



## **ENERGY & CLIMATE COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA**

Wednesday, April 6, 2022, 8:00 AM

City Hall, Second Floor Council Chambers

### **Members:**

Peter Hansel, Chair  
Zach Luse, Vice Chair  
Diana Duffy  
Jake Pipp  
Councilor Raleigh Ormerod  
Jude Nuru  
Paul Roth  
Linsey Edmunds

Councilor Bryan Lake  
Beth Campbell  
Clair Oursler, Alternate

### **Staff:**

Mari Brunner, Senior Planner  
Chris Cusack, Contract Planner

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Approval of Minutes - March 2, 2022 & March 15, 2022
3. Retreat Debrief
  - a. Results of SWOT analysis
  - b. Work Group Guidelines
4. Energy Plan Work Group Report-outs
  - a. Weatherization
  - b. Electric Vehicles
  - c. Community Solar
  - d. Renewable Energy Loans
  - e. Outreach and Education
5. Upcoming Events
  - a. New Hampshire Energy Week – April 11-15, 2022
  - b. Monadnock Earth Day Festival – April 23, 2022, 12:00-4:00 pm
  - c. Keene Energy Week – October 16-22, 2022
6. Community Power Update
7. Keene SolSmart Designation - Gold
8. New Business
9. Next Meeting: Wednesday, May 4, 2022 – 8:00 am
10. Adjourn

Link to ECC Google Drive Folder:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1O1WIR0fADTNijRt13v3DU7k2FwxXDcGs?usp=sharing>

1 **City of Keene**  
2 **New Hampshire**

3  
4  
5 **ENERGY AND CLIMATE COMMITTEE**  
6 **MEETING MINUTES**  
7

**Wednesday, March 2, 2022, 2022**

**8:00 AM**

**Council Chambers,  
City Hall**

**Members Present:**

Peter Hansel, Chair  
Councilor Raleigh Ormerod  
Jake Pipp  
Zach Luse, Vice Chair  
Councilor Bryan Lake  
Clair Oursler, Alternate

**Staff Present:**

Mari Brunner, Senior Planner

**Members Not Present:**

Diana Duffy  
Paul Roth  
Beth Campbell  
Jude Nuru

8  
9  
10 **1) Call to Order and Roll Call**

11  
12 Chair Hansel called the meeting to order at 8:00 AM. Roll call was conducted.

13  
14 **2) Approval of Minutes – February 2, 2022**

15  
16 Councilor Ormerod made a motion to accept the minutes of February 2, 2022 as presented. Mr.  
17 Luse seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

18  
19 Ms. Brunner mentioned that at the last meeting there was no motion made and seconded when  
20 adopting the meeting minutes. She suggested they go ahead and do that today for the record.

21  
22 Mr. Luse made a motion to accept the December meeting minutes. Mr. Pipp seconded the  
23 motion, which passed unanimously.

24  
25 **3) Electric Vehicle (EV) Discussion – Public Works Director & Parking Operations Manager**

26 Ms. Brunner recapped that a few months ago, the committee had requested updates on the City's  
27 plans for electric vehicles and EV charging stations and she felt it might be better for everyone to  
28 hear directly from the staff in charge of those operations.

29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65  
66  
67  
68  
69  
70  
71

Chair Hansel welcomed Kürt Blomquist, Public Works Director and Chelsea North, Parking Operations Manager, to present on the matter.

Mr. Blomquist started off by pointing out the importance of support infrastructure, noting that there are multiple supporting pieces behind EV charging stations. He stated the City has been running biofuels for over a decade, has utilized hybrid vehicles in administration functions, and still has a GEM vehicle; which was among some of the first electric vehicles produced. He went on to state that as the City has been discussing alternate fuel vehicles and electric vehicles there are three tracks they've had to consider, the first being City operations.

Mr. Blomquist stated the City operates a fleet of around 158 vehicles that are run through their central garage, and about 99 other vehicles that are run as outside expense. These vehicles range from administrative cars all the way up to fire vehicles and plow trucks. He stated they are likely looking at their administrative fleet first for adding electric vehicle components, mainly because the "heavies" have not come to the forefront yet. Mr. Blomquist explained that Ford is just coming out with an electric 150; however, for the City, that is considered a light duty vehicle when compared to the 85% of their fleet that is heavy duty. He further explained that EV technology doesn't necessarily support heavy torque issues very well.

Mr. Blomquist went on to state that as they begin to look at EV operations for city fleet vehicles they must also consider EV charging station locations. He reported that they are looking at locations such as Public Works, Police Station, Parks & Recreation Department and City Hall. They must also consider different types of EV charging stations, such as Type 2 or Type 3, as well as pricing differentials. Mr. Blomquist explained that it may make sense to put a Type 2 charger at City Hall because their typical operations are 8-5pm, so the charger could be a slow charge. For Police Department and Public Works, they would likely be looking more towards Type 3 because those operations are more 24/7 and would require a fast charge.

Mr. Blomquist stated they are continuing to explore electrical infrastructure and ideas and issues that come with it. He gave the example of the Commercial Street parking lot they built where they put two EV charging stations, pointing out that it cost about \$15,000 in electrical upgrades to support those two stations. He reiterated that when looking at charging station locations they also have to consider the infrastructure in that area to be able to support the electrical.

The next issue Mr. Blomquist addressed is the public infrastructure component, which would be Parks and Services and include garages, surface lots and on street parking. He invited Ms. North to speak to a current CIP project looking at putting in additional EV stations in the public parking lots.

Ms. North stated they have two EV chargers in the Commercial Lot, which is one of their 10-hour lots. She explained that when they are considering charging station locations for public use, or possibly downtown residential use, they are looking for long-term type charging. She went on

72 to state that there may be a possibility of looking into the fast charging, but electrical  
73 infrastructure makes that tricky. She added that some of the current codes have hour limits which  
74 also plays a role. Ms. North stated they have to carefully look at demographics such as who the  
75 user will be and how long the chargers will be utilized. She reported that they have gathered that  
76 type of data through their current EV chargers and have found that people typically charge for 2-  
77 3 hours at a time, but the use of the chargers is going up month over month and year over year.  
78 Ms. North noted that this is promising and in the CIP they have elected for 10 additional  
79 chargers, locations to be determined.

80

81 Mr. Blomquist stated another issue that comes into play when discussing EV chargers is policy.  
82 Some states have found that there is a resale of electricity issue so they will need to take a look at  
83 policy and research laws dealing with resale electricity, as well as how they will recover their  
84 cost for installing the supporting infrastructure. He explained that the typical process would look  
85 like the City of Keene receiving a bill for any electricity used in the charging stations and they  
86 would then charge the user/customer, who is fueling their vehicle up, and would want to recover  
87 those costs. Mr. Blomquist added that larger private companies such as Sunoco are interested in  
88 potentially providing this service down the line.

89

90 Mr. Blomquist also mentioned that there will need to be discussion on who can utilize the  
91 parking spaces with EV charging stations. For example, if a non-electric vehicle wants to use the  
92 parking space, will that be allowed or will those spaces be preserved for electric vehicles only?  
93 He added that this will become important if there are charging spaces in front of stores. He  
94 summarized that the City has begun looking at alternative fuel for their fleet operations and  
95 discussing how they will provide that infrastructure for the public moving forward.

96

97 Mr. Blomquist next mentioned EV recycling and stated there is a market and a system set up to  
98 recycle batteries but there isn't necessarily the same level of recycling markets for larger EV  
99 batteries, which can be anywhere from 800 to 1200 lbs. He added that they are hazardous waste  
100 so questions arise with regards to how they will handle and manage this hazardous waste. They  
101 will need to put infrastructure in place to be able to handle the batteries, which the manufacturer  
102 recommends as good for 8 years.

