

**City of Keene**  
**New Hampshire**

**ENERGY & CLIMATE COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, September 4, 2019**

**8:00 AM      2nd Floor Conference Rm, City Hall**

**Members Present:**

Dr. Ann Shedd, Chair  
Peter Hansel, Vice Chair  
Terry Clark, Councilor  
Chris Brehme  
Jake Pipp  
Ken Dooley  
Cary Gaunt  
Anna Schierioth

**Staff Present:**

Mari Brunner, Planner

**Members Not Present:**

Rod Bouchard  
Andrew Dey

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Dr. Shedd called meeting to order and roll call was conducted.

**2. Approval of August 7, 2019 Meeting Minutes**

Councilor Clark moved to accept the August 7 minutes, Vice Chair Hansel seconded and the motion was passed unanimously.

**3. Committee Rules of Procedure**

Ms. Brunner stated that the City Attorney had intended to speak to the ECC this morning about adopting new rules of procedure; however, an issue with the rules of procedure was recently brought to his attention and he would like to work that issue out first and come back to the committee at a future date.

Dr. Shedd informed the committee that Mr. Dey' nomination will be approved by City Council tomorrow night. She said Mr. Zach Luse from Paragon Digital submitted his application and he should be nominated at the City Council meeting tomorrow. Dr. Shedd noted to members that ECC still has alternate seats to fill and encouraged members to think of what other stakeholder groups and skillsets they would like to bring to the committee. She stated that there was confusion about the timing of the meetings with the County Commissioners. Councilor Clark

stated that he had suggested that they change their first Wednesday meeting of the month to 9 am to accommodate ECC. Dr. Shedd asked if Councilor Clark could clarify the meeting time with the County Commissioners as it would be great to have members of the County represented at ECC.

#### 4. **Energy Plan**

##### **a. Focus Group #1 Report-out – Real Estate and Landlord Sector**

Ms. Brunner said she included the summary that Ms. Salas prepared for the focus group session in the agenda packet. The notes are in a summary format broken out by different topic areas. Ms. Brunner stated that overall, the focus group discussion with the four participants who attended was very useful. She said three of the participants were landlords with fewer properties and one of the landlords owned up to thirty-three properties. Ms. Brunner noted that there was also a range of opinions on different topics as well. She said one of the key takeaways was the participants' concern over leaving people behind with this effort as there is a large population of people that will never be able to afford extra expenses. She said participants suggested that there should be no-cost or savings strategies. Ms. Brunner stated that the landlords also stressed that the City could do more to partner with different organizations and take on more of a facilitative role. She said they noted that it might be helpful for the City to facilitate meetings for landlords to share ideas or perhaps create an online forum or email list.

Ms. Brunner stated that she put out a survey on Facebook aimed at landlords and others involved with housing, such as real estate agents. She said so far there have been twelve responses and she would be surprised if there were many more because they have not really advertised the survey yet. Dr. Shedd asked if the survey is embedded in the City's "Sustainability" page and Ms. Brunner replied yes, and it is also a news item on the webpage. She said she also asked the focus group participants to share the survey with their colleagues and heard that the survey was also broadcast on a local radio station.

Vice Chair Hansel noted the diversity of topics that were discussed and noted that although the conversation did not focus much on energy issues, it probably served as a helpful exercise for participants. He added that perhaps some of the ideas discussed are relevant but in the future it may be best to stay on topic.

Ms. Gaunt noted that so much of the current work is centered on how to reach out to the consumer; however, her experience at Keene State College (KSC) has made her more aware of the supplier side and the energy options they are bringing in. She said that KSC has been able to shift some markets because of their purchasing power and the City of Keene may be able to do so as well. She recommended setting up strategic meetings with big energy suppliers in the area, such as Eversource, Liberty Gas and the oil suppliers because ultimately if the only available supply is a renewable energy source then no one will be left behind. Vice Chair Hansel agreed that the brokers and the utilities should be part of the discussion and that opt-in or opt-out options would be a good way to go as well.

Dr. Shedd stated that the Monadnock Energy Hub already has a foot in the door with Eversource's Director of Strategic Planning, who came from that role from Green Mountain

Power in Vermont. Dr. Shedd said the Director will be one of the panelists on the Renewable Energy track at the Radically Rural event and hopefully the City can nurture a working relationship with her as she is at a high level within the company. She said there is a local Eversource representative that the Energy Hub has had previous conversations with but she entirely agrees with Ms. Gaunt about going straight to the source. Ms. Gaunt added that she is very impressed by Green Mountain Energy's work with promoting Rutland, Vermont as an energy demonstration project and noted that perhaps they could convince Eversource to make Keene their demonstration city in New Hampshire.

