

City of Keene
New Hampshire

ENERGY AND CLIMATE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, February 5, 2020

8:00 AM

**2nd Floor Committee Room,
City Hall**

Members Present:

Ann Shedd, Chair
Peter Hansel, Vice Chair
Anna Schierioth
Ken Dooley
Councilor Terry Clark
Zack Luse
Rod Bouchard
Jake Pipp

Staff Present:

Mari Brunner, Planner

Members Not Present:

Cary Gaunt
Andrew Dey

Chair Shedd called the meeting to order at 8:01 AM.

1) Roll call

Roll call was conducted.

2) Approve January 8, 2020 minutes

Vice Chair Hansel moved to accept the January 8 minutes with amendments, Mr. Bouchard seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Revisions are as follows: On Page 6, change “Mr. Fromuth Fromuth” to “Mr. Bart Fromuth”

3) Energy Plan

- a. Timeline and Work Plan - through June 2020**
- b. UNH Sustainability Fellow Program**

Ms. Brunner stated that the City of Keene submitted an application for the UNH Sustainability Fellow Program; a program that provides high performing graduate students with real world sustainability-related job experience working on a sustainability project. She said the program has been running for a number of years; she spoke to several other cities who have participated in the program and received very positive reviews from them about their fellows. She said that the City decided it would be advantageous to have a fellow who could help with the development of the Energy Plan. Ms. Brunner announced that the City submitted a proposal to the program in early December and that Keene has been selected for placement of a fellow. Ms. Brunner noted that the fellow will work about 400 hours on-site, full-time from early June to mid-August. She stated that in order to prepare for the fellow to come onboard, she would like a draft of the Energy plan prepared by early June. She said this timeline is considerably earlier than they had previously anticipated.

Ms. Brunner stated that the memo for the job description for the Sustainability Fellow position is included in the packet; applications are being accepted until February 10 and interviews will take place in March. She directed members to the draft timeline that she included in the packet, which she is proposing will guide their efforts to prepare the draft by early June. Ms. Brunner noted that time at the next few ECC meetings will be dedicated to receiving feedback on drafts City staff produce. She said under February the City aims to establish goals and objectives, identify key metrics and establish focus groups. She said she would like to review the first two items with ECC today. Ms. Brunner stated that at the ECC March meeting, they will review the criteria needed to prioritize strategies, as well as go over the draft of the community survey that will go out to the community in March and April. She said in April, they will ideally come into the meeting with a draft implementation plan or table for members to review, and in May they would present a draft plan and get committee feedback. She said in June they would have a revised draft prepared. Ms. Brunner stated that this is somewhat of an aggressive timeline so it would require support during the May and June meetings from the committee. She requested that members support dedication of committee time in March, April and May meetings to this effort. Members agreed.

Vice Chair Hansel said they will need to keep agenda clear of other items during the next there meetings. Chair Shedd proposed extending their meeting times to accommodate this plan as there will be a lot of material to cover. She said they used to meet for an hour and half and now they meet for an hour and a quarter with the extra working group sessions, and that is one option to consider with the extra work they will have for accommodating the plan. She said they will need more time in March to get through the material needed, with the exception of County folks, as they have their own meeting. Mr. Bouchard suggested setting a different time session to go through the material. Chair Shedd replied that Ms. Brunner is very busy in February implementing the time table and preparing for the Energy Plan draft. She said she will be running two focus groups and working on goals and objectives presented in the packet today. Ms. Brunner asked if members like the idea of having a longer session in March as scheduling is often difficult and they need at least six members present for quorum. She said she can send out a Doodle Poll to see how many members can attend for a two and half hour time slot which will replace the regular March meeting.

Mr. Pipp asked Ms. Brunner if the City has acquired the baseline electricity information from Eversource and Ms. Brunner replied that they have. Ms. Brunner replied that she included the

electricity context for federal state and local policies and incentives that pertain to renewable electricity in the January ECC meeting packet, however, she may not have included the baseline information. She said she can send that information out to the committee. Chair Shedd stated that Ms. Brunner and Mr. Lamb have discussed how to come up with metrics for the thermal and transportation sectors, which will present much more of a challenge in acquiring than the electricity.

c. Draft goals, objectives, and evaluation criteria for strategy selection

Ms. Brunner stated that an attachment is included in the packet called “Clean Energy Plan- Draft Goals/Draft Strategies.” She stated that the draft she prepared covers goals for each sector, as well as the strategic approaches or methods for attaining each goal. She said underneath those goals and strategic approaches, she provides example objectives to achieve each goal. Ms. Brunner stated that the goals for the electricity, thermal and transportation sectors have been set forth under the Resolution; for example, the goal for the electricity sector states that 100% of all electricity consumed in the City will come from renewable energy sources by 2030; some strategic approaches toward achieving that goal could include (1) reducing electricity demand and usage for buildings in all sectors, (2) increasing local distributed renewable energy generation and (3) procuring renewable energy to meet the remaining electricity demand. She noted that those represent the three main categories that would entail more specific action items underneath. Ms. Brunner stated that she would like to review the strategies for the electricity sector and asked for member feedback on the three main approaches she has developed.

