ENERGY AND CLIMATE COMMITTEE (ECC)

AGENDA

Wednesday, February 25, 2026 4:30 PM City Hall, 2nd Floor Conference Room

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**
2. **Approval of Minutes** – January 28, 2026
3. **C-PACER Updates**
4. **Spring Retreat Planning** – Potential Dates/Times
5. **Keene State College Earth Day Celebration** – Friday, April 17th from 12-3pm at Oya Hill
6. **2026 Monadnock Region Earth Festival** – Saturday, April 25th from 11am-3pm at the Monadnock Food Co-op
7. **Senate Bill 538 (SB538)** – Related to Net Metering Credits for Solar Projects Serving Political Subdivisions
8. **Work Group Report-outs**
    a. Policy
    b. Resilience
    c. Outreach
9. **New Business**
10. **Next Meeting:** March 25, 2026 at 4:30 pm

Link to ECC Google Drive Folder:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1O1WlR0fADTNijRt13v3DU7k2FxwXDcGs?usp=sharing

City of Keene
New Hampshire

ENERGY AND CLIMATE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, January 28, 2026 **4:30 PM** **2nd Floor Conference Room, City Hall**

Members Present:
Gordon Leversee, Chair
Maureen Nebenzahl, Vice Chair
Councilor Bryan Lake
Timothy Murphy
Lisa Maxfield
Jake Pipp, Alternate (Remote; Voting)
Charles Redfern, Alternate (Voting)
Catherine Koning, Alternate (Arrived at 4:44 PM; Voting)
Matthew Boulton, Alternate (Voting)
Rowland Russell, Alternate (Voting)

Staff Present:
Megan Fortson, Planner

Members Not Present:
Annu Joshi Bargale
Paul Roth
Steve Larmon
Clair Oursler

1) Call to Order and Roll Call

Committee Staff Liaison, Planner Megan Fortson, called the meeting to order at 4:32 PM and led roll call. Mr. Pipp participated remotely from New Haven, CT, and was alone at his location.

2) Election of Chair & Vice Chair

A motion by Mr. Murphy to nominate Dr. Leversee as the Committee's 2026 Chair was duly seconded by Mr. Redfern. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

A motion by Mr. Murphy to nominate Ms. Nebenzahl as the Committee's 2026 Vice Chair was duly seconded by Mr. Redfern. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

Ms. Maxfield wanted to publicly thank Mr. Murphy and Mr. Roth for their years as Chair and Vice Chair, respectively, during which time Ms. Maxfield felt that the Committee ran smoothly. Chair Leversee agreed, especially because Mr. Murphy stepped in as Chair with no notice and did a

superb job organizing and leading meetings. Chair Leversee also thanked Ms. Fortson for her help organizing the meetings and Mr. Murphy agreed.

3) Approval of Minutes – December 22, 2025

Ms. Fortson reminded the Committee that per the City Clerk, all Committee members should vote to approve minutes if they read them, whether or not they were present at that prior meeting. Dr. Russell said he would still abstain.

Revision: line 100 should read, "Additionally, he said someone could buy a property and …"

A motion by Councilor Lake to adopt the December 22, 2025 meeting minutes as amended was duly seconded by Vice Chair Nebenzahl. The motion carried on a roll call vote of 6–0. Dr. Russell and Mr. Pipp abstained.

Dr. Koning arrived at 4:44 PM and Chair Leversee appointed her as a voting member.

4) C-PACER Program:

A) Answers to ECC Member Questions

Chair Leversee referred to the January 28, 2026 Energy and Climate Committee Agenda packet. Pages 13 and 14 of the packet include answers to the Committee's remaining questions about the Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy & Resilience Program (C-PACER). The Chair briefly summarized the full answers provided in the packet:

1. Who performs the special tax assessments? (state vs. rep for NHBFA vs. City's tax assessor). Chair Leversee said the capital provider is required to provide proof to the New Hampshire Business Finance Authority (NHBFA) via a professional appraisal or other, that the C-PACER loan/assessment amount adheres to these requirements prior to monies being released. Chair Leversee said that is the pathway for assessment. Mr. Murphy noticed that the appraisal is a function of the loan amount, which he thought might be relevant. Although he thought it sounded like less dependence on City staff, which was the important part.