Dr. Shedd added that they also need to reach out to contractors so they can play an important role in educating consumers about the range of energy sources available to them. Councilor Clark stated that some of the contractors are already advertising heat pumps in their installations.

Ms. Brunner shared an interesting model she recently learned about called "reverse auction", which involves awarding the contract to the lowest bidder instead of the highest bidder. She stated that the City of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania implemented this model by collaborating with about 30 large energy users, for example, their school district and other large energy users in their area and then bundled their energy needs and bid for the lowest price. She said now they are considering requiring that the energy include a certain percentage of renewable energy. Dr. Shedd added that the Nashua Planning Commission has been acting as the negotiator for several of its area towns and school districts as well as the Monadnock Economic Development Corporation and the Peterborough-based group is now sourcing from 100% renewable at competitive rates. Ms. Brunner agreed that the unique part of the "reverse auction" model is the auction component, sort of like a joint RFP or bulk purchasing program but with an auction piece to it.

Dr. Shedd asked members what takeaways they want to follow up with from the focus group. Ms. Schierioth stated that there should be a Facebook page for investors (multi-family and commercial properties). Dr. Shedd asked who she thinks would be interested in coordinating that effort and Ms. Schierioth replied that she knows of a commercial investor who is already thinking about starting one herself. Ms. Brunner added that people may want to spearhead a Facebook page on their own instead of having the City involved; however, the City could also help advertise and provide information about the page on the City website.

Councilor Clark added that Liberty has just drilled their new pipeline and made five phase plans to increase their natural gas production. He said he does not want to further discuss these types of intermediary energy sources and it is time to steer away from them entirely as natural gas is not a renewable energy source. Ms. Schierioth asked if they currently have a working definition for what "clean energy" is. Dr. Shedd replied that the EPA has a graphic on their website about how to define renewable energy that they have been referencing, and KSC is also looking to put together a panel or presentation to explore the definitions of clean energy for Energy Awareness month. Dr. Shedd said they will revisit that topic later.

Vice Chair Hansel stated that there are a few key points that were mentioned in the focus group that should be highlighted: the idea of keeping the big picture in mind, City investment in

appropriate infrastructure ideas like renewable energy as they plan for the future and energy efficiency and conservation.

Ms. Brunner added that attendees of the focus group also spoke about the lifespan of solar arrays and what happens after solar arrays and battery storage units reach the end of their life spans – in other words, what is the “decommissioning” plan for renewable energy systems that last about 20 years. Dr. Shedd added that Europe is way ahead of the U.S. in terms of life cycle analyses and how to repurpose or recycle these items. She said that she read an article looking at electric vehicle batteries and discovered that the batteries can be repurposed for household energy storage. Ms. Gaunt suggested they start planning for a series of strategic meetings with the energy providers that can culminate with a panel discussion. She said she is curious about how these energy providers can help the City achieve their energy goals and perhaps they can aim for the month of April.

#### **b. October Community Workshop**

Dr. Shedd asked if Ms. Brunner has started planning for the next focus group (Commercial and Industrial sector). Ms. Brunner said she has not started planning that focus group; however, she has been working on organizing the October Community Workshop.

Ms. Brunner stated that Tuesday, October 22 at 6:30 or 7 pm may be the best day for the Community Workshop. She said she, Chair Shedd and Mr. Webler from KSC met to brainstorm ideas for the workshop. She said at the ECC August meeting there appeared to be interest in a presentation format followed up with a smaller group break-out session of some kind. As far as the topic, she said one of the ideas could be to define renewable energy with the community.

Dr. Shedd suggested broadly addressing energy efficiency as a way to reduce footprints and energy bills could be a useful topic. Vice Chair Hansel stated that there is an EPA definition of what is conventional power and green power; however, it would be helpful to discuss those definitions collectively. Dr. Shedd added that the workshop would be a good time to share what the committee was thinking of in terms of vision and values and will also provide an opportunity to receive community feedback. Ms. Brunner informed members that the break out groups would require facilitators and asked who would be available on October 22 around 6:30 or 7 pm to serve as a facilitator. Councilor Clark and Ms. Gaunt said they could potentially take on facilitator roles. Ms. Brunner stated that the meeting location has not yet been confirmed but she will go ahead with finding a location for October 22.

#### **c. Success Stories**

Dr. Shedd stated that she was supposed to have three success stories prepared for today’s meeting, however, she did not get to them yet. Councilor Clark said he is on track for sharing his success story centered on Mr. Zach Luse before the October meeting. He said Mr. Tousley has been unresponsive so far. Ms. Brunner added that Ms. Salas had better success speaking with Mr. Tousley, so perhaps Councilor Clark can reach out to her for more information. Councilor Clark asked Mr. Brehme about collecting video drone footage of the solar arrays for a video production. Mr. Brehme replied that he would be able to help.

