

Williamsburg Energy Committee Minutes for March 30, 2021

Members Present: Neal Anderson, Charles Dudek, Dick Guzowski, Jim Piermarini (Chair)

Others Present: Thomas Croteau, Mark Rabinsky, Sam Maule

Meeting called to order at 5:03PM.

1. Presentations

The committee heard and discussed three presentations related to energy services and opportunities available to the town.

Mark Rabinsky (Regional Coordinator, Green Communities for MA DOER)

Williamsburg has been a Green Community since 2010-12. The town's most recent competitive grant was for LED street lights and lighting at town office. The town's overall energy had steadily been declining over time, but then increased perhaps as a result of the expansion of the Dunphy School: energy usage at the Dunphy School is slightly higher than average for school buildings. Rabinsky recommend that the committee arrange for access to Mass Energy Insight, which allows comparison of energy usage information for various towns, and showed available information for Williamsburg and energy reductions from installation of LED lighting. (Access can be granted via written request of the Select Board chair.)

Williamsburg can apply for grants of up to \$200K for a variety of projects, e.g. electric replacements for town-owned vehicles, which are competitive and rated by their energy saving potential. Grant applications are now accepted twice per year—fall and spring—although a town is eligible to receive only get one per year. The next application deadline is October 8 (see <https://www.mass.gov/doc/key-program-dates-calendar/download>), and the committee can stay informed about opportunities via an email listserv: <https://www.mass.gov/forms/subscribe-to-doer-email-lists>. An overview video of eligibility, the grant application process, and evaluation process for 2021 is available on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2VLASLGMTL8&list=PLm8jHk8NkHyp9XSLPDMR5hfZGUgfCyuyqy>. In connection with electric vehicle replacement, Dudek asked if there is currently a standard electric police cruiser. Rabinsky noted that this has become a common question, and answered that there is a 4WD Ford Police interceptor that looks similar to Ford Explorer hybrids. In connection with a discussion of solar installations on recapped landfill, Rabinsky remarked that Williamsburg may want to explore retrocommissioning opportunities.

Finally, Piermarini requested a recap about the town's obligations as a Green Community. Rabinsky summarized that they are (1) zoning for renewable energy generation and (2) expedited permitting for the same, (3) a plan to reduce energy usage by 20% in 5 years, (4) a fuel-efficient vehicle policy, and (5) adoption of Stretch Energy Building Code. Dudek noted that Williamsburg met (1) through creation of the solar overlay district.

Thomas Croteau (Senior Energy Efficiency Sales Representative for National Grid)

Croteau offered that he is the liaison for National Grid's energy efficiency programs and incentives across the board, and is the appropriate person for the town to contact for all such programs. He can help the town identify ways to increase energy efficiency and related incentives, and work directly with project expeditors and with Green Communities to offset the costs. Examples are air source heat pumps, EV stations on public properties, savings demand response for high usage buildings, and new pump stations. He can also introduce the town to project expeditors (e.g. Energy Source). Energy company helps customers save energy.

Croteau encouraged familiarity with opportunities and incentives available through MassSave (insulation, electricity, etc.), which is a marriage of utilities to provide one-stop shopping for rebates, solar and is paid for by an energy efficiency charge on National Grid bills. Some funding for solar is also available through the SMART. He commented that MassSave is probably the best resource at the residential level.

Piermarini asked about Croteau's role in grant application Green Community grant applications from the town. Rabinsky noted that Green Community grants require that the town has already applied for available incentives, as well as for energy audits so future energy savings can be measured. Croteau can provide pre-application letters confirming the same. He can also help with additional funds by 0% loan repaid through the electric bill. Rabinsky suggested that if we wanted to apply for installation of EV chargers on town property then we should consult with nearby communities who have done this before applying. He can provide contacts.

Sam Maule (Director, Small Business Programs for Energy Source)

Maule's focus is implementation of small business programs for National Grid. The Home Business Program is contracted by National Grid in Williamsburg for installing technology such as lighting, lighting controls, refrigeration, rooftop unit controls. They establish relationships with business owners, discuss their goals, provide analyses and estimates, and help to accommodate them as much as possible through existing incentives and programs. Eligible energy efficiency projects are covered at 100% for work done this calendar year and contracted by June.

Piermarini and Guzowski asked about the committee's role in helping small businesses in town take advantage of these opportunities to save energy. Maule noted that he has a list of 23 businesses in town, with only 5 having participated in his programs since 2017, so there is significant potential for town businesses to benefit

from audits and projects. He said that efficiency consultants will reach out, but the committee alert businesses about this outreach in advance. The committee discussed and agreed that this is a good idea. Piermarini will take the lead on preparing a letter to town businesses from the committee, and Dudek will explore distribution of information at the Special Town Meeting in April.

Alyssa Dupont (Sr. Program Manager, MA Small Business for National Grid) was also scheduled to present, but was unable to attend.

2. **Minutes:** The meeting minutes from March 12, 2021 were unanimously approved.
3. **Tabled Items:** Presentation by member Paul Fenn on aggregation, microgrids, and other opportunities.
4. **Membership Changes:** Dick Guzowski has been formally sworn in as an Energy Committee member.
5. **Next Meeting:** Tuesday, April 27 at 4:00PM.

Meeting adjourned at 6:24 PM.