2. How does resiliency work play into calculating payment/interest rates? Chair Leversee said regardless of the work/project type (e.g., energy efficiency or resiliency), C-PACER payments and interest rates are set by each independent private capital provider (the NHBFA plays no role in this process). This is how resiliency fits into C-PACER.

3. Do applicants participating in similar programs in other states end up saving as much as they initially anticipated? Chair Leversee said there was no readily available data at this point to know, because there had been no long-term measurement and verification (M&V) component to these programs in most states. The New Hampshire process does require a licensed professional engineer or qualified professional/firm to certify that each project is C-PACE eligible (from a qualified improvement standpoint); Chair Leversee said this should include the fact that the savings are greater than the cost. He noted that property owners should still be provided with evidence that savings will be recognized.

4. What happens if a loan for a project is in place and a state discontinues the C-PACE program? Chair Leversee said existing loan agreements remain enforceable as the voluntary special assessment lien stays attached to the property until it is paid in full. He said that regardless of the program status (i.e., even if the program ceases to accept new projects), the loan will outlive the program, meaning current and future property owners (if the building is sold) remain responsible for scheduled payments.

5. What are the "unincorporated" areas of NH where C-PACER can only be implemented via the County in which they lie? Answers listed in the 01/28/2026 ECC Agenda packet, page 14 of 34.

6. Of these 3 choices, which is true: a) A county's participation is limited to covering unincorporated areas of the particular county; OR b) a county may adopt and sponsor C-PACER on behalf of municipalities within said county; OR c) both a) and b) above are true? The answer is "a."

Chair Leversee noted that Questions 5 and 6 go together and he answered 6: "*A county's participation is limited to covering unincorporated areas of the particular county*." Thus, none of the unincorporated areas listed under Question 5 in the packet were in Cheshire County. So, Chair Leversee stated the fact that Cheshire County would have no role in establishing a C-PACER Program.

The meeting packet (pages 16 and 17) also includes answers the NHBFA provided to City staff's C-PACER questions, which Chair Leversee briefly reviewed:

1. *Billing & Payments: It appears that the City is obligated to bill and collect the money on assessments or has the option to delegate to an outside party.*

    a. *Will the City have to collect the money? If so, how? If not, who pays for the outside, third-party service?* Chair Leversee said the short answer was "no." The NHBFA replied that typically, municipalities assign this responsibility to a third party, often the capital provider. Chair Leversee said the City would not really have any role in collecting the fees. The NHBFA's reply stated that the costs associated with third-party, outside service providers would not be paid by the City or with taxpayer dollars. Instead, these administrative fees would almost always be built into the C-PACER financing amount itself and paid for by the property owner. Chair Leversee said the answer was that ultimately, the C-PACER program has been designed to be cost-neutral to municipalities.

    b. *Is the City still liable if there are errors or omissions with the third-party billing company?* Chair Leversee said the City would not be liable for errors, omissions, or mismanagement by a third-party billing company or administrator (this would be spoken to in the "Assessment Agreement"). The financial risk remains with the capital provider, not the municipality.

    c. *What work, auditing, etc. is the City responsible for regarding these projects/billing?* Chair Leversee said the NHBFA replied that, "… the municipality role is simply one of

recording," and the City transfers all rights, titles, and interest in the Notice of Assessment, C-PACER lien, and the Assessment Agreement to the Assignee (typically the capital provider). So, Chair Leversee said the City would not be responsible for auditing those things.

2. *Impact on City Assessing Dept. Regardless of which City department/office that is put in control of this program, are there any other duties and/or responsibilities that would be placed on Keene's Assessing Department as part of the program's administration?* Chair Leversee said the answer provided a list of responsibilities for the City, which he summarized: enabling legislation, executing all relevant C-PACER documentation and recording the C-PACER lien on the property, and adding the C-PACER repayment as a voluntary special assessment to the annual property tax bill. The City will make itself available to answer questions about the C-PACER Program and work with NHBFA/capital provider, as needed.