103

104 The last area Mr. Blomquist covered was facilities. He stated the City runs a fleet operation and  
105 their facilities are designed to the codes to deal with gasoline, diesel and propane vehicles. There  
106 are differences for maintenance of EV vehicles from both an equipment standpoint and a  
107 technical standpoint, such as training. He reported that they have a \$70,000 project in FY23 to  
108 look at their fleet facility, which will include analysis of supporting EV fleet maintenance.

109

110 Chair Hansel asked about the Commercial Street charging stations and if the billing goes through  
111 a supplier. Ms. North stated right now they go through a company called SemaConnect and  
112 pricing is set up with an electrical cost, a lot cost, and an administrative/processing cost.  
113 Customers make an account through SemaConnect and the City is sent a net proceeds check  
114 once a quarter. She went on to state that it's up for discussion to see if there is a better option out

115 there; however, it has been working fairly well so far. Mr. Blomquist stated it is sometimes a  
116 hassle for customers to create an account, so there will be discussion about that. He added that,  
117 over time, there may end up being one or two larger companies in control and customers won't  
118 need to create a bunch of different accounts.

119  
120 Chair Hansel stated the demand charge, which will come back to the City, is another issue which  
121 will need to be worked out as we move forward. He added that he's confident it will be sorted  
122 out. Chair Hansel also asked about the potential fast charger at the Monadnock Food Co-op,  
123 mentioning that the Co-op applied for one and believes the bids are coming up soon. He  
124 wondered if they were working with the City on that. Mr. Blomquist stated the City has not been  
125 contacted about that at this time but he believes March is when they announce who will be  
126 awarded.

127  
128 Councilor Ormerod stated he is encouraged to see all the work that has been done and thanked  
129 them for that and for outlining the issues, particularly with policy. He asked for clarification on  
130 where the light duty versus heavy duty starts and what category the cruisers fall into. Mr.  
131 Blomquist stated there are manufacturers making EV for police departments. He noted that  
132 emergency services is an interesting world, some chiefs are more risk tolerant than others but in  
133 general most police departments are comfortable with administration vehicles. With regards to  
134 front-line cruisers, there's a split between whether they want full electric vehicle or not. This  
135 depends on how much equipment they put into the cruisers, along with just the operation of the  
136 vehicle. For example, in Keene they have computers, printers, cameras, two radio systems, etc.  
137 He added that they haven't had a lot of internal conversations with the Keene Police Department  
138 yet, but are expecting to first roll EVs out in the administration fleet.

139  
140 Councilor Lake thanked Mr. Blomquist and Ms. North and asked, with the potential construction  
141 in downtown Keene in the next couple of years, are they looking at putting chargers on Main  
142 Street? Mr. Blomquist stated that will be part of the overall conversation and policy will be  
143 significant when it comes to that area as well. He added that a few years ago, Eversource moved  
144 their heavy transformers out from behind and removed everything from underground, so the City  
145 will need to figure out what conduit to put into the ground so in the future they can run the  
146 necessary power hook-ups for those charging systems.

147  
148 Councilor Lake stated he is generally concerned about putting them on Main Street because it  
149 increases the demand for those parking spots and makes parking tougher; however, the parking  
150 lots and garages off of Main Street sound like a perfect place. He also suggested reaching out to  
151 Hannaford and other shopping centers to see if they can get some infrastructure in place since the  
152 people most likely to be using the charging stations will be those coming from out of town into  
153 Keene.

154  
155 Ms. North added that not all vehicles can take the fast chargers, so even if they do have them on  
156 Main Street, keeping the 2 hour limit, they need to then consider if level 2 chargers fit all of the  
157 vehicles, serve all of the people, and give them enough time to charge there. She stated these

158 questions are somewhat complicated and multifaceted and will be an important part of the  
159 discussion. Ms. North stated the parking lots are generally a good place to put the chargers  
160 because of the lack of time constraints and the extra space to put multiple types of chargers if  
161 need be. Mr. Blomquist added that they are basically laying out a new infrastructure system,  
162 similar to laying out the new sewer system in the past, and there will be a lot of questions,  
163 mistakes, working through the process and thinking about expansion in the future for services.

164  
165 Chair Hansel thanked both Mr. Blomquist and Ms. North and stated they will work with them in  
166 any way they can. Mr. Blomquist encouraged them to reach out to him, his fleet manager and  
167 Ms. North. Ms. North stated she has the information about their current chargers, which will be  
168 very important going forward, and welcomed the committee to contact her any time.

169  
170 Bruce Norland of Keene, and a member of the EV charging work group, referenced an earlier  
171 comment made about an 8 year life for batteries. He stated that he owns a Tesla and the 8 year is  
172 a guarantee to at least 70% charge. He explained that the car will most likely wear out before the  
173 battery does. He added that Perry, New York has two Tesla chargers in their Police Department  
174 and a Ford Maverick on order, and they are smaller than Keene. Westport, CT also has some EV  
175 chargers in the Police Department as well.

176  
177 Mr. Norland brought up that they mentioned it might be difficult to go from coast to coast with  
178 an electric car, but he uses a Tesla supercharger system with no problem going to Florida.

179  
180 He next touched on the discussion about police cars having a lot of computers and equipment  
181 necessary for communication. He stated some police departments have been using the computer  
182 in the car as a way to communicate and decrease the necessity of having separate radios.

183  
184 Mr. Blomquist stated he appreciated Mr. Norland's comments and mentioned that the points he  
185 brought up will come with added cost and that's what needs to be further discussed. For  
186 example, changing communications out in police vehicles are details of emergency service that  
187 will need to be worked out. He added that Tesla does their own maintenance but the City of  
188 Keene will do maintenance in their fleet shop. Mr. Norland mentioned that most maintenance on  
189 electric vehicles occurs on the tires. Mr. Blomquist added that the Police Department uses their  
190 cars differently than the average user, so it'll be a little bit of a different conversation when  
191 talking about fleet operations and Police Department uses, certified mechanics, warranties, etc.

192  
193 Linsey Edmunds, Sustainability Coordinator at Keene State College, stated they are doing  
194 similar things at KSC as far as looking at EV infrastructure and policies, and are hoping to utilize  
195 the NH infrastructure funds. She went on to state that they are looking to build EV infrastructure  
196 on campus and wondered if the City is looking into the NH infrastructure funds as well.

197  
198 Mr. Blomquist stated they are looking into the funds but at the Federal level they haven't passed  
199 the appropriation bill yet. There was short discussion about how they just need a plan by August  
200 and Mr. Blomquist stated he suspects their plan is going to be similar to what they did with the

201 Volkswagen grant money, where most of the money will likely come down through existing  
202 infrastructures and programs. He added that one of the long lead items is to have Eversource  
203 come in and evaluate the infrastructure. Mr. Blomquist and Ms. Edmunds decided to stay  
204 connected with regards to the aforementioned.

205

206 **4) Energy Plan Work Group Report-outs**

207 **A) Weatherization**

208 **i) Window Dressers Program** – Mr. Luse stated they spent most of their  
209 last meetings talking about window inserts and Mr. Pipp researched and reached  
210 out to Window Dressers to help weigh the option of going through the Window  
211 Dressers program or coming up with their own plan. When researching why  
212 window inserts make sense they found the average window install is somewhere  
213 around \$1,000 per window and can save up to 20% of the energy in a typical  
214 home, maybe even more in a New England home. Furthermore, 10 inserts in a  
215 typical home can save around 105 gallons of oil per year. Mr. Luse showed a  
216 sample window insert to the committee and explained that the Window Dresser’s  
217 inserts were 50-75% less cost-wise versus going out and buying the plexiglass and  
218 metal frame set up. He stated window inserts are far less expensive and if they are  
219 looking to provide to low income households it becomes more financially  
220 feasible.