Vice Chair Hansel stated that Ms. Brunner has covered the three main areas and asked for further clarification between strategies two and three. Ms. Brunner replied that strategy two is aimed at promoting the development of renewable energy systems within Keene and the immediate surrounding region, and strategy three is focused on procurement of renewable energy from outside of Keene’s borders. Chair Shedd suggested including energy storage as an element of strategy two. Members agreed.

Ms. Brunner asked for member feedback on the strategies and approaches for the thermal sector (heating/cooling). She said as stated in the Resolution, the goal is that 100% of thermal energy in the City will come from renewable energy sources by 2050. Strategic approaches that she has identified are (1) reduce thermal energy use in all buildings in all sectors and increasing energy efficiency (2) increase local renewable energy generation using renewable technologies such as solar thermal and geothermal technologies generated locally, (3) encourage fuel switching to renewable energy sources, for example, replacing furnaces and boiler systems with ducted heat and mini split heat pumps, or switching to biomass or biogas.

Councilor Clark stated that the heart of this whole effort was aimed at clean energy and proposed they be more specific. Vice Chair Hansel added that they do not know right now what the technology will evolve into in the future and they need to remain open to new technologies generated by renewable sources. He said switching to electric does not necessarily solve the clean energy problem as the source may not be clean. He proposed drafting the plan in such a way that will accommodate emerging technologies. Ms. Brunner said they have gotten a lot of feedback from the community outreach and stakeholder groups they held last summer and throughout the

fall and winter, as well as from the workshop in October, and people are generally in favor of promoting clean energy and the plan should define that up front. Councilor Clark agreed as that will help them present their case to the Council.

Chair Shedd added that early on in the planning process, the committee identified values of the plan and those were never finalized. She said the consideration of what they are calling “renewable” or “clean energy” fits into the category of values and resilience that the group tried to address in their vision and values statements. She said the committee will need to develop a statement about their vision and values, however, right now they do not need to dive into those weeds quite yet. She suggested focusing instead on the core strategies needed to move the plan forward right now. Mr. Bouchard agreed that once you start considering residual materials from operations, that question becomes more relevant, for example, there is no good way to recycle solar panels right now. Ms. Brunner agreed that this is a conversation that needs to be continued, and she has been using the visions and values statements the committee came up with in their retreat as guiding principles for developing the strategies. She said overall there was consensus among members that renewable energy should not harm the environment. Vice Chair Hansel suggested adding categories for encouraging state and federal advocacy as well. Ms. Brunner asked for questions and feedback about the thermal sector. Chair Shedd stated that there are specific technologies like district heating and smart grids and larger infrastructure questions, which they will have to address in the thermal strategic planning section and that may fall under the state and federal levels.

Ms. Brunner stated that the goal for the transportation sector also stated that 100% of energy in the ground transportation sector should come from renewable energy by 2050; she proposed that they limit this to vehicles registered in Keene. She said she used Burlington, Vermont as a model as their “Roadmap to Net Zero” plan details how they will get to their goal by 2030 or 2040. She stated that limiting this sector to ground transportation is practical as they do not have much control over air transportation.

Chair Shedd suggested they do make passing mention of air transportation in the plan and Ms. Brunner agreed, however, it makes more sense to focus on ground transportation first as they can really only influence vehicles registered in Keene. She said that their previous methodology for the greenhouse gas inventory was based on vehicle miles traveled calculated using traffic counts for all vehicles that pass through Keene, whether they are residents, visitors, or just people passing through. This time, she proposes that they focus on Keene residents with this effort. Chair Shedd added that a large percentage of Keene’s daily workforce is coming from outside of the City, and in terms of economic development tourism is a source, so she suggested they should address electrification of transportation and encourage the development of EV charging infrastructure. She said they have less control of what happens outside of Keene, however, it is a piece of Keene’s total emissions. Vice Chair Hansel agreed that the City cannot control emissions from visitors, but they can influence them and suggested they highlight how employers can be more energy conscious overall in their operations and with their suppliers as well.

