

City of Keene
New Hampshire

ENERGY AND CLIMATE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, May 4, 2022

8:00 AM

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

Members Present:

Peter Hansel, Chair
Zach Luse, Vice Chair
Councilor Bryan Lake
Jake Pipp
Paul Roth
Diana Duffy
Beth Campbell
Clair Oursler, Alternate

Staff Present:

Mari Brunner, Senior Planner

Members Not Present:

Councilor Raleigh Ormerod
Jude Nuru
Linsey Edmunds

1) Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Hansel called the meeting to order at 8:10 AM.

2) Approval of Minutes – April 6, 2022

Ms. Duffy made a motion to approve the minutes of April 6, 2022 as presented. Mr. Luse seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

3) Energy Plan Work Group Report-Outs

A) Weatherization

i) *Window Dressers Program*

Mr. Pipp reported that he and Mr. Luse met with staff members from Southwestern Community Services at the beginning of April. They are interested in the program and happy to help spread the word to folks on the fuel subsidies list and weatherization waiting list. Additionally, they will put interested contacts within the City of Keene area in touch with the group, and will keep a list of those interested but outside the City area, for potential future expansion of geographical reach.

Mr. Pipp mentioned that Nancy Gillard and Carolyn Jones from the Clean Energy Team had a table at the KSC work day event and also at the Monadnock Earth Day festival. Their table included information on the Window Dressers program and a sample window insert. Ms. Jones is working with Monadnock Habitat for Humanity and hoping to get volunteers for the community build. Mr. Pipp also mentioned tabling at the upcoming NH Saves Button Up Workshop on May 25th. He went on to state that Mr. Luse has been working on a website that provides information on the program and allows people to sign up for the program, as well as volunteers to sign up. Their email is keenewindowinserts@gmail.com. Mr. Pipp stated Councilor Lake has joined their group and noted his appreciation. He mentioned that another member of the public is joining the group as well.

Mr. Luse reported that thus far they have received 5 requests, making a total of 80-90 inserts.

Ms. Campbell asked how much capacity they have to go beyond their goal. Mr. Luse stated they are capped at 200 units per the Window Dressers program. He added that if they created a waiting list they could potentially do another build shortly after.

Chair Hansel asked if this process is something they could take over themselves. Mr. Pipp stated, the first time around, it's good to see how it's done and not try to figure it all out from scratch. He noted he feels that they'll be able to tweak the process and maximize it and then either continue working with Window Dressers or go off on their own.

Councilor Lake asked if they had locked down a location for the community build. Ms. Brunner replied that the Blastos room was recommended and she is looking into that. She reminded everyone that they will need the room for 6-7 days to accommodate a day for clean-up, a day for take-down, and around 4 days to build the inserts with volunteers. Mr. Roth said Cheshire Medical's facility located on Maple Avenue could be another potential location.

Ms. Duffy asked how they arrived at the relationship with Window Dressers. Chair Hansel stated they brought the idea before the committee two meetings ago after the work group did research, weighed options, and met with Window Dressers. They came to the conclusion that they would need to work with Window Dressers for at least the first year to learn the process, before potentially doing it alone.

Ms. Jones asked for clarification on the percent of low income people that will receive inserts. Mr. Pipp stated 50% will go to the low-income population. Chair Hansel asked how they verify that information. Mr. Luse added that there is no income verification but more of an honor system with Window Dressers.

Ms. Gillard stated the Clean Energy team wanted to ask the ECC to partner with them for the Button Up Workshop. Chair Hansel stated they have that on the agenda to discuss later on in the meeting.

B) Electric Vehicles

Councilor Lake reported that Mr. Norland gave them some good updates regarding what's happening in the EV world, such as Tesla factories reopening and developments in the EV battery world. He stated they discussed the Volkswagen (VW) Settlement funds and he ran the group through guidelines such as what the college presented to them, code requirements he presented last fall, and the general recommendations for commercial and residential properties. Councilor Lake stated the guidelines are not quite what they are looking for so Ms. Duffy is going to help bring all the documents together into something cohesive and more focused towards City guidelines for EV infrastructure. He added that it will take some time to go through that process but it is their main focus right now.

Ms. Shedd from the Monadnock Sustainability Hub stated there's a mini drive electric expo in Peterborough on May 6th from 5:00-8:00pm. She explained that it will primarily be a celebration of the installation of some level 2 charges on the municipal parking lot in Peterborough. She also updated the group on the progress of the Co-op having level 2 chargers in its parking lot. She reported that the VW proposal was submitted in early February, so they are hoping to hear any time now and it would include two fast chargers and one station with 2 plugs for level 2 charging. She added that there will still need to be some additional fundraising for match dollars.

Mr. Roth referred to the paper the KSC student produced and suggested they could format that to be an educational resource on the website for the public. He felt that would accentuate a lot of the work they have done thus far and bring awareness to the public.