221

222 Mr. Luse went on to explain the Window Dressers program and stated volunteers  
223 build the inserts, which is why the cost is lower. Typically they provide a manual  
224 with the entire process, train the measurers, and do one volunteer hour per  
225 window insert. For new builds there’s a cap of 200 window inserts. On average,  
226 there are about seven window inserts ordered per home, which means 25 to 30  
227 homes would get the inserts in the first year of the program. He added that 25-  
228 35% of the window inserts go to low income households who either don’t pay or  
229 make a small contribution. Additionally, they expect people who order the  
230 windows to come volunteer and help build them.

231

232 Mr. Luse noted there is lot of overhead and restrictions that come with the  
233 program; however, when speaking with individuals in the building industry and  
234 exploring the idea of doing their own program as a City, he came back to two key  
235 issues. One of them being that Window Dressers handles the financial part, which  
236 on their own could be a big paperwork/process issue if taking money through the  
237 City, or finding another organization to pass money though. The second issue  
238 would be trying to figure out the process from scratch. Overall, Mr. Luse stated it  
239 seems it will save them a lot of time to go with the Window Dressers program in  
240 the first year and have that opportunity to learn what they can, and then make a  
241 decision from there on whether they’d want to do it on their own in following  
242 years. He added that the New England Grassroots Environment Fund is available  
243 to help pay for some of the low income window inserts. The details will need to



244 be worked out and the application is due March 15<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Luse added that it's hard  
245 to convince people to do weatherization projects on their homes when there are no  
246 incentives or support from Eversource, so it seems like something they can do  
247 now from a weatherization and energy savings perspective.

248  
249 Councilor Ormerod asked if they can assemble at a more local location. Mr. Luse  
250 stated the build will take place in Keene and they will find a donated facility to  
251 use over 5-6 days.

252  
253 Councilor Ormerod asked for clarification on the economics of oil saved. Mr.  
254 Luse stated 105 gallons of oil saved per 10 window inserts. Councilor Ormerod  
255 commented that that's good from a conservation standpoint but asked which  
256 organization would it make sense for to fund something like that, and would it be  
257 sustainable. Mr. Luse stated the benefit is that it is volunteer based and can grow  
258 overtime. Additionally, they could partner with someone like Southwestern  
259 Community Services to provide the inserts to people on fuel assistance, or embark  
260 on other fundraising or grant opportunities. Mr. Luse stated the only part that  
261 could potentially not be sustainable is maintaining a base of volunteers to do the  
262 work.

263  
264 Mr. Pipp stated the grant is due March 15<sup>th</sup> and Window Dressers recommended  
265 they get it in at least a week before that, leaving them very little time. He added  
266 that the grant can be between \$1,000 and \$4,000, and although Window Dressers  
267 helps cover some of the costs for low income households, it would help increase  
268 the number of free inserts they can give out. Mr. Pipp stated they'd also need to  
269 cover costs such as food for volunteers and mileage. He explained that volunteers  
270 are required to drive to homes and measure to guarantee that the window dressers  
271 fit, and their mileage needs to be covered. Mr. Pipp mentioned that they likely  
272 won't be able to accept people from very far outside of Keene at first, because  
273 they will have enough demand locally. He added that most builds have more  
274 demand than they can handle. If they move forward with this he suggested they  
275 have a small dedicated core group of people. Mr. Pipp stated one reason to get  
276 started right away is that the weather is still cold and people are still paying for  
277 oil.

278  
279 Chair Hansel clarified that the program can go ahead with or without the grant  
280 and that the purpose of the grant is to allow them to reach more middle/lower  
281 income households. He suggested they line up the plan and where they will get  
282 volunteers prior to applying for a grant, and recommended proceeding without the  
283 grant. Then, if they want to continue in years to come, they can apply at that time.

284  
285 Councilor Ormerod asked if the grant requires City resources. Mr. Pipp stated  
286 they could either use the City or another nonprofit as a fiscal sponsor for handling



287 the grants, or they can open a bank account in a name created for the local  
288 community build. Councilor Ormerod agreed with the suggestion to hold off on  
289 the grant and suggested they begin to inform partners that there's a possibility in  
290 the future but they want to pilot the program. By pilot he stated he means doing  
291 things such as setting up the process with Window Dressers and organizing  
292 volunteers. Mr. Pipp stated they could definitely move forward with the program  
293 without applying for the grant. Window Dressers promoted it because community  
294 builds have had a lot of success with it in the past. He stated they could also reach  
295 out to various community groups or business, such as banks, and apply for grants  
296 that way.

297  
298 Ms. Brunner stated the committee would need to first vote to apply for the grant  
299 and then the City Council would have to accept the grant; however, the grant  
300 seems to have very little overhead so it wouldn't be too much of a burden on staff.  
301 She pointed out that they do the grant round twice a year, so coming up again in  
302 September or October they will have another opportunity to apply.

303  
304 Councilor Lake suggested they hold off on the grant for now and then go after it  
305 in the future once they are set up.

306  
307 Chair Hansel stated there could be organizations or business in town that would  
308 get behind this, so he would agree to hold off on the grant until they line  
309 everything up.

310  
311 Mr. Luse stated waiting until the fall to apply for the grant shouldn't be an issue.

312  
313 Mr. Pipp stated the next application round might be too late for the fall build but  
314 he will look into it further and also research other funding opportunities in the  
315 meantime. Mr. Luse explained that either he or Mr. Pipp will have to attend a  
316 build with another city for training purposes. They discussed promoting and  
317 taking sign-ups through Keene Energy Week and then doing the build in late fall  
318 or early winter.

319  
320 Mr. Luse made a motion to authorize the weatherization work group to move  
321 forward with pursuing the Window Dressing program and organizing a Window  
322 Dressers event for Keene in the fall. Councilor Ormerod seconded the motion,  
323 which passed unanimously.

324  
325 **B) Home Energy Labeling** – Ms. Brunner stated all members of the labeling group  
326 who were on the committee are no longer on the committee, so there's no update on this  
327 item. Mr. Norland stated they need more members for the home energy labeling group  
328 since they just lost two members. Chair Hansel stated they will keep that in mind and  
329 believes it is a discussion point for the retreat.

330  
331  
332  
333  
334  
335  
336  
337  
338  
339  
340  
341  
342  
343  
344  
345  
346  
347  
348  
349  
350  
351  
352  
353  
354  
355  
356  
357  
358  
359  
360  
361  
362  
363  
364  
365  
366  
367  
368  
369  
370  
371  
372

C) **Electric Vehicles** –Councilor Lake stated for the upcoming retreat they may want to explore the idea of electrifying equipment, such as lawnmowers and weed-whackers, and expanding past vehicles.

D) **Community Solar** – There was no one present to report on this item. Chair Hansel mentioned that he contacted Duncan Watson to find out the drawbacks on doing solar development at the recycling center. Mr. Watson informed him that there is no three phase power there so an infrastructure change would be needed and will likely be expensive. Additionally, there is not a lot of demand for energy there so they would have to be group net metered to other uses in the City. Mr. Watson was very enthusiastic about the idea and wants to be as helpful as he can in pursuing that.