Mr. Bouchard asked Mr. Lamb what the number of incoming vehicles or employees are to Keene during business hours. Mr. Lamb replied that he can get that data from the Census but he does not know the exact number. Mr. Weed proposed discouraging the use of internal combustion engines

for boats and racecars. Vice Chair Hansel suggested collaborating with other groups like the Monadnock Alliance for Sustainable Transportation (MAST) on transportation action items. Councilor Clark stated that the public transportation system is also an important element. Chair Shedd stated that ride sharing, carpooling and alternative transportation modes would fit under strategy one.

Ms. Brunner added that the strategic approaches for the transportation sector include (1) reduce vehicle miles traveled and increase efficiency, (2) accelerate the shift to electric vehicles, and (3) promote efficient growth patterns/coordinate transportation and land use planning. She said the third item is pointing to more of a long-term goal of locating people closer to where they need to go to make transportation by foot, bike, or public transit more viable. Vice Chair Hansel asked whether Strategy 3 is aligned with other City planning documents and initiatives. Ms. Brunner replied in the affirmative, and gave examples from the City's Comprehensive Master Plan, the Complete Streets policy and design guidelines, and Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan as well as the current "Building Better Together" project that is taking a comprehensive look at updating the City's zoning and land use regulations and putting them all in one document. Mr. Pipp proposed the use of electric school buses in the school district as well, noting the detrimental health impacts of diesel engines on schoolchildren. Mr. Bouchard added that electric school buses could be an opportunity for storage, and Chair Shedd agreed that there are creative opportunities and examples out there.

d. Draft performance metrics

Ms. Brunner suggested members look at the draft performance metrics at home and provide her with feedback in person or on the phone. She said on a high level, electricity data is more readily available to the City from Eversource. The City's Assessing Department has data on solar systems. She said thermal data is less available and although they have some data on heating systems, the information is not up to date. She said when looking at metrics at the thermal and transportation sectors they just do not have the same types of data sources that they have for electricity. Vice Chair Hansel suggested that Keene State College and AUNE perform a representative survey per sector and extrapolate from that data set about the thermal and transportation sectors. Chair Shedd added that there was an email from Ms. Sarah Bockus at AUNE about applications for summer interns and that could present a good opportunity.

Ms. Brunner stated that part of the action items in the plan could be to try to acquire better data. However, they will not get the thermal and transportation data in time for creating baselines to include in the plan. She said a survey can be included in the plan as a future action item. An audience member asked if there is a way to determine the thermal usage of homes and businesses and Ms. Brunner said she has some data but it can be very old and often involves assumptions about the type of heating systems and is limited in its scope. She said it will be useful as baseline information.

e. Focus group update

Ms. Brunner said she is hoping to do two focus groups in February; the first one, the Institution sector, is scheduled for Feb 13 and she has gotten six responses back. She said there are 4-5

confirmed people and Ms. Gaunt told her that she has been recruiting people from KSC, River Valley Community College and AUNE to come to the focus group.

Ms. Brunner stated that the Business and Commercial focus group may or may not happen at the end of February and needs to be further organized and planned. She said she is currently working on a list of businesses to reach out to now.

f. Planning for community forum #2

Chair Shedd said the first community forum was held in October at KSC, which had about 35 members of the public in attendance. She said that the first forum presented mostly the vision and goals and Ms. Brunner is envisioning the second forum to begin to roll out some of the strategies. She said the second workshop would require committee support and volunteers to design and promote. Chair Shedd stated that she sent out an email to several members of the committee and a couple of members of the public to potentially form a working group to design the workshop. She said she heard from Ms. April Salas from the Clean Energy Team that she is willing to participate. Ms. Brunner stated that working group volunteers would be expected to select a date and time and design the agenda, for example, inviting speakers, create posters and design the program. She said if they want to do a workshop in mid-March she would not have time to put a lot of effort toward it but she can help support volunteers in the implementation.

Chair Shedd stated that if they are having an extended session for the committee in early March, they can go through the evaluation criteria for strategy selection and asked if they would be realistically ready to put together a workshop for March. A guest stated that the timeline seems ambitious. Ms. Brunner said the issue is whether there are volunteers who have time to put the workshop together. Ms. Pat Martin asked if the community workshop input is needed for Cadmus. Ms. Brunner stated that Cadmus is wrapping up their work and will be finished in April. She said the purpose of the workshop is to do a check-in with the community and give people an opportunity to keep up with the plan and do some education about programs and actions as there has not been a community forum since October.