Ms. Brunner asked members how much time they will need for gathering success stories. Members collectively agreed upon early October. Ms. Brunner noted that it would be nice to launch the success stories throughout October's Energy Awareness month. Dr. Shedd asked where success stories will be shared and in what format. Ms. Brunner replied that video format is great but noted that she will not be able to edit them. Councilor Clark replied that he can edit videos if need be. Ms. Brunner said that Ms. Salas put together a guide for creating written success stories, with an emphasis on pictures and specific questions to answer in the text. She said they can create a link and share it with other organizations, for example, the Clean Energy Team and Cheshire County. She said the more places the links are posted, the better. Dr. Shedd added that the New Hampshire Saves website has a nice series of success stories mostly centered on energy projects including a picture and a couple of paragraphs. She said they are capsules and members can visit that webpage to get ideas. Vice Chair Hansel noted that success stories should be kept to one page in length as people do not have long attention spans.

Dr. Shedd added that the City's Sustainability page also displays a beautiful story map on the transfer station biodiesel project which highlights the evolution from the methane-to-energy project to the 100% post-consumer biofuel and explains the rationale, economics and limitations of that project. Ms. Brunner stated that the City's GIS technician, Mr. Schoefmann, worked with Mr. Sean Spendley on the story maps, however, Mr. Spendley is no longer with the City and Mr. Schoefmann may not be able to take on additional tasks – it would depend on his workload. Ms. Brunner noted that alternatively, Mr. Brehme could perhaps look into recruiting student groups through his department at KSC. Mr. Brehme replied that he could find students to create story maps for the City. Ms. Brunner said the story maps are very popular and it would be a great project for a KSC student group to take on.

Ms. Brunner asked if anyone signed up to do a success story on Filtrine as it will be the largest solar array in the City. Vice Chair Hansel replied that he would sign up for it.

#### **d. Consultant Status**

Ms. Brunner announced that the City received a fully executed contract from the consultants with a revised scope of work that includes a final deliverable in the form of a written report. She said she is confident that the negotiation will lend itself to a high quality product. She stated that there will be a kick-off meeting with the consultants at the end of September and all City departments are interested in attending including the City Manager. She said the final figure was not very different than the initial offer; however, she said having a final written report which includes a detailed analysis of the work the consultants do is invaluable.

### **5. Upcoming Outreach Opportunities:**

#### **a. Drive Electric Event, September 14, 2019**

Dr. Shedd said the Drive Electric Event will take place from 12-3 pm (set up at 11 am) and Ms. Brunner and Councilor Clark agreed to table the event. She said she does not know how many vehicles will be there for test drives but there will be a food truck and music. Ms. Brunner said the test drives will take place in the Whitney Brothers parking lot next to the Monadnock Food Co-Op.

Dr. Shedd said part of the event is related to the kick-off of a crowdfunding campaign to put the region's first DC fast charger in as part of the Co-Op's expansion by tapping into the Volkswagen money when it becomes available. She said southwest NH fell off the first version of the map of where the VW funds would go but they are aiming to remedy that as this region has high tourism and interest in fast chargers. Ms. Brunner added that there was a recent presentation by Eversource that showed that there are about 12 non-proprietary fast charge stations statewide and they would need to install about 135 more just to maintain the state's current level of tourism. Dr. Shedd said new construction at the Co-op would help mitigate some of the cost of installing a fast charging station there.

Ms. Brunner asked members if there is anything specific the committee wants to convey to the public during this outreach opportunity. Dr. Shedd asked if MAST will be present and Vice Chair Hansel replied that he is unsure. Dr. Shedd suggested they can focus on the wise development of infrastructure for increasing electrification of the fleet and also to not forget the importance of other forms of transportation. She said people can place dots on a map to communicate to the suppliers where the demand is for charging stations. Councilor Clark asked when the event starts and Dr. Shedd replied that set up is at 11 am and the event is from 12-3 pm.

Ms. Gaunt asked if it is possible to transform focus group questions into a one page survey. Ms. Brunner said they can create a paper survey for the table, but would recommend keeping it very brief – a maximum of three questions that are not free-response. Mr. Brehme said they could also do participatory mapping and he will brainstorm some ideas.