5) **“Green Regional Issues Series” Proposal**

Chair Hansel stated he contacted the Chamber of Commerce to see if they’d be interested in putting on a regional issue series based on clean energy and received a very enthusiastic response from Southwest Region Planning Commission. They have an upcoming meeting scheduled and he asked the group who they felt their audience is and what they see them providing the audience with in the way of new and exciting information. He explained that the series are typically held at the Alumni Center at Keene State College and attract around 40-50 people, with the set up being a panel or speaker to introduce a topic and generate discussion. He suggested they appeal to businesses as they are a key potential for achieving more growth in renewable energy in the region, as well as landlords.

Councilor Ormerod suggested realtors and banks and addressing some of the myths about alternative energy as an opportunity for education.

Mr. Luse suggested telling the success stories from the small business webinar during Keene Energy Week.

Chair Hansel added that the Monadnock Sustainability Hub will be present at the upcoming meeting with the Southwest Region Planning Commission.

Councilor Ormerod suggested commercial installation success stories across the state for content, which includes school districts, and will show the economic viability to fiscally conservative organizations.

6) **Community Power Update**

Ms. Brunner reported that the PUC held a public hearing in early January and issued an order of notice on February 3<sup>rd</sup>. They scheduled a public hearing at 21 South Fruit Street, Suite 10, in Concord, NH on March 7<sup>th</sup> at 1:00pm. The deadline for submission of comments following that

373 hearing is March 14<sup>th</sup>. She explained that this is about the PUC rulemaking process for  
374 Community Power. There had been an informal rulemaking process going on before HB315 was  
375 submitted last year, which put a stop to the rulemaking process, and now they are picking the  
376 process up again and beginning the formal rulemaking process. She stated what came out of the  
377 earlier informal process will be their starting point, which is positive news and it's moving along.  
378 Ms. Brunner stated their consultants are on the contact list and will likely be participating. She  
379 mentioned that, for anyone who would like to attend or submit comments, they can reach out to  
380 her or Clean Energy NH for more information.

381

382 Chair Hansel stated the governor has recently signed the authorization for the bill passed that  
383 brings them back to where they were before the energy efficiency measures were voted down.  
384 He explained that they are back to the previous levels from 2021, which is good news because it  
385 gets them back on track to where they were prior to the triennial plan being voted down.

386

387

388 **7) New Business**

389

390 Chair Hansel stated Lindsey Edmunds from Keene State College will be joining them as a  
391 member soon. Additionally, Beth Campbell, who works for Unity Homes, is a new member as  
392 well and will be taking the place of Andrew Dey. He added that they could use more members so  
393 if anyone hears of people interested, please pass them along.

394

395 Chair Hansel stated Tuesday, March 15<sup>th</sup> is their annual retreat and their next regular meeting  
396 will take place on Wednesday, April 6<sup>th</sup>.

397

398 Ms. Brunner added that the City got leveled up to a SolSmart level of Gold and at a future  
399 meeting she will recap what that means.

400

401

402 **8) Upcoming Meetings:**

403 **A) Tuesday, March 15 – 12:00 – 2:00 pm (annual retreat)**

404 **B) Wednesday, April 6 – 8:00 am**

405

406

407 **9) Adjournment**

408

409 There being no further business, Chair Hansel adjourned the meeting at 9:18 AM.

410

411 Respectfully submitted by,  
412 Nicole Cullinane, Minute Taker

413

414 Reviewed and edited by,  
415 Mari Brunner, Senior Planner

1 **City of Keene**  
2 **New Hampshire**

3  
4  
5 **ENERGY AND CLIMATE COMMITTEE**  
6 **RETREAT**  
7 **MEETING MINUTES**  
8

**Tuesday, March 15, 2022**

**12:00 PM**

**Council Chambers,  
City Hall**

**Members Present:**

Peter Hansel, Chair  
Zach Luse, Vice Chair  
Councilor Raleigh Ormerod  
Councilor Bryan Lake  
Jake Pipp  
Jude Nuru  
Diana Duffy (via Zoom)  
Beth Campbell  
Linsey Edmunds  
Clair Oursler, Alternate

**Staff Present:**

Mari Brunner, Senior Planner  
Chris Cusack, Contract Planner

**Members Not Present:**

Paul Roth

9  
10  
11 **1) Welcome and Introductions**  
12

13 Chair Hansel called the meeting to order at 12:04 PM. He introduced the Energy and Climate  
14 Committee's history, mission, and work. Members introduced themselves.  
15

16 **2) State of the Committee**  
17

18 **A) Review of Energy Plan**  
19

20 Mari Brunner, Senior Planner, stated that an overview of the Energy Plan is in the agenda packet.  
21 She continued that it includes the Energy Plan's vision, which restates the goals the City Council  
22 adopted: to transition the whole Keene community to renewable electricity by 2030, and  
23 renewable energy for thermal (cooling and heating) and energy use for transportation by 2050.  
24 In January of 2019, the City Council adopted these goals asked the ECC to work with staff to  
25 come up with a plan to achieve those goals. That two-year process resulted in the Keene Energy  
26 Plan. The full plan is about 100 pages, but can be summarized by looking at the pathways. It is  
27 split into three sections: Electricity, Thermal Energy, and Transportation Energy. The framework

28 they used was to first focus on reducing the overall energy use, through energy conservation and  
29 efficiency. The second piece of the framework was to switch as much as possible to generating  
30 renewable energy from local sources. The third piece was to meet the remaining demand that  
31 cannot be met with local energy by purchasing it elsewhere. An example in the electricity grid is  
32 that if they cannot produce all of the energy locally, which is the case, then they would purchase  
33 renewable electricity from the grid, generated outside of the Monadnock region. The last piece  
34 was to focus on outreach, education, and “advocacy and communications,” which means taking a  
35 role in the State’s legislative process when there are policies that affect Keene’s ability to switch  
36 to renewable energy and pursue efficiency. It means paying attention to what is happening at the  
37 State level so they can weigh in regarding policies or programs that would affect Keene.

38  
39 Ms. Brunner stated that the last two pages of the agenda packet include Table 5.1 from the plan,  
40 which identifies priority implementation strategies. They organized the 17 identified strategies  
41 by category. The strategies that relate to Energy Efficiency include a benchmarking program,  
42 home energy and weatherization programs, promoting Complete Streets and the City Express  
43 Bus and multimodal transportation, and making sure they pay attention to what is happening at  
44 the State level with respect to policies around promoting multimodal and alternative forms of  
45 transportation.

46  
47 She continued that under Renewable Energy is the Community Power Program, which allows the  
48 City to go out to bid for the electricity supply for all of its residents, so Keene residents can  
49 benefit from the City’s collective buying power. It is a little more complicated than that, but that  
50 is a brief explanation. The City could also choose to incorporate more renewable energy into  
51 that supply. The City’s goal is to go above and beyond the renewable energy content in the  
52 default electricity supply, while also remaining cost competitive. The Community Power  
53 Program has big potential to impact the renewable electricity goal in particular. This also  
54 includes the option to do a virtual power purchase agreement as part of the Community Power  
55 Program. Other renewable energy strategies include a pilot battery storage program, renewable  
56 energy loans, and solar- and EV-ready guidelines, documents for the community at large to have,  
57 to help them if they want to install solar or EV charging stations or purchase electric vehicles.

58  
59 Ms. Brunner continued that the final category of strategies is “fuel switching.” One strategy is  
60 the Heat Smart Campaign, similar to the Solarize Campaign, a community effort to promote  
61 solar during a specific period of time. The Heat Smart Campaign would promote the installation  
62 of renewable thermal technologies, and specifically mini-splits or air source heat pumps. Other  
63 strategies in this category are to have public charging stations for electric vehicles; and to  
64 promote electric busses, which is the purview of the Keene School District and Home Healthcare  
65 Hospice and Community Services, which runs the City Express program. That strategy focuses  
66 on working with those organizations to see if they are able and willing to pilot an electric bus or  
67 switch their fleet of busses to electric. Other strategies are advocacy for electric vehicles and  
68 alternative fuel vehicles, and commissioning a study to assess the potential for a renewable  
69 district heating system in Keene.

