

City of Keene
New Hampshire

ENERGY & CLIMATE COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, December 4, 2019 **8:00 AM** **2nd Floor Committee Room,
City Hall**

Members Present:

Dr. Ann Shedd, Chair
Peter Hansel, Vice Chair
Rod Bouchard (until 9:07 AM)
Terry Clark, Councilor
Ken Dooley
Andrew Dey
Carey Gaunt

Staff Present:

Mari Brunner, Planner

Members Not Present:

Zach Luse
Christopher Brehme
Anna Schierioth
Jake Pipp

1) Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Shedd called the meeting to order at 8:03 AM. Roll call was conducted.

2) Approval of November 6, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Hansel made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of November 6, 2019.
Councilor Clark seconded the motion.

Mr. Bouchard noted corrections to be made –

- The words “Mr. Bouchard” should be changed to “Mr. Weed” in the following locations:
- Bottom of page two (“Mr. Bouchard stated that there was a...”)
- Third paragraph of page three (“Mr. Bouchard stated that there was some...” and “Mr. Bouchard replied that he...”)
- On page five, in the second paragraph, “...who spoke at Radically Rural, has left for a more private sector” should be changed to “...who spoke at Radically Rural, has left for a position in the private sector.”

Chair Shedd added the following corrections:

- Page 2, first paragraph: “Mr. Tom Webler” should be “Dr. Tom Webler.”
- Page 8, second paragraph: Mr. Pipp’s term expires in 2021 (as stated on the City’s website), not 2020 (as stated in the minutes).

Mr. Hansel added the following corrections:

- Page 3, third paragraph: the text “...it could solve another problem in Keene, for example, Beaver Brook as they could potentially put a reservoir there in Northfield,” should say, “...it could solve another problem in Keene, for example, Beaver Brook, as they could potentially put a reservoir there as they did in Northfield.”
- Page 4, second line: the text “...for example, the report from the community power aggregation process” should be changed to “...for example, the report from the consultant.”

The motion to approve the meeting minutes (as corrected) passed by unanimous vote.

3) Presentation: Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships (NEEP) –
www.neep.org

John Balfe and Samantha Caputo introduced themselves and gave a slide show presentation. Mr. Balfe stated that NEEP is a regional nonprofit committed to improving energy efficiency in the business sector, covering a big territory. He continued that they try to share lessons learned, and find best practices from one area to share with another, and they give resources and technical assistance.

Mr. Dey asked where NEEP’s funding comes from. Mr. Balfe replied that they get funding in a few different ways. He continued that this work is funded through a grant from the Department of Energy (DOE), Achieving Community Efficiency. The State of NH is a project partner. NEEP also gets funding from the private sector and other various foundations and grants. Ms. Caputo stated that they have state partnerships, too, with NH, VT, and ME. They try to keep a diverse mix of funding sources. Mr. Balfe stated that NEEP used to be mainly funded by the DOE but that has changed.

Mr. Balfe asked what Keene hopes to get out of the energy plan. He continued that two key areas he sees are the need to be proactive and strategic. It is best to think ahead (say, ten years out) and plan milestones along the way, so they are not just reacting to things on an annual basis.

Ms. Gaunt stated that she is the Director of Sustainability at Keene State College (KSC). She continued that KSC is doing a comparable planning effort to the City’s, and what has been beneficial to KSC is having a clear implementation strategy, not just lofty goals. They need to lay out a plan for the decision-makers. Ms. Caputo replied yes, working out how to actually achieve the plan is key.

Mr. Hansel stated that also important is to hear how the plan will be funded. He continued that a big objection they will hear, from various sectors in the community, is

that the plan is not affordable. Mr. Bouchard agreed that people need to know the return on investment based on various elements of the project – if the payback is too far out in the future, that could be tough. Chair Shedd stated that she agrees that the plan needs to be specific, actionable, and cost-effective with diverse funding streams. She continued that it also needs to be adaptable. Technologies will evolve over time and the plan will need to be revisited periodically.