Ms. Pat Martin stated that if they are not time constrained to March, the Clean Energy Team plans to put on activities for Earth Day in April and asked if it would be more appropriate to do a community forum during Earth week. Chair Shedd agreed as it provides volunteers more time to develop materials to share with the public. Ms. Robbins added that the Button Up workshop is also on the Clean Energy Team's agenda in March so it will be hard to do both. Vice Chair Hansel agreed that the Earth Day timeframe will make more sense. Ms. Brunner stated that is still not too early to form a working group for a workshop slated for mid to late April so if anyone is interested in volunteering to organize a workshop to please let Chair Shedd or herself know. Ms. Pat Martin stated that she is interested.

g. Consultant status and progress

Ms. Brunner stated that she included a document in the packet from the consultant Cadmus entitled "Keene, New Hampshire: One Hundred Percent Renewable Energy Planning Evaluation Criteria." She said this is the first draft that Cadmus submitted to staff for evaluation criteria used to rank and

prioritize strategies. She said City staff did provide feedback so they will provide a revised draft. Ms. Brunner proposed using a similar format for ranking the action planning for the thermal and transportation sectors. She said any feedback from the committee will be passed on to Cadmus as well. Ms. Brunner said Cadmus is generating a whole list of actions that the City can take including community power, solarize campaigns, etc. She said then the City will choose the top six actions using the evaluation criteria in the packet. Ms. Brunner stated that for example, the City told Cadmus they want to give a higher weight to the criteria for the scale of impact. Chair Shedd stated they will discuss this process in more depth at the next session.

4) **Community Choice Aggregation**

Ms. Brunner stated that the City Manager and City staff met with the County at least twice to discuss the City's approach. She said the City would like to move forward with exploring a community power program; however, this option would not preclude the City from participating in a county-level program at a future point. She said the City is also exploring ways to be inclusive of communities outside of Keene. Ms. Brunner stated that the County is looking into a shared back office model. Councilor Clark stated that they spoke to the City Manager and he was unclear about the structure of the program. Ms. Brunner replied that she is not an expert in that area; however, she believes that it boils down to the fact that systems for setting up municipal programs are well-developed and understood. She said there is less hesitancy from suppliers who are bidding on a municipal program so it is more likely to be successful. She said NH is charting new ground with this type of program, which also means that there are a lot of details needing to be worked out, and suppliers may not be willing to assume certain risks. She said the municipal-level program is designed so that other communities can join in and once the details of a shared back office and county-level program are worked out they can look at joining that program down the line.

Mr. Bouchard stated that he and Mr. Lamb and a number of other country representatives met with the City Manager and Clean Energy NH representatives, and they agreed to try to work together to make this happen as a unit. He said there will be various pushes ahead for the City of Keene because they have more traction already to move the program along, however, they also agreed to work together to create a shared back office so when integration happens it will be much easier. He said it will also make it easier for some of the towns to join in on this group. Mr. Bouchard said generally speaking, when you go out to negotiate contracts in the power pool, it is important to maintain maximum critical mass moving forward because the bigger the aggregation, the better the prices.

Mr. Lamb stated that as the back office system develops, the City intends to draft an RFP for a community-choice aggregation (CCA) plan as soon as possible. Chair Shedd noted that the state-enabling legislation allowing CCA with an opt-out model is explicit in that the process needs a CCA Committee, which the City would need to name. She said some communities name their energy committees in that advisory role, however, she is not sure with that ECC has the time or expertise needed to serve as an advisory committee. She proposed representation on the advisory committee from ECC. Chair Shedd proposed that Mr. Bouchard be named on that committee and

perhaps Ms. Duffy, the energy purchaser at Keene State College. Vice Chair Hansel asked if the School District is planning on being involved. Mr. Dooley stated that they are interested in being involved, however, the School District's usage is very different and as a high user of energy they receive fantastic rates already. Mr. Bouchard added that there is a dual path system for programs like this: the philosophical path of green energy at the best rate but not necessarily the current rate, and then brown energy which is green and brown energy mixed together which might be the path forward toward green energy and often better rates. He said the value of CCA is choice and there are different paths of approach.

Councilor Clark stated that cheaper energy might incur external costs that are not born at the meter and instead are absorbed by the environment. He said the work of this committee is to achieve clean energy and there is a big difference between brown and green energy in terms of ECC's charge. Chair Shedd agreed that the primary mission of ECC is explicitly to work toward reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and it would be great to do that at a reduced cost but their primary charge is to achieve clean energy.