70

71                   **B) Progress Over the Past Year**  
72

73 Ms. Brunner stated that the City has made some headway with some of those strategies, in part  
74 due to the ECC’s work. At the time of last year’s ECC retreat via Zoom, with the passage of the  
75 Energy Plan just a couple months prior, the ECC decided to form work groups to start  
76 implementing some strategies. The ECC initially decided to focus the work groups on  
77 weatherization (which now also includes energy efficiency), electric vehicles, and home energy  
78 labeling (working with Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnership, NEEP), and later added a fourth  
79 work group for community solar. The work groups have made good progress. In addition, the  
80 City had a Keene State College (KSC) intern work on the first draft of the solar- and EV-ready  
81 guidelines. Councilor Lake is updating those. The City also worked with a UNH Sustainability  
82 Institute fellow last summer to start a benchmarking program. That fellow did a lot of the  
83 groundwork for the City but the City is not yet at the point of actually benchmarking the City  
84 facilities. The fellow’s final report gave the City some good next steps.  
85

86 Ms. Brunner continued that the City had an Ad Hoc Community Power Committee, for about a  
87 year, which created a Community Power Plan. The City Council adopted that plan but cannot  
88 launch a program until the State PUC approves the plan and develops rules for that program.  
89

90 Chair Hansel asked for questions. Ms. Duffy stated that that is a wonderful and ambitious  
91 laundry list. She asked if it has been prioritized yet or if there is a plan of attack, or if that is  
92 what they are here today to figure out. Chair Hansel replied that the ECC needs to reassess what  
93 they are doing and figure out the priorities for going forward.  
94

95 Ms. Brunner stated that the table she was reading from includes a timeframe, saying whether a  
96 strategy is near, mid, or long term. She continued that it also gives an idea of the lead/who  
97 would be responsible for each strategy. Last year they narrowed the list down by taking  
98 strategies off the list if someone else was the lead, so the committee was looking at a shorter list  
99 of 6 to 8 strategies and narrowed it down from there.  
100

101                   **3) SWOT Analysis – Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats**  
102

103 Chair Hansel stated that Chris Cusack volunteered to lead the SWOT analysis.  
104

105 Chris Cusack stated that he is a Contract Planner, working here temporarily. He continued that  
106 Mari Brunner moved up to Senior Planner and the City just hired a new Planner and are in the  
107 process of hiring a new Community Development Director.  
108

109 Mr. Cusack began by asking what the ECC’s strengths are. What would they boast about? He  
110 continued that he will write down the ideas that people toss out. ECC members gave the  
111 following answers:  
112

- 113                   • Early adopters with ICLEI

- 114 • Involved local citizenry who push the ECC and help the ECC, and respond when the  
115 ECC asks for support
- 116 • Strong support from City staff and City Council
- 117 • Leadership from the City, and passion
- 118 • Keene is a leader across the state, first city to sign to Community Power
- 119 • Deep, varied expertise on this team, regarding the environment and energy
- 120 • ECC members who are committed and doing the work in work groups. Some have said  
121 the ECC is a model of what a City committee can do.
- 122 • ECC members “walk the talk.” They are not just “interested” in energy and climate  
123 issues; they take action.
- 124 • Local media willing to cover these kinds of issues, such as Community Power Program  
125 getting front page articles

126

127 Mr. Cusack asked what the ECC’s weaknesses are. What can be improved? ECC members gave  
128 the following answers:

129

- 130 • The limitations of being a public body and having to operate within the rules and  
131 limitations that come with that. It slows things down when you cannot have meetings on  
132 the fly or make decisions over email, or when they cannot meet due to lack of quorum.
- 133 • Some people want/need to participate remotely, and the meetings are in person again
- 134 • The global pandemic has affected participation
- 135 • Limited resources, limited staff time, limited money
- 136 • ECC has been blessed to have the amount of staff time they have had. If that changed,  
137 what would happen?
- 138 • Advocacy for the City to add a full-time or part-time Sustainability Officer has not  
139 worked
- 140 • ECC is all-volunteer; volunteers have limited time

141

142 Ms. Campbell asked about data and research. How much are they prioritizing those, based on  
143 what has proven effective in other municipalities? How does the ECC come to decisions about  
144 priorities? Do they address the low-hanging fruit because it is economically viable, or if it is  
145 proven to have a big energy impact? Those are questions not to answer now, but to think about.

146 Chair Hansel replied that those questions are next on the agenda, after the break.

147

148 Bruce Norlund replied to Ms. Campbell’s questions, stating that each ECC members has other  
149 connections and contacts that contributes to the overall effectiveness of the ECC. He gave  
150 examples.

151

152 The list of the ECC’s weaknesses continued:

153

- 154 • Sometimes what happens in Concord works against the ECC’s efforts. It requires the  
155 ECC to stay on its toes, to stay aware of what is happening and support energy policy



- 156 • Keene is no longer on the leading edge. E.g. the work groups are looking to case studies  
157 from other cities, to see how to implement strategies.
- 158 • Landscape constraints in Keene, regarding Community Power. Land is not very available  
159 for many sources of renewable energy. Not a lot of wind or undeveloped land.

160

161 Mr. Cusack asked what the opportunities are. What are favorable situations now, or that they  
162 foresee in the future? What are they most hopeful about? ECC members gave the following  
163 answers:

164

- 165 • Prices of fossil fuels are going up and supply is going down. A lot of market forces are  
166 driving that. It creates more opportunity for solar and other alternative energies.
- 167 • A recent bill passed that makes EV infrastructure funds available to NH. Keene should  
168 ask for a seat at the table as these plans develop.
- 169 • In the past couple weeks, inquiries about EVs have about doubled. Rising fossil fuel  
170 costs drive the interest in EVs.
- 171 • The concept of having control over your own energy generation is gaining ground in  
172 academia and industry.
- 173 • The current global political situation is currently causing an interest in local energy  
174 generation and not relying on imports. This interest might not last. Need to take  
175 advantage of it.
- 176 • There are federal, state, and local opportunities
- 177 • Grants are available for the ECC to apply for
- 178 • ECC has a big opportunity to increase awareness of its work and accomplishments. Need  
179 to do this more.
- 180 • People are talking about renewable energy more than ever, due to global politics, the  
181 COVID-19 pandemic and funding, and other factors. For example, school boards are  
182 talking about improving HVAC systems, which they might not have done 10 years ago.  
183 There are more opportunities for conversations, as people think and talk about energy  
184 more.
- 185 • The City offering tax exemptions (abatements?) to entities trying to switch to solar or  
186 other renewable energy. They need to raise awareness of this opportunity.
- 187 • Chamber of Commerce is doing a promoting the region initiative, and have hired a  
188 consultant to help brand the Monadnock region. Needs more focus on energy,  
189 sustainability, etc. That should be a highlight of the region.

190

191 Mr. Cusack asked what the threats are. What are the unfavorable situations that are potentially  
192 damaging to the ECC's mission? What obstacles do they face? The ECC gave the following  
193 answers:

194

- 195 • Keene should look beyond just being #1 in NH. Keene should strive to be a leader in the  
196 region/this part of New England, as people are moving here from out of state. Need to  
197 look more regionally for benchmarking.

