

Williamsburg Energy Committee Minutes for April 24, 2023

Members Present: Jim Piermarini (Chair), Neal Anderson, Dick Guzowski, Adin Maynard, Jonathan Gregory (Alternate)

Others Present: Doc Pruyne (Reporter with The Reminder)

Called to Order: 6:30 PM

New Member Welcome: The Committee welcomed Jonathan Gregory, who has been appointed as an alternate Energy Committee member. Gregory has been in town since 2019, and has previously served on Energy Committee in Concord, NH and worked in the PV industry.

Public Safety Complex Solar Updates: Piermarini briefly reviewed the effort to solarize the new Public Safety Complex building, and how the town opted to go with Power Options for aiding consideration of various options, design, and completion. He reported that design studies are underway, and that he will get cost estimates from Resource Innovations for associated construction costs. Guzowski reported that there are some concerns within the PSCB Committee around the solar canopy in the parking lot and the free standing ground-mounted solar, and that the idea of covering the south- and east-facing roofs with panels is under discussion although it is not yet clear if full PV roof coverage would alone meet the building's needs.

Newly Awarded DOER META Grant for Dunphy School: Piermarini announced that the Town was awarded DOER META grant of \$15K for retrocommissioning of the Dunphy School, and that he has offered the WEC's help going forward. He also reported that he and Kaplan both attended a meeting with DOER about exploring inclusion of the Hampshire Regional High School to Williamsburg's Energy Reduction plan, as Williamsburg is within the Hampshire Regional school district, and that B2Q (who will likely do the retrocommissioning work and a scoping study at the Dunphy School) was also in attendance. The scoping study will identify opportunities for which grant funds can be pursued (e.g. from Green Communities or Inflation Reduction Act funds). There was a discussion of the importance of the Town arranging for proper maintenance of newly energy equipment of all types, and of encouraging the Town to define and support a managerial role for the Town's energy systems. Maynard wondered about funding sources for a part time Energy Manager in Town. It was noted that B2Q provides some training along these lines as part of their work.

Scoping Studies for Meekins Library, Highway Garage: Piermarini reported that, in addition to the scoping studies for the Dunphy School, National-Grid-funded scoping studies of the Library and Town Garage will also be carried out (and most likely also by B2Q).

Electricity Aggregation Update: Piermarini reiterated that the Town's contract with Colonial Power expired in January and that contracts are in place through end of October 2023, but that Colonial is recommending that the town sign a longer term contract at a lower rate. Power Options is providing Town Administrator Caccamo with information on pricing for alternatives. Piermarini also reached out to Mass Power Choice and Good Energy, and suggested that nothing in their recommendations suggested anything unusual about Colonial's pricing in the current market. He also had a discussion about Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) with Haydenville resident and CCA originator Paul Fenn, and made Administrator Caccamo aware of the same. Fenn offered that he can provide what the other brokers offer plus complex consulting for engineering clean energy systems for homes and businesses and help with soliciting bids. Fenn also mentioned a mechanism to tie users in town together so residents with more generation and storage capacity can help to power others who are not in a position to do so, and be credited accordingly, and Piermarini recommended to Caccamo that such options be considered before making longer term commitments to other brokers. Piermarini will plan to reach out to Fenn, in coordination with Caccamo, about the Town engaging with Fenn in some form or another.

IRA and BIL Energy Incentives: Anderson suggested that the WEC play an active role in providing residents and businesses with information and resources on how to take advantage of clean energy incentives (tax credits, rebates) available through the Inflation Reduction Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill. There was a discussion of available resources and their dissemination via the WEC web page, the All Things Williamsburg group, and the Transfer Station. Piermarini mentioned that Power Options can provide communications around the IRA, and the question arose as to whether they give public presentations and if we could arrange for one in town.

Other Business and Updates: Maynard mentioned the sustainability benefits of the Mill River Greenway project, including encouragement of less driving through the connection of village centers. He wondered if there is a role for our committee in advocating for that project.

Minutes: Minutes from March 13 meeting approved (with one minor amendment) by roll call vote, with Anderson, Guzowski, Maynard, and Piermarini voting in favor and Gregory abstaining since he is just joining the committee and was not present at that meeting.

Adjourned: The meeting was adjourned by unanimous roll call vote.

Next Regular Meeting: Monday, May 22, 2023 at 6:30 PM