Chair Hansel stated he is attending a task force on micro-transit and there was mention of alternatives to EV such as hydrogen. He encouraged the committee to be open to other forms of renewable energy besides electric.

C) Community Solar

Ms. Brunner reported that Mr. Nuru is on a work trip so he could not be present; however, they can get an update from the group at the next meeting. Mr. Norland stated they took a look at a potential location for solar panels and it looks good as an option. Chair Hansel reminded everyone that it is the land down Route 12 on Lower Main Street that is a City owned lot and used to be a wastewater facility.

Ms. Shedd asked if they would have a public celebration for the solar installation at the waste water treatment plant being completed. Chair Hansel stated they will do a ribbon cutting.

D) Renewable Energy Loans

Ms. Campbell reported that they had a guest speaker, Scott Maslansky from the NH Community Development Finance Authority, who gave information on how they run their operation. The

group decided they need to further educate themselves on what opportunities exist with nonprofit organizations and how to pair themselves with for profit organizations. She stated Chair Hansel met with a number of interested groups including the Monadnock Economic Development Corporation, who is not ready now but may have funds available in the future, the Keene Downtown Housing Corporation, Mascoma Savings Bank, and the Regional Economic Development Corporation. Ms. Campbell stated there are opportunities out there they just need to explore which will be the best fit.

Chair Hansel agreed, stating all the groups have some interest; however, they have different missions for use of their funds. He explained some of these differences and stated it will take some time to research. He noted that how ECC and the City fit into this picture is still unknown, but they are at least starting the discussion for potential collaborations and getting money for their mission to go towards energy efficiency and renewable energy.

Ms. Campbell added there are a number of communities around the country who have already instituted programs like this and they will be researching those as well, so as to not reinvent the wheel. She stated they also have a list of programs administered by utilities or banking institutions. There was mention of the Milwaukee Shines Solar Program and Ms. Brunner stated she reached out to them to set up a meeting and will report back on that once it occurs.

Mr. Norland asked about EV chargers at apartment buildings and Chair Hansel stated that's a good point. Ms. Brunner stated the EV Ready Guidelines were meant to be a resource for when people are doing reconstruction or developments and how to make a property EV ready. She added that they are trying to re-work the document so it can be put on their website as a resource.

E) Outreach and Education – Mr. Luse reported that they have not had a meeting yet but he will be working with Ms. Duffy this week.

4) Requests for Event Sponsorship

A) NHSaves Button Up Workshop, May 25, 6:00pm, Keene Parks and Recreation Center (Clean Energy Keene)

Chair Hansel stated there has been a request for event sponsorship for the NH Saves Button Up Workshop. He reminded the committee that they have done this as a committee in the past and feels it is a good thing to continue doing. Mr. Luse made a motion to approve the sponsorship. The motion was seconded by Mr. Roth. Councilor Lake asked if the main purpose of sponsorship was to have their name as a sponsor and for the Clean Energy Group to be able to use the location free of charge. Chair Hansel stated that is correct. The motion passed unanimously. Councilor Lake asked if there was a requirement that anyone from the committee be at the event. Ms. Jones and Ms. Gillard stated it is always nice to have representation from the committee.

B) Community Power Roundtable, June 7, 5:00pm, Keene Public Library/Heberton Hall (Monadnock Sustainability Hub)

Chair Hansel stated there is a request to sponsor the Community Power Roundtable. Ms. Shedd stated Southwest Region Planning Commission is involved with the roundtable as well and explained a bit about the event and read a statement surrounding Keene's Community Power Plan goals, noting that it makes sense for the City of Keene to be present.

Mr. Roth made a motion to approve the request. Mr. Pipp seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Chair Hansel added that, with regards to outreach and education, they've been meeting with a representative from Southwest Region Planning Commission and the Greater Keene and Peterborough Chamber of Commerce to organize a regional series in the fall. They are in the process of planning and are hoping for an October date. The goal is to get the word out to a different audience than normal.

5) Community Power Update

Ms. Brunner stated their plan was officially submitted with a more robust data security plan and they are waiting to hear back.

6) Legislative Updates

Chair Hansel stated he did some research and most of it was about crossover amongst legislative branches that needs to be worked out. Ms. Brunner added that the House is in session to go under a consent calendar. She explained that anything that both the Senate and the House agree to will be voted on and the following day they will vote on the regular calendar. She added that Clean Energy NH has been doing a great job of tracking everything and the City of Keene is a member, so you can sign up for their policy updates and weekly calls.

7) New Business

8) Next Meeting: Wednesday June 1, 2022 – 8:00 AM

9) Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Hansel adjourned the meeting at 8:53 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Nicole Cullinane, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,
Mari Brunner, Senior Planner