



ENERGY AND CLIMATE COMMITTEE (ECC)

AGENDA

Wednesday, November 6, 2024

8:00 AM

2nd Floor Conference Room,
City Hall

Members:

Zach Luse, Chair
Paul Roth, Vice Chair
Annu Joshi Bargale
Diana Duffy
Gordon Leversee
Jude Nuru
Clair Oursler
Kenneth Swymer Jr.
Councilor Bryan Lake

Lisa Maxfield
Chuck Redfern, Alternate
Rowland Russell, Alternate
Michael Winograd, Alternate
Jake Pipp, Alternate

Staff:

Megan Fortson, Planner
Emily Duseau, Planning Technician

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**
2. **Approval of Minutes** – October 2, 2024
3. **Update on Keene Clean Energy Team Button-Up Workshop Reimbursement**
4. **Survey on Food Waste/Composting** – Rowland Russell
5. **Committee Membership**
6. **New ECC Meeting Location** – Room 22, Parks & Rec Center, 312 Washington St
7. **Work Group Report Outs**
 - a. Community Solar
 - b. Grants, Fundraising, and Partnerships
 - c. Education and Outreach
 - d. Legislative Tracking
 - e. Food Security
8. **SolSmart Training Opportunities** (<https://solsmart.org/>)
9. **New Business**
10. **Next Meeting:** Wednesday, December 4, 2024, 8:00 am in Room 22, Parks & Rec Center, 312 Washington St

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, October 2, 2024

8:00 AM

2nd Floor Conference Room,
City Hall

Members Present:

Paul Roth, Vice Chair
Councilor Bryan Lake
Diana Duffy
Clair Oursler
Gordon Leverage
Jake Pipp, Alternate
Charles Redfern, Alternate (Voting)
Rowland Russell, Alternate (Voting)
Michael Winograd, Alternate (Voting)

Staff Present:

Megan Fortson, Planner

Members Not Present:

Zach Luse, Chair
Lisa Maxfield
Kenneth Swymer Jr.
Jude Nuru
Annu Joshi Bargale

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

10
11 Vice Chair Roth called the meeting to order at 8:05 AM and invited all the attending alternates to
12 participate as voting members.

13
14 **2) Approval of Minutes**

15
16 Mr. Jake Pipp moved to approve the September 4, 2024, meeting minutes with a second from Mr.
17 Rowland Russell. The group voted to approve the minutes as presented unanimously.

18
19 **3) Keene Clean Energy Team Button-Up Workshop Reimbursement**

20
21 Ms. Carolyn Jones explained that she was seeking reimbursement to cover the cost of a \$56 ad that
22 was run to advertise the Keene Clean Energy Team's Button-Up Workshop held on September
23 25th at the Keene Rec Center. Mr. Michael Winograd motioned to use the Energy & Climate
24 Committee's budget to cover the ad's cost. Mr. Pipp seconded the motion, which passed
25 unanimously.
26

27 Ms. Jones stated that only five people attended the event. She has had trouble spreading the word
28 when these events were held. Mr. Peter Hansel noted that Eversource may be able to provide some
29 assistance with this. Mr. Gordon Laversee indicated that it may be a good idea to go into local
30 schools and do presentations about things like energy efficiency and small changes that can be
31 made in homes.

32

33 **4) Monadnock Clean Energy Fair Wrap-Up**

34

35 Vice Chair Roth stated that the Monadnock Clean Energy Fair held on Saturday, September 28th,
36 at the Dillant-Hopkins Airport was a success. He noted that he had spoken with attendees from
37 outside the northeast region who had traveled to the area from Texas and Georgia. Councilor Bryan
38 Lake said he spoke with people about community power and had some individuals complete the
39 EV survey.

40

41 Mr. Laversee shared that the only identifier that they were from the ECC was a small card on the
42 table that was hard to see. He suggested a more significant poster-sized identifier for next time.
43 Councilor Lake suggested creating a subgroup before events to assist with preparation, creating
44 and gathering materials, etc. Ms. Lisa Maxfield said that the education and outreach group had
45 been working on this and believed Ms. Bargale was finalizing a new brochure. Mr. Roth stated
46 that the subgroup idea should be a task for the education and outreach group.