Continuing with the slide presentation, Mr. Balfe displayed a graphic depicting the community energy planning cycle. He stated that it is a high-level outline of how to think about these things. He continued that he and Ms. Caputo put checkmarks on the areas Keene has already worked on. Ms. Caputo stated that many of the goals people just mentioned are parts of this cycle, such as determining the funding sources, determining the specific goals and strategies, and methods to evaluate and measure the plan's progress.

Mr. Balfe continued that it is great to have long-term goals, but they need to understand how to achieve them. They need to determine what can be accomplished, say, next year – what are the short term “wins”? He gave examples of those. He continued that what is critically important to success is asking, “What do we need to be thinking about to make sure we are hitting our longer-term goals?”

Mr. Balfe stated that key strategies to achieve Keene's goals include those that have been successful elsewhere. He continued that some are policy-level. Regarding the cost of the plan, there are more behavioral or operational things they can be doing to understand energy usage. The foundational step NEEP always talks about is energy benchmarking, which involves tracking building energy use and comparing it to the energy use in the same building at a different time. It helps build an understanding of the baseline energy use for buildings and setting goals. Facility directors can see where they might be able to save energy and identify priorities in their building stock. For example, is one building an energy hog? What operational changes can be made to reduce usage? Benchmarking is a critical step for everyone, whether in the private or public sector. Starting with municipal buildings is a way to lead by example. NEEP has statistics, reports, and results of studies done over the years that show actual energy savings coming from the benchmark process. It has been shown that just uncovering energy usage data leads to savings over time.

Mr. Balfe continued that leading by example is a good first step, and recommends benchmarking all public buildings in the community and displaying that data to the public. It is important for the City to show that it is “talking the talk” and “walking the walk,” and to show the community the benefits. Understanding that it might be challenging to implement an ordinance mandating benchmarking, they could have it be voluntary. However, if it is voluntary, people might ignore it. There is the option of having a mandatory ordinance requiring buildings of a certain size or in a certain area to benchmark their energy use and disclose it to the public. Then they could craft programs and plans along the way to get at improvements for the building stock here. This is a great way to start engagement with the building owners in the city.

Mr. Balfe used South Portland, ME as an example – at the time, it was the smallest community to adopt a benchmarking ordinance. The best part that has come from it: engagement with local business owners. The owners impacted by the ordinance have been really engaged with the Sustainability Office in the community and direct improvements to buildings have been made. The ordinance pertains to the core business district. That is different from how other cities have gone about this. First, it was just municipal and school buildings and then it bumped up to the core business district. This is kind of a pilot program and they are looking to expand it.

Mr. Hansel asked how such ordinances are enforced. Mr. Balfe replied through penalties, such as fining businesses for not getting their data in on time. At first, it is lenient. Or, the City can offer incentives to businesses that report their data and show a good score. For example, maybe such a business would get a lower cost or an expedited process when applying for a permit or loan. There is room for creativity in coming up with benefits and incentives to give building owners or to make sure they are reporting their data.

Mr. Balfe continued that South Portland adopted the benchmark ordinance in 2017 and last year was the first required reporting year. He continued that they did not disclose all the data for commercial buildings that were reported. Sometimes commercial buildings do not want their data reported. Therefore, in year one they just reported compliance rates, and energy data for municipal buildings only. There was about a 6% reduction in emissions since 2014, which they were able to show. There was a 96% compliance rate for year one, which is high. The Sustainability Office did a great job with helping business owners, hosting workshops, and showing people how to do the reporting. It can be time consuming but helps build relationships. They offered a Portfolio Manager training and people liked it to the point where, when the town offered another private software free of charge, people did not want that and continued with Portfolio Manager.

Ms. Caputo stated that another key strategy to discuss is home energy labeling. She continued that the residential sector can be difficult to engage with in terms of getting people to understand and come along with the transition the City is trying to see. Home energy labeling is a way of improving transparency and engaging with residents to help them understand how they can reduce energy and costs. It provides a label or scorecard regarding the energy efficiency of a home, similar to an energy guide sticker that you see on appliances on your house. This can be done in various ways – there are automated models that can be used, or you can use a specific scorecard that is available in the market.