- 198 • State funding. NH has less funding than surrounding states and it seems to be always  
199 under attack, especially for energy programs.
- 200 • Project costs. Electric vehicles, solar panels, etc., are expensive up front. Difficult for  
201 people to afford, especially since federal incentives have tapered or disappeared
- 202 • Inflation
- 203 • Supply issues with selenium. Need more research into what it takes to make a battery or  
204 solar panel.
- 205 • NH's complex legislation regarding how these programs should be deployed
- 206 • NH's lack of incentives, compared to nearby states'
- 207 • Lack of understanding and misinformation, among the public, of the ECC's work and the  
208 issues. This includes some pushback due the lack of understanding – Eversource raised  
209 its rates and some people think the ECC had something to do with it.
- 210 • Lack of stability and affordable housing, and rising costs of living, cause people to fear  
211 the costs of switching to renewable energy.

212

213 Mr. Cusack stated that he will put all of this together and look for themes and threads, as a draft,  
214 and people can comment on it and edit it. Then they can discuss, where do they go from here?

215

216 Chair Hansel called for a five-minute break.

217

218 **4) Priorities for 2022-2022**

219

220 **A) What are our goals for the upcoming year? How should they be prioritized?**

221

222 When the meeting resumed, Chair Hansel stated that Mr. Luse will lead them through what he  
223 views as some priorities for the ECC.

224

225 Mr. Luse stated that the question is what the ECC wants to accomplish over the next year or two.  
226 He continued that they can figure out the “how” in the next step. What are the big things they  
227 want to focus on? On the list of strategies that Ms. Brunner was referring to earlier, the priorities  
228 that the ECC had previously identified say “ECC” next to them. They do not necessarily need to  
229 stick to these. The Heat Smart Campaign was something they had wanted to look at in the one-  
230 to two-year timeframe, as well as advocacy for EVs and alternative fuel vehicles, advocacy for  
231 public transportation and active transportation, and weatherization. The ECC's current work  
232 groups reflect these. Weatherization was stalled due to the lack of incentives and funding over  
233 the last couple years.

234

235 Chair Hansel stated that the ECC took over another one, which was slated for the City – home  
236 energy labeling.

237

238 Mr. Luse stated that the goal is to figure out which items to focus on in the next one to two years.  
239 The Heatsmart Campaign is one they did not focus on at all, which was a one- to two-year goal  
240 last time, so he would add that as a priority for the next couple years. Chair Hansel agreed.

241  
242  
243  
244  
245  
246  
247  
248  
249  
250  
251  
252  
253  
254  
255  
256  
257  
258  
259  
260  
261  
262  
263  
264  
265  
266  
267  
268  
269  
270  
271  
272  
273  
274  
275  
276  
277  
278  
279  
280  
281  
282

Ms. Duffy asked how priorities are determined, generally. She asked if there are data behind how these decisions are made. Mr. Luse replied that this list came out of the process where they talked about the impact [of the strategies] and about what the ECC could actually accomplish. They did that process and are now reassessing where they are at and whether they want to move priorities around on the list, considering impact versus feasibility.

Ms. Brunner offered to write more ideas on the flip chart. ECC members gave the following answers.

- Public EV charging stations, which would have momentum now
- Community Solar
- Home Energy Labeling needs a discussion at some point.
- Do they want to keep the four work groups as priorities over the next couple years? If they add in the Heatsmart Campaign, they basically have the current four work groups.
- Is there anything in the Energy Plan that is not currently in the list of priorities but should be?
  - Education/Outreach/Advocacy category, which last year they glazed over because it is so general.
  - Benchmarking, which was assigned to the City, not the ECC.

Ms. Brunner stated that benchmarking has stalled a bit. She continued that the UNH fellow did an excellent job with the report, setting the City up to take the next steps, but the City is not quite ready yet, on the staff side, to take on benchmarking. The City needs to do benchmarking internally before they start asking others to do it, so the City will be able to answer others' questions about benchmarking and help others to do it. Discussion continued, and ECC members spoke to the importance of benchmarking still being up on the list, and ideas for how to tackle this, such as having an entity other than the City take the lead on a benchmarking program and then share what they learn with others. There is also an IT component to figure out and some IT barriers that might take a couple years. Ms. Brunner replied yes, a problem they ran into was not being able to get the needed data. It is both a strength and weakness of the City that each individual department manages its own budget, although there is a centralized budgeting process. A big challenge of the benchmarking program was getting the data they needed to input into the Energy Star tool. The limitations of the Energy Star tool itself was another weakness and staff has not had time to research the other options. She continued that a non-profit could take on a benchmarking program.

ECC gave more ideas about priorities:

- Renewable energy loans and/or conservation loans. With the recent success of the City-initiated “21 in 21” program, there is awareness of this, and maybe opportunities to get something going. The ECC could help the City do some research on what that type of

283 program could look like or how other communities are doing it and bring a  
284 recommendation forward to staff or the City Council.

- 285 • Potentially expanding the promotion of EVs and EV charging stations to include the  
286 City's fleet and/or school busses (First Student)

287

288 Ms. Brunner stated that a barrier with First Student is staff does not know who to contact at the  
289 company at the local level. She continued that however, this would be a great opportunity, as  
290 First Student has done electric school busses in other states. The reason they have not done it in  
291 NH may be tied to the lack of incentives and lack of programs in NH. The ECC's goal has been  
292 to reach out to First Student. If anyone has a contact there, that would be great.

293

294 Chair Hansel stated that the ECC should maintain an awareness of what other groups are doing  
295 similar work, and decide whether the ECC should take the work on itself, or assist or monitor the  
296 other group. For example, John Kondos has been doing a lot with bus electrification programs.  
297 The ECC could perhaps publicize, monitor, or offer to help other groups like this.

298

299 Mr. Nuru stated that the Keene School District is independent from the City, but in other places  
300 where the school district and municipality are meshed, they budget for busses. The ECC could  
301 look at how it is working elsewhere. There is a company that has piloted electric school busses  
302 in other states, including Maine.

303

304 Councilor Lake stated that it was great to have Public Works Director Kürt Blomquist here to  
305 talk with the ECC, and he thinks they should invite him back. He continued that he is a great  
306 resource, and considers everything involved with getting EVs in the city. Others agreed.  
307 Discussion continued about electric busses, the KSD and its budget, First Student, the ECC's  
308 role, incentives, and so on and so forth.

309

310 ECC members' other thoughts about priorities included the following:

311

- 312 • Expand the promotion of EVs to include electric equipment as well, such as lawn  
313 mowers, leaf blowers, and more.
- 314 • What about the fleet at KSC, Cheshire Medical Center, and other entities? Is the ECC  
315 only interested in encouraging private citizens to purchase EVs for their personal use?  
316 Why or why not?
- 317 • There are plans across the country to increase EV infrastructure. Rt. 101 is an identified  
318 corridor of importance. What will the State do for EV infrastructure? How can Keene  
319 utilize that to expand fleets in other ways?
- 320 • Recent bills have been introduced about compost. Landfills are sources of emissions.  
321 Can the ECC track what is happening at the State level about compost?

322

## 323 5) Culminating Questions

324 A) **What should the ECC start doing?**

- 325 **B) What should the ECC stop doing?**
- 326 **C) What should the ECC keep doing?**

327

328 Mr. Luse stated that they need to think about where the ECC can have the biggest impact and  
329 what they can actually achieve. He continued that it sounds like the EV work group should be  
330 broadening its focus a bit, to look at how they can impact bussing, charging infrastructure,  
331 electrical equipment like lawnmowers and snow blowers, and so on and so forth.

332

333 Chair Hansel stated that there are many conversations around the country about EVs right now.  
334 He continued that in that sense, the ECC does not necessarily need to promote it, but there are  
335 other ways they can contribute to the whole discussion. They could do public education about  
336 these other forms of energy use that could be electrified, or about what other groups are doing  
337 and what is being discovered about fleets and school busses. The work group could get the  
338 information together and out to the public.