47

48 Mr. Bruce Norlund noted that about 15-20 electric vehicles were at the event, and some people
49 could do test drives. Ms. Jones stated that their table was set up in one of the hangars away from
50 other parts of the event, which she thinks may have impacted the number of people who had come
51 by their table. Mr. Peter Hansel shared that there were three presentations: one on heat pumps, one
52 on community solar, and the third on how to get incentives to help pay for some of the energy
53 upgrades.

54

55 During either the Energy Fair or the Radically Rural Summit, he learned that Concord created their
56 own community power program and added a two-cent per kilowatt hour fee for all their customers,
57 which can be used for anything that the community wants to use it for. He suggested that the ECC
58 consider this before the current contract's end. Mr. Roth asked who the governing body would be,
59 to which Mr. Hansel responded that it would likely be the City negotiating with the contractor. Mr.
60 Roth said it is like Efficiency Vermont, which also has an adder on the electric bill, which is how
61 they fund all their reimbursement and energy savings projects.

62

63 Mr. Roth suggested that at future events, it would be helpful to have information available about
64 other ongoing City initiatives, such as the ongoing Master Plan update. Ms. Fortson noted that in
65 the future, they will be happy to help with any print assistance of materials with enough lead
66 time. Mr. Hansel said the Clean Energy Fair will be held in Peterborough next year. Mr. Roth said
67 he would forward the suggestions discussed to Mr. Luse when he returns.

68

69 **5) Work-Group Report-Outs**

70 **A) Community Solar**

71
72 Mr. Hansel reported there was no meeting due to Mr. Jude Nuru being away and nothing to report.

73
74 **B) Grants, Fundraising and Partnerships**

75
76 Mr. Redfern offered to assist any workgroups in writing a short article to promote upcoming
77 events, such as in the Monadnock Ledger or Keene Sentinel. He had nothing to report on the grants
78 and fundraising.

79
80 **C) Education and Outreach**

81
82 Mr. Roth shared that the education and outreach group met a few times. The big topic of discussion
83 was the Clean Energy Fair. Aside from what was discussed earlier in the meeting, they also
84 discussed the need to look at the website to determine if there is any work they can do to make it
85 into a clearing house for information and to serve as a community go-to for resources. He is starting
86 to collect available resources and asked members to share anything that they know or are aware
87 of.

88
89 There was a lot of conversation at the fair about solar and permitting and the need for a cheat sheet
90 for zoning and permitting. He believed that was an item the group needed to start working on. Ms.
91 Fortson added that Ms. Mari Brunner had just created a web page about solar and thought it had a
92 flow chart of a high-level review of what the permitting process is like. She offered to send that
93 out to the group following the meeting. Mr. Hansel asked Ms. Fortson to include him in the e-mail.

94
95 Ms. Maxfield mentioned that Earth Day will be the next event that the workgroup will start
96 preparing for.

97
98 **D) Legislative Tracking**

99
100 Councilor Lake shared that he and Jake met, and explained that they are working on compiling
101 several things around EV charging regulations that other cities and municipalities are creating. The
102 other night, there was a lot of discussion at City Council about the charitable gaming facilities
103 ordinance. One piece of the ordinance required that if there were more than fifty parking spaces,
104 it required two parking spaces, or one or two percent of the parking spaces, to have EV chargers
105 on them. The Council did not want to put this requirement into just one ordinance, like an
106 ordinance with one specific use; they wanted something broader. There is an appetite for broad
107 EV regulations for places with large parking lots, and they do not want to call out just one type of
108 business.

109
110 The Council took removed that from the ordinance and expected the ECC to return with
111 some recommendations. As a result, he and Mr. Pipp will pull together data, use cases, and
112 suggestions to submit back to the City Council for them to review. Mr. Hansel asked if there were

113 any discussions on fast chargers or whether it referred just to general EV chargers, to which
114 Councilor Lake said it would likely be on general EV charging. They might discuss the levels, but
115 noted that he did not expect to see any suggestions for level three chargers specifically because of
116 the cost.