Ms. Dori Drachman introduced herself as a member of the Peterborough Energy Committee. She said that on behalf of the smaller towns, she encourages the City to include language in their CCA plan that would allow and encourage smaller towns to join the program at a later time. She noted that towns like Peterborough are at a disadvantage in terms of resources and she encourages Keene to maintain an openness to inclusivity. Ms. Brunner stated that is the City's intent. Mr. Bouchard added that one of his goals is to make sure smaller towns receive the benefit in proportion to how they are participating.

Ms. Brunner stated that in the resources folder on the Google Drive she included a folder about Community Power, which includes slides from webinars, outreach materials and background information on community power.

Mr. Bouchard and Mr. Weed excused themselves from the meeting.

Mr. Scott Maslansky asked about the role of competitive energy supply and if businesses that currently use a competitive energy supplier would be allowed and encouraged to participate in the CCA program as well. Chair Shedd replied that her understanding is that the electricity demand on which negotiations would be based are only relevant to those who are not already on competitive energy supply. She said most of the larger institutions and businesses are already on competitive energy supply. She said she hopes that as those contracts end, those entities can comparison shop and see what the CCA has to offer, if it can offer a green opportunity and that they could become involved. Ms. Brunner added that CCA in NH is set up in such a way that anyone who is already on a default energy option would be switched over to the community energy supply. She said people often do not switch and that is why, when they go out to bid with suppliers, they will be conservative and only look at people on the default supply when assessing the demand. Mr. Scott Maslansky asked if participation will be predominantly residential and Ms. Brunner and Chair Shedd replied yes.

5) Correspondence

a. Christa Daniels regarding “Game of Floods”

Ms. Daniels stated that she will be training about five graduate students to facilitate a game called Game of Floods. She said the Urban Sustainability Development Network decided to take a game from California, which is more a form of community engagement than a professional training. She stated that the game runs for about two hours, and involves a group of 7-9 people to play. In the game, players trade assets and figure out how to save a hypothetical town from a climate-related flood. Ms. Daniels explained that through the game, players are essentially performing a vulnerability assessment for an imaginary town called Resilience Harbor and are challenged to make strategic decisions, such as whether or not to save the school or the power plant, based on a set of priorities. In the end of the game, the players are given a budget and players are forced to brainstorm solutions together. Ms. Daniels explained that the game can be played by City Staff for fun or by high school students, however, the key is to have trained facilitators. She stated that they are proposing that students train committee members so that they can then facilitate the game and run it at schools or other locations. She said multiple groups can play simultaneously in the same room or space with different budgets and can compare their decisions with other player groups.

Ms. Daniels stated that AUNE is offering the training for anyone who wants to learn about the game and become a trained facilitator. Ms. Daniels replied that the game boards are small and easy to print (17 X 23). Ms. Dori Drachman asked if it is open to other counties and Ms. Daniels replied yes. She said individuals from Peterborough can be mixed in with Keene folks because it is good for players to work with people they do not know. Mr. Pipp added that it seems like a great way to get people involved and talking about flooding scenarios. Ms. Daniels also proposed that they find a good space where they can set up five tables, for example, the library or recreation center due to AUNE’s recent flooding incident.

Mr. Pipp moved to partner with AUNE on the “Game of Floods” game, Vice Chair Hansel seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

b. Eric Swope regarding NH Drinking Water Festival

Chair Shedd stated that if members are interested in being involved with the NH Drinking Water Festival for fourth graders in the community to please contact Mr. Swope.

c. Clean Energy Team – Request for ECC sponsorship of a NH Saves “Button Up” Workshop

Chair Shedd stated that over fifty people showed up to last year’s Button Up workshop which was one of the largest turn outs of residents interested in weatherization. She said the Clean Energy Team is asking the City to partner with them to host a Button Up workshop on March 23. Ms. Gillard said they are looking at the Stone Arch Community Room as a potential venue and if the workshop takes places earlier in the month, they could hold it at Keene Ice as well. Ms. Gillard stated that Keene was the largest turn out they have had in the past five years. Mr. Scott Maslansky

stated that March 23 is also Energy Week and has often included four to five energy-related events around the state.

Vice Chair Hansel moved to recommend that the City partner with the Clean Energy Team on the “Button Up” workshop, Mr. Pipp seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

6) New Business

Chair Shedd asked the committee if members would consider having a longer meeting in March. Vice Chair Hansel suggested that they might consider having two meetings next month if they are unable to find a time for a longer meeting. Ms. Brunner said she would send out an online poll to schedule the next meeting.

Chair Shedd stated that next month they will talk briefly about a state-initiative called the Carbon Cash Back coalition.

7) Next Meeting: TBD.

8) Adjourn

There being no further business, Chair Shedd adjourned the meeting at 9:20 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Ayshah Kassamali-Fox, Minute Taker