339

340 Mr. Norlund stated that electric dump trucks are coming, and electric school busses are available.  
341 He continued that they should take advantage of this and promote it.

342

343 Ms. Brunner stated that compost is not in the Energy Plan, so she did not include it, because the  
344 ECC's focus is on advancing the strategies for the goals of the Energy Plan. She asked if that is  
345 a correct assumption, and stated that she sees a lot of nodding heads. She continued that there  
346 are four work groups that have been meeting, and one of the things they wanted to get out of the  
347 retreat today was a decision about whether the work groups would continue with those four  
348 topics, or if they should drop one of those work groups and add a new one, and so on and so  
349 forth. She put a check mark next to EV, because it sounds like that work group has lots to  
350 discuss and lots of passion, excitement, and ideas for the future.

351

352 Ms. Brunner stated that the weatherization/energy efficiency work group has been quite active  
353 this year. She asked how the ECC feels about continuing that group. The work group has done,  
354 for example, Keene Energy Week, and has talked about doing a program with window dressers.  
355 Chair Hansel replied that he thinks it is one of the most important work groups. Not wasting  
356 energy is a key goal.

357

358 Ms. Brunner stated that something new that they have not had, but that she has heard a lot of  
359 people say is important, is education and outreach. She asked if people think that should be its  
360 own work group. Several ECC members replied yes, and spoke about how education about EVs,  
361 and Keene Energy Week, could fall under this. A task of this work group could be to talk with  
362 the other work groups, regarding what they want the public to know about.

363

364 Ms. Brunner stated that the home energy labeling work group lost steam because all of its  
365 members resigned, but there are some volunteers still in that work group. Should the ECC  
366 continue this work group? They were working on creating a pilot home energy labeling

367 program. It is a heavy lift for a small group of volunteers, is the feedback she received from  
368 them. Do any ECC members want to take the lead on this?

369  
370 Ms. Campbell replied that the building industry, which she is a part of, frequently relies on third  
371 party certification, such as Energy Star for homes or the HERS Index. She continued that it  
372 would be a concern to her to have a small group reinventing the home label, when there are  
373 nationally recognized labels available, but perhaps she is misunderstanding the point.

374  
375 Ms. Brunner replied that that is one of the challenges with this one; they found that it is very  
376 difficult to explain. She continued that in a nutshell, it would take information from all those  
377 third parties and put it on a label that would be posted when a house or apartment goes up for  
378 sale or rent. The work group was looking at using an online model that would either pull in data  
379 from the HERS Index or Home Energy Score or elsewhere, or, if a person had not participated in  
380 any of those they could fill out a questionnaire online and it models what your energy use might  
381 be. It would not be as accurate as doing a Home Energy Score or HERS rating, but it would give  
382 something. The idea would be that once you finish you get a label that compares apples to  
383 apples. It would not be based on how you use your home, but the actual way the home is set up.

384  
385 Ms. Campbell replied that her experience in the home building industry is that self-reporting  
386 does not carry much weight, in terms of how much one might actually be able to sell their home  
387 for, compared to third party certification.

388  
389 Ms. Brunner stated that she is sensing that the ECC might not want to continue the home energy  
390 labeling work group. Chair Hansel asked if they should fold it into the weatherization work  
391 group. Others agreed. Brief discussion continued about the topic. The leader of the  
392 weatherization work group expressed that the group might not have the time to discuss/work on  
393 home energy labeling, given all their other work. Mr. Nuru suggested they move the topic to the  
394 education and outreach work group. Others spoke against including home energy labeling as a  
395 priority, citing lack of community support. Chair Hansel suggested they drop this from the  
396 priority list for now and revisit it in the future, and that they reach out to volunteers from the  
397 home energy labeling work group to acknowledge their efforts and ask if they would like to join  
398 a different work group.

399  
400 Ms. Brunner stated that the community solar work group has also been active. She asked if the  
401 ECC wants it to continue, or if they feel like it is losing steam. Mr. Nuru spoke in favor of  
402 continuing it. Chair Hansel agreed.

403  
404 Ms. Brunner stated that the two new topics are home energy loans and the HeatSmart Campaign.  
405 Those would be new work groups. She asked if anyone feels strongly about those and wants to  
406 take the lead on them. Ms. Campbell replied that she is interested, and spoke of how getting one  
407 company to sign on to solar might be the equivalent of 10 single-family households. Chair  
408 Hansel agreed that that would be a worthwhile work group, and he is interested in participating.  
409 Others who are not ECC members may be interested in participating as well.



410

411 Ms. Brunner asked if she can cross off the HeatSmart Campaign, or if anyone is excited to lead  
412 it. Chair Hansel replied that he would recommend putting it off for a year in order for the ECC  
413 to make a good decision on it, but they could schedule a meeting with someone who could tell  
414 them more about HeatSmart Campaigns that have been successful elsewhere. Ms. Brunner  
415 replied that maybe someone from Northampton, MA, could share their experiences.

416

417 Mr. Luse stated that he thinks benchmarking is an important one, for measuring progress. He  
418 continued that he does not know if a work group could move that forward or not, or if there are  
419 other things the ECC could do to help. Ms. Duffy replied that she did a lot of benchmarking for  
420 KSC. She continued that she wonders if she would be allowed, and if it would be helpful, for her  
421 to educate the committee about where they are, what they want to learn, and how what they want  
422 to learn can inform how they want to help the community or the City Council. Since many ECC  
423 members are new, they need to get oriented. She would be happy to help. Chair Hansel replied  
424 that would be great. He continued that the ECC needs to educate themselves more, over the next  
425 year, before they decide whether to have a separate work group. If Ms. Duffy or someone from  
426 another community wants to come talk to the ECC, that would be great. Ms. Duffy asked if she  
427 can connect with Ms. Brunner to get the benchmarking background. Chair Hansel replied yes.

428

429 Mr. Luse stated that lastly, they need to look at work group membership, and who wants to be in  
430 which groups. Discussion ensued and ECC members decided which work groups to participate  
431 in. Chair Hansel stated that each work group can only have up to five ECC members so they do  
432 not form a quorum of the ECC. Ms. Brunner reminded everyone that the work groups are  
433 actually “research groups” and not able to act on their own, due to the fact that the ECC is a  
434 public body. Everything they do and decide has to take place in the full committee setting at a  
435 regular ECC meeting that is publically noticed. She continued that they cannot have a quorum of  
436 ECC members at a work group meeting, unless it is publically noticed, with the public invited to  
437 attend, with a minute-taker and an agenda posted at least 24 hours in advance, and so on and so  
438 forth. Chair Hansel asked if work group members who are not members of the ECC are counted  
439 as part of the quorum. Ms. Brunner replied no.

440

441 Chair Hansel stated that they did great work at this retreat, and focused their attention where he  
442 thinks they can. He looks forward to the education and outreach part of it, and getting more  
443 information out to the public. That is a way the ECC can really make an impact.

444

445

446 **6) Monadnock Earth Festival**

447

448 Ms. Brunner stated that right after the March meeting, staff learned that the Monadnock Earth  
449 Festival is happening in person this year. She continued that in past years, the ECC has tabled at  
450 this event. They need to know, before the April ECC meeting, whether the ECC wants to table  
451 this year, so they can reserve a spot and prepare. It is April 23 from 12 to 4 PM. Volunteers  
452 would be needed for set-up from 11 AM to 12 PM, during the actual event from 12 to 4 PM, and



453 for break down from 4 to 5 PM. She asked if anyone is willing and able to volunteer for that.  
454 Discussion ensued about what the ECC could do. Mr. Norlund stated that he will volunteer for  
455 the whole day. Mr. Oursler stated that he will volunteer, too. Chair Hansel stated that those who  
456 are able to volunteer should get together to plan what to have at the table and figure out the  
457 details. Ms. Brunner stated that she will send the committee a volunteer sign-up sheet.