117
118 Mr. Clair Oursler asked how many chargers are currently available. Councilor Lake responded
119 that the City owns two, but the Co-op, Monadnock Family Services, and a few dealerships own
120 additional ones. Mr. Oursler shared that his daughter and son-in-law drove down from Burlington
121 with their electric vehicle and discovered no chargers along the road between here and Burlington.

122
123 Mr. Hansel asked whether making EV chargers part of the Planning Board's standards would be
124 possible rather than creating an ordinance. Councilor Lake believed that was something that could
125 be discussed whether it is something within their specific requirements or if it is in the Land
126 Development Code. Discussions could help determine which way would be better. Ms. Fortson
127 addressed Mr. Hansel, saying that if it were incorporated into the land development code, it would
128 probably be under Article 9. This is where the requirements for things like accessible parking
129 spaces, minimum parking requirements for different uses, etc. are outlined. It would likely end up
130 in the Land Development Code under the zoning section.

131
132 **E) Food Security**

133
134 Dr. Russell shared that their focus group on commercial composting and nutrient cycling occurred
135 after the last ECC meeting. The focus group was well attended, with seventeen people there,
136 including Diana Duffy, Duncan Watson, and Mari Brunner. Three New Hampshire Department of
137 Environmental Services employees provided an overview of where they are with that process and
138 how much of it is community education and communication. They will need to dive into creating
139 policy at the state level. Dr. Russell believed the focus is on the carrot rather than the stick, to
140 begin with, regarding incentivizing participation, which is also where local efforts are at.

141
142 Dr. Russell explained that Mr. Watson had some ideas about things that could be done at the
143 Transfer Station and how they are already collecting non-plated food. Composting in Keene is not
144 at the same level as what Wyndham County has, such as processing compost on-site. Wyndham
145 County is expected to double its capacity over the next year, which could serve as a short-term
146 option while exploring long-term possibilities here. This assumes that going across the state border
147 satisfies some of the stipulations in the rules.

148
149 Dr. Russell noted challenges and opportunities include assessing what and who is affected and
150 taking measurements. The NH DES has a small fund they could use to apply for scales,
151 measurement bins, etc. That has not been operationalized, but it is being discussed. Another
152 challenge they are facing is packaging. Some grocery stores must unpackage things to avoid
153 contamination, which is complicated and expensive, depending on how you want to address it. The
154 state food bank director was there and mentioned that it is also a challenge for them.

155

156 Dr. Russell shared that the discussion was upbeat and enthusiastic and that the state would support
157 whatever they did. Last week, he had a former colleague from Keene State reach out to him to
158 connect him with a faculty advisor for a group of students doing their senior project on a feasibility
159 study for a commercial composting facility in Keene. He met with the students and their advisors
160 with the Southwest Region Planning Commission staff. It was a timely meeting, and the students
161 are currently working on a survey they hope to conduct citywide and region-wide.

162
163 The students have also been doing structured interviews and have already interviewed Duncan
164 Watson from the Transfer Station and Albert Diemand of Elm City Compost. Dr. Russell and his
165 group suggested some other people they could interview. They are looking at how to tie this group
166 of students into the Master Planning process and perhaps work with the City on communicating
167 the survey results. Essentially, this group of students is doing a lot of ground or baseline research
168 that could help propel many of these efforts forward.

169
170 Ms. Diana Duffy added that she was struck during the meeting by the fact that Keene is uniquely
171 positioned to make things happen statewide with this. It was clear that the state's focus was on
172 Keene. She was also struck by how much of a resource Mr. Watson is to the community and the
173 state. He knows the numbers, challenges, and infrastructure limitations and is a valuable resource.
174 There were several moments in which she felt Keene was the chosen option, especially given the
175 ability to access Keene State, Antioch Environmental Studies, and other valuable connections. Dr.
176 Russell pointed out that seven of the seventeen in attendance were Antioch students. Ms. Duffy
177 said it had been a long time since she felt like Keene could move the needle, but with this current
178 legislation and the state being willing to help them figure it out, she felt there was significant
179 potential.

