Coogan. **Guests:** None. **Public:** Joe George, Cool Current; Suzanne Altenburger

The meeting was called to order by Candace at 7:30pm at Pond Road City Hall Annex, 2nd floor conference room. The meeting minutes for October, November and December 2015 were unanimously approved.

Public Comment

Joe George: Solar Challenge is a good thing. Solar City did 11,000 installations. They know how to properly install. Candace: This is a TownGreen2025 initiative not CEC. We as a city are not going to take on Solarize Mass at this time.

Suzanne Altenburger: Separation of church and state is a concern; i.e., TownGreen2025 vs. CEC. (Linda B. pointed out that TownGreen2025 is not a religious organization. It has obtained a 501(c)3 tax classification as a non-profit organization.) Hydrogen: Wind power is not so cutting edge. We are in high wind area but hydrogen is good anywhere. Cars experimented with hydrogen since 1930's. Gloucester could be leader, consider Cape Ann-wide consortium for generating hydrogen as non-carbon fuel. Netherlands good example. We will monitor says Candace.

Joe George asked if Meister suggestions re City solar projects are moving. Matt said no, we have our own limit on using solar energy for municipal source because of City's wind turbine contract. City has no flexibility. Essentially we have only leasing of sites capability, if a 3rd party developer or Buyer Cooperative proposed a community solar project. (TownGreen2025 has considered setting up solar cooperative on non-City land.) Any type of solar project must start with committed customers (like harbor businesses, for example) in order to be financeable.

CEC member news and comments:

-John commented regarding meeting on storm resilience which he attended. Dept. of Homeland Security is mapping large electrical transformer stations which are important to storm resilience, though the Gloucester transfer station was not raised as a concern. Re microgrids as tool for storm resilience, Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) negotiated the microgrid standards, and N-Grid and Eversource have "bought in". BRA will produce models to use in new developments. This looks like real standard with reviews. Mass.CEC Galen Nelson is the contact person. Eversource was involved because they have downtown Boston constituency.

-Matt says that Map on Gloucester web page shows municipal facilities and storm surge projections for 2030-2070.

-John said best microgrid pilot projects are in New York State. Linda S. asked about similarity to Long Island? John said NY microgrids are more real grids with own power generation; other places are backup generation. MA standards are built on NY standards.

There will be a MEETING APR 14 on biogas (e.g., anaerobic digesters) with Valerie Nelson.

CEC Reappointments: State Ethics Certifications may need to be done. They run out biannually. We do not need to get sworn in if being reappointed; Linda S. completed certification and attended her reappointment March 14, 2016. Candace also reappointed through Feb. 2018.

Staff and Member Reports/Updates/Discussions:

1. **Climate Change:** Matt spoke about climate change issue. Climate change (massadapt.org). More top down planning is available. Guidelines on how to lobby and provide feedback were presented. We can advise Gloucester administration to participate.

2. **Vacancy: Candace** mentioned that we have a vacancy on the commission now that Sam has resigned. We can recommend replacement candidates to Gloucester administration. After discussion, it was decided that Candace would write a note to the mayor indicating CEC's support of both Paul McGeary and Tim Greiner as possible candidates

3. **Aggregation:**

- Letter recommending that Gloucester administration pursue aggregation was written and delivered and will be on next city council agenda. The recommendation will be in Mayor's report for April 12 meeting. Val Gilman is familiar with topic.
- Will people with solar homes who are doing net-metering be affected by aggregation?
- Linda B. wants John to be at P&D City Council subcommittee meeting, April 20 at 5:30 PM.
- Matt will ask Good Energy (Aggregation Consultants) to answer questions and have them at P&D. Good Energy will do leg work.
- Matt and Candace went to meeting with Jim Destino re aggregation for Gloucester. Jim okay with proceeding.
- MAPC did procurement of Good Energy as aggregation consultant for any participating communities who wish to work with Good Energy. Communities may choose another consultant if they prefer.
- We will attend meeting with runner up to Good Energy (Peregrine and Bay State) on April 5 in Peabody.
- Aggregation will not be impacted by City's wind turbines contract because Aggregation does not apply to municipal electricity usage. It applies to residential, commercial and institutional energy use.
- John asked:
 - Is a minimum number of city residents participating required for Aggregation after opt outs?
 - Will there be a problem if people attempt to game the system by doing frequent opt in and opt out?
 - Will it be a problem if there is a Microgrid around the harbor?
- Send Matt our questions and he will forward them to Patrick Roche at MAPC. Bob and Linda S. will meet to assemble a list of questions.
- Neighboring communities might come on board at different times and have different requirements. We should try to proceed with that as a future possibility, but not wait for regional aggregation to get started.

4. **Next Step Living** went out of business. They were venture capital funded. Their VC funding declined after sale of their solar installation sector to NRG. Bob says industry is in a shakeout stage and we should always consider multiple vendor choices. Linda S. asked if MassSave is vetting its affiliated contractors carefully enough.

5. **Solar leasing:** A recent letter to the Gloucester Daily Times discussed the practice of the filing of UCC (Uniform Commercial Code) statements upon installation of solar panels that are being leased. The concern stated was that the UCC statement becomes an encumbrance (lien) on one's property; and further, that some homeowners may not be aware of the existence of this filing until they attempt to sell their home. Linda S. explained that regardless of whether a lease or a loan was obtained specifically for the panels, that the contract would include a "granting clause" allowing a security interest in the panels and she noted that the homeowner does not own the panels until they are paid for (similar to a car lease/loan). This is a common practice. What typically occurs when a property is sold, the lease/loan payoff is included as part of the sale. The increase in UCC filings mentioned in the letter to the GDT is logically a result of the increase of solar panel installations in general and pointed out that most solar installations increase the value of a property. 80% of Gloucester's residential solar is the lease type. Bob noted that Vermont Power is financing Tesla storage batteries for residents with solar installations.

6. **Net metering:** Where is state legislation? Frozen.

7. **Street light installation:** Installation is starting in North Gloucester. Approx. 2800 lights are being replaced; can do about 100 lights per day, estimated completion is eight weeks; 2/3rds of the energy consumed prior to the installation will be saved. Gloucester selected 3000 Kelvin lights by LeoTech, rather than 4000 K. lights used by some communities. 3000 K. causes less distortion and glare in the night sky.

8. **Strategic Plan for CEC:** Wait for Tom's input (presently on vacation).

Ongoing and New Items: John says Block Island wind turbines will produce 30 MW, 7 times what Gloucester produces. Next meeting is April 28. Bob will not attend.

Action Items (Note: We will want to find substitutes where Sam is responsible)

- Redraft Strategic Plan – Kiely
- Other from October Mtg.:
- Net Metering Cap: follow legislation
- Gas Leak Follow-up with DPW - Coogan
- Research Social Media Outreach by other Municipalities – Myers
- -Continue to explore options for Solar Siting
- Zoning By-laws for ground-mounted solar projects – Cleaves, Coogan
- Develop City Inventory of owned/rented properties – Coogan's Intern
- Send note to mayor re: potential candidates for appointment - Candace

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday April 28, 2016, 7:30 p.m. in the Pond Rd. Annex Conference Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Myers