Mr. Murphy thought it was good that the NHBFA's replies about C-PACER's impact on the City Assessing Department were consistent with what Frank Richter of Clean Energy New Hampshire read into the record at the ECC's December 2025 meeting.

Chair Leversee called this an informational item, and noted that the Committee would remain a resource for the City Council and its Planning, Licenses and Development (PLD) Committee. He hoped they would be satisfied with these answers.

B) Follow Up from City Council Meeting – January 15, 2026

The Energy and Climate Committee's recommendation that the City Council amend the City Code of Ordinances too add the C-PACER Program was included on the Council's January 15, 2026 Agenda. Mayor Kahn referred the recommendation to the Council's PLD Committee for consideration at their February 11th meeting.

C) Planning, Licenses & Development Committee Meeting – Wednesday, February 11, 2026 at 6:00 PM in the Council Chambers

Chair Leversee suggested that an ECC member attend the Planning, Licenses and Development (PLD) Committee on February 11, 2026, to represent this item. Vice Chair Nebenzahl agreed to attend. Councilor Lake also planned to attend, but if a quorum of City Councilors is in attendance, it would prevent him from speaking on the topic. Ms. Fortson would also attend to speak as ECC Staff Liaison. She agreed that it would be great to have Vice Chair Nebenzahl express the Committee's desire for the City of Keene to adopt this program and explain its importance based on the ECC's expertise. Ms. Fortson added that the Community Development Director, Paul Andrus, would be available to answer more technical questions the PLD Committee might have related the Assessing Department's involvement in the program.

Discussion ensued briefly between Councilor Lake and Vice Chair Nebenzahl, as they decided to coordinate in advance of the PLD meeting about the ECC's statement. Ms. Fortson encouraged more ECC Members to come and speak in support too, up to the Committee's quorum limit of six members.

Chair Leversee asked about next steps. Ms. Fortson explained that on February 11, 2026, the PLD Committee (5 members) would gather information, accept public comments, and make a recommendation back to the full City Council (15 members). At the next City Council meeting on February 19, they will decide whether to support the ECC's recommendation to move forward with incorporating the C-PACER program into City Code. If approved, the City Manager would be directed to instruct staff to submit an ordinance to amend City Code to include C-PACER as a new voluntary funding mechanism and establish a district. Chair Leversee noted that the January 28, 2026 ECC meeting packet also included a draft ordinance for information on how that could work.

Mr. Boulton said he was thinking strategically while reading through the answers to these questions, and it seemed like a lot of the burden and liability would not be on the City. He tried to think skeptically; if there were an opposition to the City adopting C-PACER, where would it come from? He asked about the vulnerability in the case the ECC was making, or if there was one. Councilor Lake thought the PLD Committee would be concerned about any potential burden placed on the City. He thought there might also be discussion about establishing a zone, whereas the ECC talked about it making sense to allow C-PACER for the whole City. So, Councilor Lake thought the PLD Committee might need to decide those merits. Dr. Koning discussed how the PLD Committee's job would always be complicated, and things are always being added on. So, she wondered what the PLD Committee's response might be if the concern about establishing a zone was raised. Councilor Lake thought it would depend on whether City staff reports that they find it is too much of a burden. Then it would be up to the Committee to discuss and weigh benefits of the program, and the ECC could comment on why it is trying to enact these goals (i.e., further carrying out the Keene Sustainable Energy Plan).

Dr. Koning asked if there was another city the Committee could provide data from. Ms. Fortson explained that no other municipality in the state of New Hampshire had adopted this option yet. NHBFA had internal discussions with the Keene Assessing Department and other necessary staff. Ms. Fortson reported that C-PACER seemed like it would hopefully not be too labor intensive for City Assessing staff, because the responsibilities can be assigned to a financial third party. Ms. Fortson thought one remaining clarifying question was how C-PACER would be incorporated into the property tax bill, but she did not think that it would be a burden for the Assessing Department overall. Any staff concerns would come up during the PLD Committee presentation. She agreed that it was difficult without a lot of data from NHBFA on other cities and states participating in this. Dr. Russell said it would be worth looking at how C-PACER relates to the Strategic Pillars in Keene's 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan and make those connections for the City Council.