180
181 Dr. Russell shared that the Keene State students shared their interview with Duncan Watson, in
182 which he made it clear that there is a lot of room available at the transfer station to make this
183 happen. They would need the funding and the resources to upgrade from what they currently have,
184 but he's poised for it.

185
186 Dr. Russell added that there was some discussion about locations within Keene for composting.
187 Still, a significant smell is generated from a working composting facility that area residents may
188 not welcome. He noted there is a twenty-mile radius stipulation. This means that Brattleboro and
189 Windham will not work for Peterborough, but if it is closer to Keene, it could be within that twenty-
190 mile radius. Cheshire Medical is one of those entities that could be affected as it is within a twenty-
191 mile radius, meaning it could no longer landfill food waste. While that is the law, there is no policy,
192 punishment, or enforcement capability.

193
194 Mr. Roth shared that he has utilized Keene State students and finds them to be a beneficial
195 resource. He wondered how best to tap into it and whether bringing them into the ECC meetings
196 would be helpful. He asked if the ECC should advertise what the students are doing and offer it on
197 the website as a resource for people to view. Dr. Russell shared that the student's work will
198 generate a report. The food security group already has a draft report that he believed needed to be

199 added to and edited. The students are in their last semester, and he was unsure whether they could
200 help with that measurement.

201
202 He was firm in his belief that the measurement is something the ECC needs to look at and was not
203 sure whether it was something Albert at Elm City could do. There is a gap in services because
204 there is no longer anyone available to haul. Elm City would need more capacity to take this on,
205 requiring additional items, such as a dump truck. He believed that what the food security group
206 would do next will be determined by getting statistics, such as how much waste Cheshire Medical
207 produces or how much the Co-op produces.

208
209 **6) New Business**

210
211 Mr. Winograd referenced the presentation on the flooding done by Don Lussier, the Public Works
212 Director, at one of the recent meetings and stated how it was clear that no focus or effort was being
213 made to address the concerns about flooding. He suggested that the committee raise that in the
214 hope that somebody would look at it. He stated that he hopes it could possibly even result in the
215 City Council putting money towards it to figure out a plan should a flood occur.

216
217 Mr. Redfern pointed out that roughly ten years ago, the dam almost gave, and he was given an
218 evacuation notice for his home on Colby Street because it was expected that the dam would
219 overflow and release tremendous amounts of water. He believed Mr. Winograd raised a good point
220 that the ECC needs to deal with flood prevention and the reality is that climate change is already
221 occurring, and its effects are being seen. He agreed that it needed to be followed up on.

222
223 Ms. Duffy stated she wanted the committee to be one of support, rather than poking at the work of
224 the City Staff and to assist the Council in making these things happen. After hearing the remarks
225 from Mr. Redfern and Mr. Winograd, she wondered how the ECC could let Mr. Lussier know they
226 could be of assistance or what they could do in this work to further it.

227
228 Mr. Winograd pointed out that Mr. Lussier was frank in saying that he could not rely on the military
229 because they had decided that this was not something they were interested in doing and that he
230 needed assistance in that matter. Mr. Winograd believed that is where the ECC should encourage
231 the Council to focus on it and raise it as a concern, especially given all that is occurring in the
232 Southeastern states.

233
234 Ms. Duffy finished her remarks by saying there is no climate haven and that the ECC can be a
235 committee to keep that in the front of the community's mind. Mr. Roth said that while he was not
236 at the meeting, from reading the minutes, he believed it to be a systemic problem with the process
237 and that figuring out how to get these initiatives funded was necessary because there seemed to be
238 money available at different places. The one thing that stood out to him was that there is still mixed
239 sanitary and storm storage, and there is a need to address that because it is a serious climate issue,
240 and the plant should never overflow. He agreed with Ms. Duffy about positively supporting,
241 navigating, and assisting the Council.

242

243 Mr. Winograd stated the negative does work. The positive approach does nothing because it gives
244 an excuse to delay the conversation. He believed it was imperative to make it clear what the
245 problem was. Mr. Roth countered that it was in the presentation.

