

City of Keene
New Hampshire

ENERGY AND CLIMATE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, December 7, 2022

8:00 AM

**Council Chambers,
City Hall**

Members Present:

Peter Hansel, Chair
Zach Luse, Vice Chair
Councilor Bryan Lake
Jake Pipp
Jude Nuru
Diana Duffy
Clair Oursler
Charles Redfern, Alternate

Staff Present:

Mari Brunner, Senior Planner

Members Not Present:

Councilor Raleigh Ormerod
Paul Roth
Beth Campbell
Linsey Edmunds

1) Call to order and Roll Call

Peter Hansel called the meeting to order at 8:15 AM and conducted roll call. Chuck Redfern was asked to participate as a voting member.

2) Approval of Minutes- November 2, 2022

Chair Hansel asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Councilor Bryan Lake moved to approve the November 2, 2022 minutes with a second from Mr. Zach Luse. The motion passed by roll call vote.

3) Energy Plan Work Group Report-outs

A) Weatherization

Zach Luse reported that the weatherization work group was not able to meet this month. There is a Button Up workshop at 6pm this evening (December 7, 2022) at the Rec Center in Keene.

B) Electric Vehicles

Councilor Bryan Lake reported that the EV group is trying to work on guidelines or requirements for EVs and Solar arrays. They had a discussion with Director Jesse Rounds and chatted through things they can and cannot do within the code. He believes they found a good way forward around exploring some incentives that they can actually build into the code. They are hoping to bring something substantive back to the committee in the near future.

C) Community Solar

Chair Hansel said that Mr. Jude Nuru was going to report, but he is not present. Chair Hansel spoke on his behalf and read an e-mail from Mr. Nuru:

“I have been meaning to provide updates prior to the ECC meeting tomorrow regarding feasible community solar farms for Keene for 2023. I have been in contact with Mr. Dan Weeks, Revision Energy, who has been working with Duncan Watson on site developments. My goal was to share with Dan the subcommittee’s determination to see a community solar farm in 2023. He confirmed it is going to happen and went further to provide an overview of the developments so far. There are four potential sites- Monadnock Cemetery, Rose Lane, the City of Keene well pump station house and a location near Arch St. However, he said these sites require development and assessment and just completed a draft letter of intent for the city to review. If the city approves and signs, then Revision site development expert will commence site assessment. In short, two solar projects are likely to be developed for 2023. One for Keene housing LMI (low and moderate income) residents and another as a solar cooperative for individual households to participate.”

Chair Hansel asked Bruce Norlund (work group member) if he thought there was anything else to report out and Bruce said he had nothing to add, but wanted to be one of the first to sign up for community solar. Chair Hansel added that this has been slow and steady, but progressing nonetheless.

Mr. Nuru arrived late and added that they are also trying to see how they can help other initiatives in the city. He added that he is aware that Clean Energy NH is developing a program to educate communities about ways to do community solar and believes that program will be very useful.

D) Renewable Energy Loans

Chair Hansel announced there was no meeting and nothing to report.

E) Outreach and Education

Mr. Luse reported that there was no meeting for this workgroup either. They will regroup at the start of the year.

4) Keene Energy Week- Request for reimbursement for EV parking costs

Chair Hansel said they had received a request for reimbursement for costs that amount to \$45 for reserving EV parking spaces for Energy Week. Chair Hansel asked Ms. Brunner what was the process for reimbursement. Ms. Brunner said that, while the Committee does have a budget, the process for approving expenditures may not be familiar because the budget is usually spent entirely on memberships. The Energy and Climate committee has a budget of \$850/year. Usually, \$250 goes towards Clean Energy NH to be a member of that organization. The remaining \$600, over the past 20 years has been used to pay membership in ICLEI. ICLEI raised their membership costs a few years ago and were letting Keene slide by on the lowered cost. The membership was dropped this year, leaving that money unspent. It could be used for that or it could be used to look at other potential membership options in the future. Normally, the group would have to make a vote on an expenditure in the meeting and document it in minutes in order for finance to be able to cut the check. This can be done ahead of time, but since this was not preemptively approved, it has to be paid as a reimbursement. She added that parking fees can only be waived by City Council. It is a pretty high bar and involved process.