Home energy labeling can provide recommendations on how homeowners can reduce energy usage, such as incentives and rebates from utilities, or community programs that you can implement through this action plan. In addition, it provides an indicator to the market and can spur workforce development, creating jobs to have these energy assessments done, and provide opportunities for retrofits and measures to be adopted in the residential sector. Home energy labeling is a behavioral tool. It can help drive further

savings – it says to people, “This is where you are now, and this is where you could be in the future.”

Ms. Caputo continued that home energy labeling is particularly helpful with existing buildings. NEEP is seeing mandatory time-of-listing or time-of-sale ordinances, which is when an audit is triggered, to give a baseline understanding of energy costs to incoming homeowners or renters. She noted that, next to a mortgage, energy use is the second highest cost for homeowners. Thus, you can look at home energy labeling as a consumer protection measure, making sure people understand and can afford the costs of the home they are going into.

Ms. Caputo continued that it is transparency-informed decision making, similar to the stickers on cars that show miles per gallon. Buyers expect to see this sticker and it helps one understand the operation and maintenance costs. If a pickup truck gets 11 MPG and a sedan gets 26 MPG, that gives you an idea of the cost of gas for each vehicle. The person who needs a truck will still buy the truck, however they will know up-front how much they can expect to pay for fuel. When you put labeling on homes, it is the same thing. Studies have shown that a lower score on a house (if you are using a scorecard option) does not necessarily deter people from purchasing that house; it just provides information to help people understand what their costs will be. Typically, the first two years is when homeowners do significant work on their house. When a home turns over in ownership you are providing information on rebates and incentives at that time, that is, what can be done to achieve energy savings.

Ms. Caputo continued that Montpelier is an example of a community that is doing this, and is the smallest city that has enacted an energy efficiency disclosure ordinance. Instead of using one of the nationally available tools, they are using an automated energy model. It takes tax assessor information, information about certifications homes have, information from homeowners, and so on and so forth, and runs a model, and provides the estimated energy cost based on fuel used in the home. This method is low cost and does not involve getting an assessor into the home. Montpelier only has about 100 homes that turn over a year. They are using this as a tool toward their energy goals. It helps activate people in the community.

Councilor Clark asked how to get the residential sector to comply with such an ordinance. Ms. Caputo replied that there are different ways. She continued that with time-of-sale ordinances, the requirement is for audit/scorecard results to be included in the home’s listing within a certain number of days and to make the information available to potential buyers. Councilor Clark asked if that means homeowners have to get an audit before listing their homes for sale. Ms. Caputo replied yes, if that is the mechanism being used to generate the scorecard or label. Councilor Clark asked if there is a way to have the utilities tied in. Ms. Caputo replied yes, for example: in MA they have the Mass Save energy audit, and the state is adding a scorecard, on a voluntary scale. So in MA, if a community wants to enact an ordinance and require it, they can use the state’s scorecard. For a state that does not have a scorecard associated with the audit, they can look to other providers, and this is where funding and costs come into play. There are

great tools but they can be expensive, such as \$200 to \$300 per audit, so then you would need subsidies for low-income homeowners and a plan for foreclosures, and so on and so forth. There are more considerations that come into play when you craft an ordinance, using a tool like that that has an associated cost. Then there are models like what Montpelier is doing, with an automated model that does not have the cost associated because you do not need the in-home assessment.

Ms. Caputo continued that there are different pathways for compliance. The compliance requirement is typically to have the information available within a certain amount of days with the MLS listing, or to make it available physically at an open house, too. Thus, you would have to consider the average amount of time a home is on the market. For example, if there is typically turnover in 50 days, and you require the home energy labeling to be done within 90 days, that does not work.

Mr. Balfe stated that for green buildings, there are different options, if a municipality wants to require things for new construction or major renovations. They could establish standards for new buildings, such as building schools to a high performance criteria (like Keene Middle School). There are ways to go about it through creating zoning and having building performance standards. He is happy to chat more about it later.

Mr. Balfe continued that he wanted to highlight an operations and maintenance guide developed by NEEP, which can be used to improve the operations of existing buildings. It touches on a number of sections, more than just energy efficiency. There are plenty of low- to no-cost measures that can be taken, like behavioral changes.