246

247 Mr. Redfern pointed out that there were fifteen people at the table if at full status, and he can
248 appreciate what Ms. Duffy is saying in that they should be mindful about how they say and present
249 things. He pointed out that this is an open forum where everyone should feel free to participate
250 and share their thoughts without worrying about offending another person. Mr. Roth responded
251 that it applies to the individuals in this committee, but it is a different situation when they present
252 as a committee.

253

254 Mr. Oursler said he has been working on this for 45 years, saying it is not cheap talk. He was
255 considering ways to get this information to the City Council, where it must be voted on. It is not
256 just a discussion at every meeting of the Energy & Climate Committee, as it has been for the past
257 two or three months. He believed the Committee should go to the City Council and get to voting
258 on some of this instead of just talking it to death.

259

260 Dr. Russell wanted to bring up a couple of terms. He explained that his Master's degree was in
261 systems theory, and his PhD was in environmental studies. This is what they call a wicked problem,
262 as it has many tangles and tentacles everywhere. Another term from his system's background is
263 equifinality or many paths to an expected end. He explained that a wicked problem is going to
264 need a multifaceted approach. Some of that is advocacy and intense communication about the
265 seriousness of the issue, and some of that will be behind-the-scenes strategizing and working
266 within the system or sometimes outside the system. There are many ways the committee can work
267 to address it, and there will be things they can do as individuals and things they can do as a
268 committee. They are all viable and necessary.

269

270 Chair Roth asked for other new business. Ms. Fortson shared that the Local Energy Solutions
271 Conference will be held on November 1st in Manchester, New Hampshire. The committee gets two
272 free tickets from Clean Energy New Hampshire. Zach Luse is interested in attending and claiming
273 one of the tickets. She did not remember the total cost but did not believe it to be over \$100.
274 Someone has expressed interest in the second complimentary ticket, but she wanted to check with
275 the group to see if anyone else was interested in attending. The budget funds are available to cover
276 the cost of any additional tickets, but the committee would have to vote to use the funds to pay for
277 them. Chair Roth asked what the budget cycle was, and Ms. Fortson explained that it was from
278 July to June.

279

280 Chair Roth asked if anyone was interested in attending. Mr. Pipp expressed interest. Mr. Winograd
281 motioned to approve two extra tickets. Mr. Redfern seconded the motion. With all in favor, the
282 motion was passed unanimously. If anyone else is interested in attending, they are asked to contact
283 Ms. Fortson.

284

285 7) **Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 6th, 2024**

286

287 8) **Adjournment**

288

289 There being no further business, Vice Chair Roth adjourned the meeting at 9:00 AM.

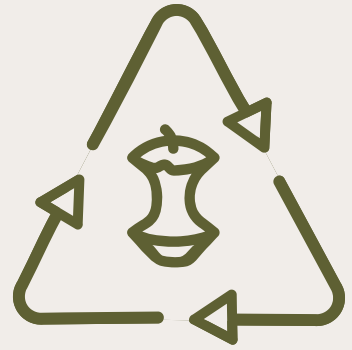
290

291 Respectfully submitted by,
292 Amanda Trask, Minute Taker

293

294 Reviewed and edited by,
295 Megan Fortson, Planner

KEENE ON COMPOST



ASSESSING LOCAL COMMERCIAL COMPOSTING POTENTIAL

KEENE AREA RESIDENTS!

**PLEASE TAKE A
QUICK SURVEY:**

**[HTTPS://KEENESTATECOLLEGE
E.COLQUALTRICS.COM/JFE/F
ORM/SV 7VBCVUM9ZI4TGVO](https://keenestatecollege.colqualtrics.com/jfe/form/sv7vbcvum9zi4tgvo)**



We are a group of Keene State Environmental Studies and Sustainability students working on our capstone project, assessing the feasibility of developing a commercial compost facility in Keene.

This survey aims to gauge community interest in diverting organic waste into sustainable management operations.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary and anonymous. Participants must be 18 or older.

Thank you!



**FOR MORE INFORMATION:
EMAIL [KSEAVER@KEENE.EDU](mailto:kseaver@keene.edu)**