Chair Hansel thanked Ms. Brunner.

Mr. Pipp asked Ms. Brunner if she could put together a list of those other organizations for membership and benefits of membership so the group can think about what they would like to do for next year. Ms. Brunner said she was not sure she would be able to do that by next month – she could compile a list of available organizations, but would need more time for the details. Chair Hansel suggested possibly utilizing a volunteer or member of this group to do that rather than Ms. Brunner given her already tight schedule.

Chair Hansel requested a motion to approve the request for reimbursement from Ms. Carolyn Jones. Mr. Jake Pipp made a motion to approve the reimbursement request for \$45 and Mr. Zach Luse seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

5) Meeting schedule for 2023

Chair Hansel said they are trying to stick to the first Wednesday of each month and asked if there were any questions or problems with that schedule. Ms. Brunner pointed out there are a couple of dates in the lineup (January and July) that fall very close to a Holiday and pointed out that quorum can be difficult to achieve in those situations. She suggested the group could adjust the dates now or leave them as-is and adjust later. Chair Hansel made note that he will not be chair and asked for a show of hands that expects to be present for the January meeting.

Mr. Redfern asked if he could zoom in for the January date. Ms. Brunner said yes, she believed that would be fine as she expected to have AV support. Chair Hansel pointed out that his

attendance by zoom would not count towards quorum, but he would still be considered a voting member.

Chair Hansel asked the group's opinion of those dates. It was suggested to push the July 5 meeting date back a week to which Ms. Brunner pointed out that zoom may not be available due to another meeting using it that same day/time. The group will proceed with January 4 meeting, reschedule the July meeting for a week later to July 12 and then redistribute the schedule. Ms. Brunner requested a vote to adopt the schedule. Chair Hansel requested motion, Mr. Zach Luse motioned to approve and Mr. Nuru seconded. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

6) Planning for Annual Retreat

Chair Hansel noted that most years they try to do an annual retreat. He asked Mr. Luse to speak on it. Dates have varied by year, but usually tend to be around March or April. Mr. Pipp suggested doing it sooner rather than later if one of the topics of discussion is to be group membership. Chair Hansel suggested the other option is to put that topic into the agenda of January or February meeting. Mr. Luse suggested a separate discussion of the group memberships and to look at April for the retreat. Chair Hansel mentioned that previously, they have created a small subcommittee to develop the agenda and topics for the retreat. He suggested doing that again and Mr. Luse welcomed members to bring forward any topics. It was asked to avoid the April school break if at all possible.

7) Community Power Update

Ms. Brunner said there was not much to report. The plan is all finalized and ready to go. Right now, they are just in a holding pattern because it is not the right time to go out to bid. We are likely to see more movement in the start of the New Year.

Mr. Pipp asked if there was any data in the Eversource data that would be useful or accessible for this group. Ms. Brunner responded that they can ask for aggregated data, but the rest is protected and not shareable.

Chair Hansel suggested waiting for the end of the year to request the data on the solar installs and suggested including a topic for future of discussion to be how to monitor the data.

8) Membership

Ms. Brunner noted that Mr. Kenneth Swymer and Ms. Lisa Maxfield have been nominated. They are still waiting to be confirmed by City Council and will be joining as alternates. Chair Hansel will be staying on until a replacement is found to fill that seat.

9) New Business

Mr. Nuru mentioned that John Kondos will be a valuable asset for the group and will be working with the region as the new energy circuit rider. Chair Hansel suggested inviting him to come to a meeting and speak.

10) Next meeting: Wednesday, January 4, 2023- 8:00 AM

11) Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Hansel adjourned the meeting at 9:03 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Amanda Trask, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,
Mari Brunner, Senior Planner