Mr. Boulton asked if the City Council and its Standing Committees typically consult City staff when something potentially objectionable is raised that could cause stress for staff. Councilor Lake said the City Council definitely relies on City staff's opinions about these things. He called them the subject matter experts within those various areas. That is why Ms. Fortson will represent the ECC on this matter, or various department heads act as experts before the Council's Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee during the budget process, for example. Councilor Lake anticipated the PLD Committee discussing potential impacts of the C-PACER Program with Community Development Department staff, much like the ECC had been.

Mr. Pipp understood concerns about potential staff impacts but also wondered how many of these projects the Committee expected the City to see per year. He expected that it would not be so many that it would increase the burden that much for the Assessing Department. Regarding property tax, Mr. Pipp asked how the increased value will be assessed; will it be added to the existing assessment value for the property (based on the City's formulas)? He said property taxes are reassessed every five years. Councilor Lake agreed, and within that period, every property in the City is revalued to recalibrate the property taxes. Other organizations also perform their own assessments (e.g., a financial institution assesses its property). Councilor Lake called them separate entities that end up filtering into the same value. Mr. Pipp wondered how a mortgage lender's internal assessed value of a property differing from the City's assessed property value would have any impact on the City's value; what if that mortgage assessment is also in-between the City's reassessment?

Chair Leversee thought it was important that the ECC had moved its recommendation forward to City Council, so it could be discussed by the PLD Committee. At this time, Chair Leversee thought the discussion was in the world of hypotheticals, and it was time to hear what the PLD Committee would have to say. If the PLD Committee were to have more questions, Chair Leversee said the ECC could help get enough information to answer them.

Dr. Russell thought Mr. Pipp's question about how many C-PACER projects per year the Committee was anticipating was a good one. Dr. Russell knew NHBFA did not have certain data, but he wondered if they had data on the number of projects per municipality per year in other states, so the ECC could provide an estimate based on population to the PLD Committee before February 11, 2026. Chair Leversee agreed. Ms. Maxfield thought the October 2025 Eversource Main Streets Event 10% enrollment rate provided a pretty usual glimpse at the community atmosphere around these programs. Councilor Lake compared it to the City's 79-E Tax Relief Program that is for similar style projects, with a different funding mechanism. During his four years on the City Council, there were only three 79-E projects (two on the same building). Councilor Lake did not anticipate 20 C-PACER projects per year, stating that one per year would be fantastic. Ms. Fortson recalled that only commercial properties (e.g., an office) and properties with five or more units will be eligible for the C-PACER Program.

5) Work Group Report-Outs

A) Outreach

Chair Leversee missed the Outreach Work Group's Zoom meeting. Dr. Koning reported that a lot of the Work Group's focus was on the Sustainability Coordinator position. The Outreach Work Group discussed the hope for the Coordinator position to be revenue neutral. To generate enthusiasm, Dr. Koning said the Work Group thought about creating a petition as a mechanism to engage people with the idea of having the Coordinator. She added that another idea was to present a workshop on the City's clean energy progress and what the City could still do, which Dr. Koning said would build the case for the Energy/Sustainability Coordinator position. She wanted to discuss the two ideas with the Committee before approaching Senior Planner, Mari Brunner. Dr. Koning also knew progress with the Coordinator position relied on the Policy Work Group.

Chair Leversee recalled the December 2025 minutes mentioning that the Outreach Work Group would seek information about the C-PACER Program, but it seemed the NHBFA, banks, and others involved will already probably be the best sources of outreach and information. Still, he said that could be another possible task for the Outreach Work Group.

Ms. Fortson asked about the deadline to apply for the 2026 Monadnock Region Earth Festival with the Monadnock Food Co-Op. Mr. Redfern said he received an email about it through Pathways for Keene. Dr. Koning said she would inquire about the deadline for the ECC to participate.