Ms. Caputo stated that NEEP has a renter's checklist, which they can share as-is, or they could co-brand it and make it more specific to Keene. She continued that it gives a checklist for potential renters to know what they should be asking before they rent a place, like "Is it drafty?" or "Do I have control of the thermostat?" College students, especially, love this checklist. There is also a homebuyer's checklist, which is very similar. If a municipality does not have an ordinance, they could make this checklist available, so people understand the baseline energy usage and the cost of the home.

Mr. Balfe stated that the Achieving Community Efficiency (ACE) grant is what allows them to do this work, ranging from benchmarking to piloting an on-site shared energy management model so smaller communities can pool together resources and utilize one person working across towns to look at different energy management practices. He continued that finally, he wanted to highlight other resources NEEP has available, such as Community Action Planning for Energy Efficiency (CAPEE), a tool for communities to use. NEEP also has a lot of information and guidance on air source heat pumps, for both consumers and installers. The information is on NEEP's website.

Mr. Balfe continued that regarding ongoing technical assistance from NEEP, they could come and do more presentations, or do a deep dive on certain topics, like crafting an ordinance. Or, they could come and provide insights/help out with certain sections of Keene's energy plan. They are happy to review things and give feedback.

Ms. Caputo added that they just hit the tip of the iceberg today. She continued that they have a lot of resources and are happy to share and be a resource to Keene. A final thought, which the presentation did not touch on, is: as Keene is thinking about its 2030 and 2050 plans for decarbonizing, they should think about what energy efficiency efforts they want to do and to integrate it all, so they are not waiting for 2030 to start working on the 2050 goals.

Mr. Hansel stated that the presentation talked about air source heat pumps. He asked, what about water source heat pumps? Ms. Caputo replied that they are expanding their resources and looking at renewable thermal energy. She continued that they could put the ECC in contact with NEEP team members that are working on that directly.

Mr. Hansel asked if the presentation will be available to the ECC/emailed to Ms. Brunner. Mr. Balfe replied yes.

Scott Maslansky asked if Montpelier is typically getting multiple years of data and weather normalizing it. Ms. Caputo replied that the ordinance has not been enacted yet, but they are looking to get a year's worth of data, to get all seasons, and it would be normalized for everything. That would take the behavior out of it. She continued that a home profile is more useful than knowing the behavior of various occupants, because various occupants' behaviors differ – for example, in how each occupants set the thermostat.

Chair Shedd asked if Ms. Brunner had questions. Ms. Brunner thanked Ms. Caputo and Mr. Balfe. She continued that after this meeting, she and a few City staff members will be meeting with Ms. Caputo and Mr. Balfe to talk about how the City might use this technical assistance moving forward. She met Ms. Caputo and heard about this organization and was excited to learn about it. Chair Shedd replied that some of the information is in the ECC's shared drive, such as the renter's checklist.

Mr. Dey stated that the goals for 2030 and 2050 are stated in terms of renewable energy, so energy efficiency is implicit in that, but it tends to short shrift because people like to talk about renewable energy more, so it is great they are doing this work. It is harder to get people engaged in these energy efficiency methods than it is to get people on board with renewable energy. Ms. Caputo replied yes, this definitely helps with the cost-effectiveness aspect – if you were to just take energy usage now and try and replace that with all renewable energy, it is not a cost-effective method at all to achieve the goals. Trying to make energy efficiency more visible is important. Chair Shedd stated that the City, County, school district, and KSC are all represented on this committee, and have done great energy efficiency strategies.

Ms. Caputo stated that NH just adopted a cost effective test that is specific to NH's state policies, the Granite State Test. It includes participant and societal benefits, things like greenhouse gas emissions, economic development, and so on and so forth. Hopefully by broadening the scope of the cost effectiveness test at the state level and for utility

programs it will help create more offerings that communities can use, and a partnership with Eversource will build up and they will be a strategic partner in the planning process.

Chair Shedd and the group thanked Mr. Balfe and Ms. Caputo for their presentation.

