

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

**ENERGY AND CLIMATE COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, November 6, 2024**

**8:00 AM**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room,  
City Hall**

**Members Present:**

Zach Luse, Chair  
Paul Roth, Vice Chair  
Gordon Leverage  
Jude Nuru  
Kenneth Swymer Jr.  
Councilor Bryan Lake  
Chuck Redfern, Alternate (Voting)  
Rowland Russell, Alternate (Voting)  
Jake Pipp, Alternate (Voting)

**Staff Present:**

Megan Fortson, Planner  
Emily Duseau, Planning Technician

**Members Not Present:**

Annu Joshi Bargale  
Diana Duffy  
Clair Oursler  
Lisa Maxfield  
Michael Winograd, Alternate

**1) Call to Order and Roll Call**

Chair Luse called the meeting to order at 8:00 AM and invited all the attending alternates to participate as voting members. Mr. Jude Nuru arrived to the meeting at 8:07 AM.

**2) Approval of Minutes – October 2, 2024**

Councilor Bryan Lake made a motion to approve the October 2, 2024 meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Roth and was unanimously approved.

**3) Update on Keene Clean Energy Team Button-Up Workshop Reimbursement**

Chair Luse explained to the group that Ms. Carolyn Jones no longer needed the Energy & Climate Committee (ECC) to cover the cost of the ad that was run prior to the Button-Up Workshop. Later on during the meeting, Ms. Jones mentioned that she was able to get a reimbursement from NH Saves instead.

**4) Survey on Food Waste/Composting – Rowland Russell**

Mr. Rowland Russell explained that the local regional food systems assessment group has been collaborating with faculty and students at Keene State College on a senior project related to the feasibility of commercial composting in the region. They've been circulating a survey around the City and trying to get responses from members of the public. Mr. Russell noted that he and his group will most likely extend the timeline of the survey and expand on the survey results and report created by the Keene State students in the future. The students have a limited amount of time to dedicate to the project before the end of their class.

**5) Committee Membership**

Chair Luse mentioned that his second term on the ECC would be expiring at the end of the year, but he would continue serving as Chair until a new member was elected to fill his spot. He noted that Vice Chair Roth would also not be continuing as Vice Chair next year, and the Committee would need to figure out general membership and decide who they would like to elect as a new Chair & Vice Chair.

**6) New ECC Meeting Location – Room 22, Parks & Rec Center, 312 Washington St**

Mr. Luse noted that moving forward, ECC meetings will be held in Room 22 at the Parks & Recreation Center located at 312 Washington St.

**7) Work-Group Report-Outs**

**A) Community Solar**

Mr. Nuru explained that the Community Solar Work Group met last month. They discussed the solar farm in Jaffrey and are trying to publicize it through the Keene Sentinel, Chamber of Commerce, and Hannah Grimes. He mentioned potentially inviting Josh Meehan, the Executive Director of Keene Housing, to an upcoming ECC meeting to discuss what their organization has done related to community solar and achieving 100% renewable solar.

**B) Grants, Fundraising and Partnerships**

Mr. Redfern explained that he forwarded a grant opportunity related solar photovoltaic projects providing direct benefits to New Hampshire residents considered low, moderate, or low and moderate income to the City Manager. She forwarded the information on to the appropriate City departments and other community members. He noted that the application submittal deadline is January 2, 2025.

Chair Luse noted that he had sent this information to City Staff and requested that it be distributed to the ECC members as informational rather than something that the group should definitively consider pursuing. Mr. Nuru mentioned that he has already received \$400,000 in grant funds

through this process and stated that he would be happy to help anyone interested in applying for this type of grant.

**C) Education and Outreach**

Chair Luse explained that the Education & Outreach Group has been working on creating promotional materials for Community Power & general ECC brochures. He stated that draft documents have been sent to Mari Brunner, Senior Planner, for her review. Megan Fortson, Planner, noted that she would follow up with Ms. Brunner about the status of these documents and would then forward the materials onto Rebecca Laundry, the Communications & Marketing Director, for formatting.

**D) Legislative Tracking**

Councilor Bryan Lake stated that there were no updates on the legislative tracking work group.

**E) Food Security**

Mr. Russell stated that he has been working with Antioch on a survey to gauge local interest in community gardens and increasing community garden space. He noted that he has also been looking into the possibility of creating community gardens in the downtown area with three different organizations: Antioch University New England's Community Garden Connections, the Monadnock Farm & Community Coalition, and the Cheshire County Conservation District. He also noted that some stakeholders, including immigrant and refugee community members, would prefer opportunities to garden directly in the soil as opposed to using raised beds.

**8) SolSmart Training Opportunities**

Chair Luse noted that there are some upcoming solar training opportunities that will be offered through the SolSmart Program. He noted that information about the upcoming sessions had been sent out to the Committee by City Staff via email.

**9) New Business**

Chair Luse mentioned that he attended the Local Energy Solutions Conference that was held in Manchester on November 1<sup>st</sup> and found it to be very interesting. He noted that he was surprised to find that Keene is not a member of the Community Power Coalition in NH.

**10) Next Meeting: Wednesday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**11) Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair Luse adjourned the meeting at 8:44 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Megan Fortson, Planner

Reviewed and edited by,  
Emily Duseau, Planning Technician