Mr. Redfern mentioned the Committee talking for a long time about getting a banner to represent it at booths during events. The Committee recalled that it purchased a standing banner and tablecloth during the previous fiscal year.

B) Policy

Councilor Lake reported that the Policy Work Group had not met this past month, but he hoped to schedule a meeting with the whole group before the February 11, 2026 Planning, Licenses and Development Committee meeting.

Councilor Lake led a discussion about the Sustainability Coordinator position, noting that the Policy Work Group was in a holding pattern with it. During his last conversation with Senior Planner Mari Brunner, she reported that the City Manager took the ECC's feedback and they made some changes to the job description. Now, they were working toward the budget process (starting in early May) and he wondered if it was worth seeing if Ms. Brunner needed any further feedback from the ECC. Councilor Lake thought the Committee would love to see the draft job description before it was finalized in case there was any final input. Vice Chair Nebenzahl said Ms. Brunner indicated that she would show the ECC another copy of the job description, which the Vice Chair agreed would be a good thing. Mr. Redfern added that it would be helpful to see the salary and benefits estimated for that position, so the Committee could answer those questions. Councilor Lake said Ms. Brunner was working with the City's Human Resources Department to review all of the similar style positions in the region and decide what makes the most sense for Keene; there are many different levels of what the position could be. So, Councilor Lake said the pay scale was still to be determined when they last met with Ms. Brunner at the end of November. However, Vice Chair Nebenzahl said it was confirmed as a full-time position.

Discussion ensued about whether this is supposed to be an *Energy* Coordinator or a *Sustainability* Coordinator position. During the Outreach Work Group Report, Mr. Murphy heard that Dr. Koning referred to it as the *Energy* Coordinator. Dr. Koning said she and Mr. Boulton had been helping try to raise money for the non-City portion of the position. So, Dr. Koning brought the title up with Ms. Brunner, who agreed to consider it and wanted to hear more conversation about it. Dr. Koning found *Sustainability* broader (i.e., anything from recycling to land protection, bicycles, etc.). She felt strongly that the position should be *Energy* adjacent or affect energy. Mr. Boulton agreed. Dr. Russell disagreed, countering that this should be a *Sustainability* Coordinator because it began interrelated with the ECC creating the Resilience Work Group; the Committee felt it had been unbalanced in attention on climate impact due to may factors (e.g., staff assistance). While he thought *Sustainability* could be too broad, Dr. Russell felt that *Energy* would be overly focused

for the Coordinator position. He thought the duties listed in the job description would ultimately be more important and a title like *Sustainability Coordinator* would provide the City with more freedom to take up emergent things, including those climate and energy related. Chair Leversee asked for the Policy Work Group's input since it was working on the job description. Councilor Lake clarified that the job description was in the hands of City staff at this point, but he could request that the Policy Work Group be able to review it again to keep this conversation going.

Mr. Boulton noted that he spoke with Ms. Brunner about the financial package the City team had been clarifying for the Coordinator position. Mr. Boulton said he believed that the financial package was ready to be shared for fundraising. He recalled the three-part strategy for funding the salary and benefits package: 1/3 City-funded, which the City Manager already identified; 1/3 public fundraising, which was already completed thanks to community donors, such as Peter Hansel and many others; and 1/3 donations from the business community. So, Mr. Boulton said the three-year position was 2/3 funded at this time. He wondered if the ECC could show the Council that the Coordinator could be value-neutral for those three years, then it might make a stronger, positive case for the City to make it a permanent position. Mr. Boulton and Dr. Koning are not experts on Keene's business community, but they were willing to do the fundraising leg work, so they empowered ECC Members to share ideas (via Ms. Fortson by email). Otherwise, Mr. Boulton reported on Ms. Brunner's excitement because the City had never been this close to having an Energy/Sustainability Coordinator.

Peter Hansel of Keene suggested framing the 1/3 ask of the business community (roughly $35,000) as the amount approximately needed to cover this portion of the salary for the position.