4) Energy Plan

a) Consultant Status and Progress

Chair Shedd stated that at the last meeting they talked about challenges with getting baseline data from Eversource. She asked for an update from Ms. Brunner about where Cadmus is in its process. Ms. Brunner replied that later the same day as that EEC meeting, Eversource gave the City some of the requested data. She continued that Cadmus provided the City with everything in the electricity context except for the electricity baseline. Once the baseline is complete, the next step is to start working on strategies and comparing them to the City's "business as usual" trajectories. Ms. Brunner continued that she does not have specific dates for when deliverables will be due because they are off schedule due to the delay in Eversource giving them the data. She noted that the consultant is also working with the City on the SolSmart program. Cadmus recently sent draft solar zoning recommendations, but staff have not yet had a chance to review.

Chair Shedd asked when consultant deliverables can be shared with this committee. Ms. Brunner replied probably at the next meeting. Chair Shedd replied that it would inform the committee's discussions to be somewhat up to date on what Cadmus has put together.

Chair Shedd asked, regarding the SolSmart program, and coming up with an ordinance and looking at codes, if Cadmus will be able to outline a document for consumers and installers. Ms. Brunner replied yes, that is one of the requirements of the program. She continued that staff is working on that right now. Chair Shedd replied that making the City's regulations readily accessible to installers is an important part of implementation, and to the development of a workforce around energy efficiency. She continued that there are contractors doing the work, but none in the immediate area are certified through NH Saves.

b) Institutional Focus Group: Wednesday, January 8, 2020, at 8:00 AM

Chair Shedd stated that they talked about using the January 8 meeting to pull together at least a preliminary version of this. She continued that the ECC has representation from several of the stakeholders. They have not put together in a significant way what that meeting would look like.

Ms. Brunner stated that one thing she was hoping to get from the ECC today is any contact information people have for representatives from these organizations. She continued that she would like contact information for people at Cheshire Medical Center, Southwest Community Services, and River Valley Community College, for starters. Chair Shedd added that Hillside Village should be on the list. She continued that she passed around a document she created of who the stakeholders should be, and a draft of

questions they might take to the focus group. She thinks they should have stakeholders submit a basic information sheet before the meeting, to make efficient use of the time.

Chair Shedd asked if it is correct that River Valley no longer has its own campus and is using the KSC campus. Ms. Gaunt replied yes. Mr. Hansel asked if that means they have no control over what happens with the buildings. Ms. Gaunt replied that they have a voice, and should be there.

Chair Shedd asked Ms. Brunner to put the contact list and the information they have so far into a spreadsheet in the ECC's shared drive. Ms. Brunner replied that she thought it was there, but she will double check. Chair Shedd replied that they should have a spreadsheet for just the institutional stakeholders, because they have one for all stakeholders. Ms. Brunner stated that if anyone has more names of institutional stakeholders, and/or emails or phone numbers for the contact people, they can email that information to her.

Chair Shedd asked if it is realistic to have the meeting in January or if they should wait until February. Ms. Gaunt and Mr. Bouchard replied that February would work better for the college and the County. Ms. Brunner stated that the date of the February ECC meeting is February 5th.

Chair Shedd stated that regarding the content of the meeting, she is not sure if people had a chance to look at her draft of questions. She asked for other thoughts on what they should be addressing at the gathering of stakeholders. Mr. Hansel replied that they should ask the stakeholders what kind of benchmarking they have and what programs they are using. Chair Shedd replied yes, the question is not so much about the benchmarking results, but to share experience using the benchmarking tools. At some point it would be great to ask about the data.

Mr. Bouchard asked Mr. Dooley if the school district is using Portfolio Manager. Mr. Dooley replied no, they are using School Dude, which they use for other things as well, and it is working well. He continued that there is also Facility Dude for non-school buildings. Ms. Brunner asked if that costs money. Mr. Dooley replied yes, it is expensive.

Ms. Gaunt stated that regarding the questions, when in focus groups, people often have good ideas they want to share. She continued that they could ask, "What do you want to achieve? What have been the barriers to success? Where have you found success in overcoming those barriers?" Chair Shedd replied that she is especially interested in hearing from the representatives of the institutional sector what would be useful information to share among the institutional sector representatives that would advance the goals the City has set.