#### **b. Radically Rural Summit- September 19 and 20, 2019**

Dr. Shedd stated that she talked to Ms. Taryn Fisher and Ms. Georgia Cassimatis about using art for outreach. She said Ms. Fisher had signed up to do a mixer at the Radically Rural event and plans to put on two art-related event opportunities. One is focused on using four-inch canvas tiles for participants to paint what the energy future looks like, and the other will be a dot activity with four to five multiple choice questions centered on what communities in other parts of the country are doing to work towards a clean energy future. Dr. Shedd said they are looking to have ECC members stand by that easel for an hour and a half mixer event on Thursday, September 19 to explain the project to visitors in the time after the last presentation and before the Connect event that evening. Dr. Shedd and Vice Chair Hansel said they would attend.

#### **c. October Energy Awareness Events**

Dr. Shedd stated the Mayor has reviewed a draft proclamation on proclaiming October as Energy Awareness Month. She said the October events schedule includes:

- KSC is working on a presentation panel on defining “clean energy.”
- The Keene Public Library will have a Thursday night film series.
- United Unitarian Church will have an energy efficiency work day.
- The Monadnock Energy Hub will have a small working event one evening.

- The Clean Energy Team will have a “sharing stories” event on October 17 in the Community Room.
- The Energy and Climate Committee will have their Community Workshop on October 22.
- The Monadnock Energy Hub is also working to revive green drinks, perhaps at Machina Arts Kitchen and Art Bar with a focus on electric vehicles.
- There will be a presentation on offshore wind.
- Ms. Rachel Brice on behalf of the Keene Public Library will work on having a display board at the Keene Farmer’s Market centered on how agriculture and renewables can coexist.

Dr. Shedd said she spoke to Mr. Phil Suter at the Chamber about becoming involved in the national Chambers for Innovation in Clean Energy initiative and they discussed bringing in other New England chambers that are already involved in that initiative to talk about their experiences. She said Mr. Suter asked whether or not they need to generate a list of topics that the general public needs to be educated about. Dr. Shedd suggested that they educate people on the different collaborative purchasing opportunities including the buy-in co-ops and consumer choice aggregation. Vice Chair Hansel agreed that those ideas are staying on topic of the clean energy theme.

Vice Chair Hansel said on September 20 at 12 pm a few churches in town will ring the bells for one full minute to raise awareness about the climate crisis.

**6. Legislative Update: SB 286, “Relative to aggregation of electric customers by municipalities and counties”**

Ms. Brunner suggested that they place this item on a future agenda as she did not look into the bill thoroughly yet and Mr. Bouchard, who requested that this item be added to the agenda, is not present. She briefly explained that the bill will enable municipalities to offer a community choice aggregation program as an opt-out program which will increase the likelihood that people will participate in the program. She said this bill was signed into law and represents a critical strategy toward reaching the City’s energy goals.

Dr. Shedd added that Mr. Bouchard might be interested in what entity would serve as the aggregator in the City as well as furthering understanding of what the model means. Ms. Brunner said to the best of her understanding, the program has to be offered at a town level but once it is up and running people outside of town can participate. Dr. Shedd said this has the potential to be broad-based, reaching across economic sectors to make clean energy available at a competitive price. Mr. Dooley added that sometimes bigger is not better as the School District was able to negotiate better prices as a sole entity.

Mr. Dooley informed the committee that the School District is currently wrapping up the second phase of energy-related projects at the Franklin Elementary School, for example, they installed new LED lights on the other half of the building, fire suppression, new finishes on floors, and efficient radiant panels on the ceiling which are tapped into high efficiency boilers. They also put

LED lights in the larger rooms in Keene High School and they are anticipating cost savings from those installations.

**7. Correspondence from Fred Ward, dated August 8, 2019**

Dr. Shedd said that a letter from Mr. Ward addressed to City Council was included in the meeting packet and asked committee members if they have any questions for Mr. Ward.

Councilor Clark asked Mr. Ward to clarify his comments about the how renewables are not ideal due to the weather being variable. Mr. Ward replied that all renewables are weather-related so the model simply does not work because weather is constantly changing. He suggested “renewable energy” be called “weather-produced energy sources” instead, and noted that they are very inefficient. He said solar panels are 20% efficient and will provide 5 megawatts of power in bright sunshine and no energy at night and in cloudy conditions.

Mr. Pipp added that Mr. Ward is only referring to solar, wind and hydro-energy and there are other renewable options out there, including biomass, biogas and geothermal. Mr. Ward said that oil and coal are renewable on a fifty thousand-year scale. He said renewable means “weather-produced.”

Mr. Hansel moved to accept Mr. Ward’s documentation as informational, Ms. Gaunt seconded and the motion was passed unanimously.

**8. New Business**

**9. Next Meeting Wednesday, October 2, 2019**

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Ayshah Kassamali-Fox, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by Mari Brunner, Planner