458

459 **7) Wrap-up and Next Steps**

460

461 Mr. Nuru stated that he has found Ms. Brunner's support of the work groups very helpful. He  
462 asked if the new Planner will be helping with that. Ms. Brunner replied that Mr. Cusack is here  
463 through the end of April, at least, and will be able to help out through then. She continued that  
464 after that, there will not be staff support for the work groups.

465

466 Chair Hansel thanked everyone for their work today. He continued that he will be away for the  
467 regularly scheduled April meeting, and hopes that Mr. Luse can chair it.

468

469 **8) Adjournment**

470

471 There being no further business, Chair Hansel adjourned the meeting at 2:17 PM.

472

473 Respectfully submitted by,  
474 Britta Reida, Minute Taker

475

476 Reviewed and edited by,  
477 Christopher Cusack, Contract Planner

# 2022 Energy and Climate Committee Retreat

## Summary of SWOT Analysis & Work Groups

### I. SWOT Analysis

Frequently used in strategic planning, a SWOT analysis is a process by which the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of an entity or organization are identified. Results of the ECC SWOT analysis are presented in Table 1. Specific strategies can be developed by cross-referencing the four general elements of the SWOT analysis in order to derive approaches aimed at minimizing threats and maximizing opportunities. This is accomplished by looking for relationships between different factors and categories, as shown in Table 2. Note that Table 2 represents some, but not necessarily all, of the potential connections derived from the ECC SWOT analysis and presents actionable items should the ECC choose to pursue them.

**Table 1. Energy and Climate Committee: SWOT analysis**

<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early to ICLEI / climate action</li> <li>• Active Citizenship</li> <li>• City Support – Staff &amp; City Council</li> <li>• City Leadership               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Passion</li> <li>○ Forerunner</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Expertise of ECC               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Level of Commitment</li> <li>○ ‘Walking the Walk’</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Members have valuable contacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limitations of operating as a public body               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ City and (especially) State rules</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Difficulty for some to return to in-person meetings               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Limited Resources – Money &amp; Staff time</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Limited Volunteer time</li> <li>• Keene no longer perceived as a forerunner</li> <li>• Lack of communicating the role of the ECC               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Misunderstanding by some members of the public</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High costs / availability of Fossil Fuels</li> <li>• Legislation providing funding for EV infrastructure</li> <li>• Increased interest in EVs</li> <li>• Geopolitics at all levels               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Global, Federal, State, Local</li> <li>○ Increased interest in controlling our own energy resources</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Availability of grant money</li> <li>• Increased awareness of citizenry               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Getting people to know about the ECC</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Local media provides good coverage</li> <li>• City has tax exemptions for solar/wind/wood</li> <li>• Chamber of Commerce is promoting the region</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keene needs to be a regional (i.e., New England) leader, not just a leader in NH               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Helpful to attract people to Keene</li> </ul> </li> <li>• NH state funding is low in comparison to other states</li> <li>• High upfront costs of EVs, residential solar, etc.</li> <li>• Inflation</li> <li>• Need for rare earth minerals</li> <li>• Complicated NH Legislation</li> <li>• Lack of NH incentives               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In comparison, Maine provides far more incentives than NH</li> <li>○ Instability (cost of living, cost of housing, etc.)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Topography and land constraints</li> </ul>

**Table 2. Cross-referencing ECC SWOT analysis for strategic planning**

<p align="center"><b>rengths-Opportunities strategies</b></p> <p>Which ECC strengths can be used to maximize the opportunities listed?</p>	<p align="center"><b>Strengths-Threats strategies</b></p> <p>How can ECC strengths be used to minimize the identified threats?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harness the combined strength of the ECC, city staff, and city leadership to net available grant money and those monies available for EV infrastructure.</li> <li>• Utilize the expertise of ECC members in collaboration with local media and the Chamber to promote ECC goals and strategies in marketing Keene and the Monadnock region.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage city/county leadership to advocate for increased state funding and incentives.</li> <li>• Encourage city leadership to think ‘big picture’ in order to attract people to Keene from throughout New England.</li> <li>• Work with the city leadership to minimize instability associated with cost of living (housing, heating, taxes, etc.) in Keene.</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>Weaknesses-Opportunities strategies</b></p> <p>What action(s) can be taken to minimize ECC weaknesses by using the opportunities listed?</p>	<p align="center"><b>Weaknesses-Threats strategies</b></p> <p>How can ECC weaknesses be minimized to avoid the identified threats?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Augment the public’s understanding and appreciation for the ECC by leveraging increased community interest in geopolitics and electric vehicles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restore Keene to a position of environmental leadership and thereby demonstrate to the state of New Hampshire the need for streamlined legislation and value of increased funding and incentives.</li> </ul>

**II. 2022 Workgroups**

<i>EVs*</i> <i>*includes buses, equipment, etc.</i>	<i>Weatherization &amp; Energy Efficiency</i>	<i>Education / Outreach</i>	<i>Community Solar</i>	<i>Renewable Energy Loans</i>
<b>Bruce</b>	<b>Zach</b>	<b>Zach</b>	<b>Peter</b>	<b>Peter</b>
<b>Linsey</b>	<b>Jake</b>	<b>Clair</b>	<b>Jude</b>	<b>Beth</b>
<b>Diana</b>		<b>Diana</b>	<b>Bruce</b>	<b>Linsey</b>
<b>Paul</b>			<b>Raleigh</b>	

**Potential workgroups that will be delayed for one year:**

- Heatsmart Campaign
- Benchmarking

**Workgroup that will be dropped for the time being and may be revisited in the future:**

- Home Energy Labeling

[View this email in your browser](#)



# NH Energy Week

## NH's *energy future is now!*

### NH Energy Week 2022: Accelerating our Energy Transition

New Hampshire's 5th annual Energy Week is back, with events taking place from April 11th through April 15th. This year NH Energy Week will comprise five events on a range of topics connecting to "Accelerating our Energy Transition".

NH Energy Week will begin with a virtual "Kick-Off" event on 4/11/21 which will feature National, State, and local speakers and a panel discussion on community based renewable energy development.

NH Energy Week will continue with events focusing on **clean energy financing, electric vehicles** and our first **virtual career & resource fair**.

The conclusion of NH Energy Week will once again be the annual NH Energy Champions Award ceremony, honoring nominees in the categories of "Small Business," "Large Business," "Municipal

All NH Energy Week events are free to attend, but guests must pre-register online at: [nhenergyfuture.org/nhew/](https://nhenergyfuture.org/nhew/)

Free Registration

# NH EnergyWeek

ACCELERATING OUR ENERGY TRANSITION

# APRIL 11-15

2022 VIRTUAL EVENT SERIES

2022 KICK-OFF

CLEAN ENERGY FINANCING

THE ROAD TO EVS

CAREER FAIR & RESOURCE EVENT

ENERGY CHAMPION AWARDS

### PREMIER SPONSORS



### ORGANIZING PARTNERS



*NH Energy Week is made possible due to our generous sponsors:*

**Premier Sponsors:** Coca-Cola Beverages Northeast and NH Saves

**Other Sponsors include:** Liberty Utilities, Rath Young Pignatelli, Sheehan Phinney, Orr & Reno, Res rthen Industries and TC

Free Registration



Copyright (C) 2022 NH Energy Future Is Now. All rights reserved.

Our mailing address is:

Want to change how you receive these emails?  
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe](#)