Mr. Bouchard left at 9:07 AM.

Chair Shedd stated that it will be helpful in January to revisit where they are with the timeline and in engaging the different sectors. She asked: if Cadmus will be recommending strategies sometime in February, will the ECC, having been tasked with community engagement, be providing them with enough Keene-specific information to help inform their process?

Ms. Gaunt stated that she has contacts for Ms. Brunner from Antioch and River Valley. Ms. Brunner replied that that would be great. Ms. Gaunt asked how many people from each institution they want to have for the meeting. Ms. Brunner replied one or two, three maximum, to keep the conversation manageable. She continued that it would be great to have the facilities person from each institution.

Chair Shedd stated that they will work on having a draft outline for that gathering, to bring to the ECC's January meeting for the ECC to add to. Mr. Hansel asked about getting the word out. Ms. Brunner replied that she can do a "save the date" – once the contact list is filled out, she will send everyone an email with an invitation. She continued that Chair Shedd had brought up trying to have people share some data ahead of time. Chair Shedd replied yes, finding out basic information (such as a one-page sheet) about each institution ahead of time could save them 30 or 40 minutes during the meeting. Ms. Brunner replied that maybe an online survey format would be best.

c) Community Energy Conversations (meeting-in-a-box activity)

Chair Shedd stated that there have been 5 or 6 Community Energy Conversations so far. She asked Nancy Gillard and Carolyn Jones, from the Clean Energy Team, to share about what their experiences have been like.

Ms. Gillard and Ms. Jones replied that there was a great group of six people at the library last night, who had great questions, concerns, and ideas. It will be interesting to see how the feedback helps the consultants, but these groups are getting the conversation going more and more in the community. People respond enthusiastically. Young people who were not aware of the extent of the program were excited about it and wanted cards to share with their friends.

Chair Shedd stated that she has been a part of two faith-based groups and one at the library. She continued that themes that have come up are education, awareness, and cost-effectiveness. There was a lot of enthusiasm. The church groups wanted to meet and talk again.

Ms. Brunner stated that one group in November had good participation, and a lot of energy. She continued that students who attended are excited to bring this to their school and they will be working on a project with the City. There is another group meeting on Friday, December 6, and there is still room, so everyone can spread the word. The groups are open to folks who are not Keene residents as well. Ms. Gillard and Ms. Jones added that next week they have one at the Senior Center and one at the Community Kitchen.

d) Success Stories: www.ci.keene.nh.us/sustainability/success-stories

Chair Shedd stated that two success stories are up on the website. Ms. Brunner replied that she has a backlog of four or five more to get posted. She continued that there is an excellent one from Bensonwood. Chair Shedd added, and some from the non-profit sector, such as the Keene UU Church, and MoCo.

Ms. Brunner stated that there was one from Michele, who asked her to wait until she (Michele) sent more data. Chair Shedd replied that they do not need more data, just the story. Ms. Brunner replied that she will ask Michele if it is okay to post it as-is. Discussion continued and other names shared were the Monadnock Food Coop, Keene Housing, Community Kitchen, and Hannah Grimes.

Chair Shedd stated that the Solarize 2020 Keene and Monadock Campaign is meeting tomorrow night to finalize the RFP that will go out to potential contractors, hopefully within a week. She continued that the proposals will be due January 10, and will be reviewed in January. They are aiming to have the Keene kick-off on Wednesday, March 4. There is no City Council meeting then so they hope to have some Councilors there.

5) New Business

Mr. Maslansky asked if anything has come up regarding the Eversource divestiture funds and Keene's interest in speaking up about that. He continued that Eversource put together a \$5 million Clean Energy Fund. There is a recommendation from the Public Utilities Commission and other initiatives on what to do with that funding. There is a stakeholder meeting on December 18. There is interest in discussing what should be done. CDFR is looking to have longer-term leverage of the funds. If the City or this group is interested, he can talk with them and get them more information.

6) Next Meeting: Wednesday, January 8, 2020

7) Adjourn

Hearing no further business, Chair Shedd adjourned the meeting at 9:19 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Britta Reida, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by Mari Brunner, Planner