Mr. Redfern noted that Cheshire County has an excellent Grant Manager, Suzanne Bansley, who has landed multi-million-dollar grants. She has everything at her disposal to search for corporations/foundations' focus areas, and who they give money to, how much, and for what causes. He called it robust. Mr. Redfern said in his opinion, the City does not use the County's Grant Manager to the extent that it should. He said Keene is a Cheshire County entity and he thought the City should ask the County to help Keene fund this 1/3 of the Coordinator position for a three-year basis or whatever is decided later on.

Dr. Russell recalled that with the Downtown Infrastructure Project starting this year, it would be a tough time for downtown businesses and fundraising, which the ECC would need to keep in mind. He recalled that for the Walldogs Festival, over $100,000 of the $250,000 was raised from local foundations and grants. So, Dr. Russell agreed with Mr. Redfern about the merit of pursuing grants to fill these funding gaps.

C) Resilience

Dr. Russell reported that the Resilience Work Group would be meeting on February 10, 2026 to continue prioritizing the rolling list of climate change impacts. Next, the Work Group would compare its prioritized list of climate change impacts in Keene to the 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan, as well as the City's Disaster Preparedness Plan, Emergency Preparedness Plan, and others that might be pertinent. That effort would involve discussions with City staff to ensure the

Resilience Work Group's priorities align with the City's, so that the group can focus on identifying gaps.

Dr. Koning suggested that the Outreach Work Group should report out last because she learns about things during the other Work Groups' reports (e.g., workshops, projects) that would be good for Outreach to share. She is on several committees in the community, and it would be good to spread the word about what the ECC is doing (e.g., climate change priorities, like flooding). Dr. Koning suggested inviting Ms. Brunner to lead public workshop on the City's progress to date and to make the case for why the City cannot advance further without an Energy/Sustainability Coordinator. Mr. Redfern noted that some committees he is a part of have retreats, with a primary mission to accomplish a specific focus like this. Mr. Murphy thought any opportunity for the ECC to interact and coordinate with City staff at future meetings would make sense. Discussion ensued about Dr. Koning's suggestion to hold a workshop event, inviting the public to learn about the Coordinator position. Dr. Koning said in her mind, the event would build the case in the public's minds about the need for an Energy/Sustainability Coordinator and that fact that it would be revenue neutral.

Dr. Russell recalled Mr. Redfern's past research on cities with coordinators like this. Dr. Russell recalled that some cities (e.g., Portland, Maine) were more than revenue neutral, they could pay their coordinators with the energy savings the cities generated. Dr. Russell wondered whether Mr. Redfern's research would be useful to share with the public. Mr. Redfern agreed, noting that the City was less interested in the research at that time on AmeriCorps, which he believes is responsible for the sustainability coordinators that are spread throughout Maine. He thought the conversation about the Energy/Sustainability Coordinator reinvigorated the Maine research. Dr. Russell said he was thinking about something that was not AmeriCorps funded and made a note to look through his digital materials. Dr. Koning said she had done a lot of that work and already gathered some information Dr. Russell had provided, so she thought Ms. Brunner may be well ahead of this curve on that. She thought the public's understanding was another story.

Dr. Koning was not suggesting a public event to only focus on the Energy/Sustainability Coordinator Position, she wanted to educate the public about how much progress the City has made toward its goals and what is needed next. Chair Leversee suggested the Coordinator/Progress Event as an agenda item for the February 2026 ECC meeting, and how to approach City staff and the public in an organized and mutually productive way. As the ECC's Staff Liaison, Ms. Fortson suggested having a very clear picture of the event's goal. Ms. Fortson did not think the Committee would necessarily need to convince members of the public about why a Energy/Sustainability Coordinator is necessary if there is no Budget impact. She thought it was great to have an event celebrating everything the City has done with Community Power and more. Vice Chair Nebenzahl said the Committee needed to decide which demographic of the public this event would be for (e.g., groups like the Chamber of Commerce); who is going to come and listen? Ms. Maxfield suggested that this could be an opportunity to use Dr. Koning's knowledge and develop a brochure to distribute to the commercial businesses in Keene, who might donate for the final 1/3 of the Coordinator position funding.

Dr. Koning mentioned a Letter to the Editor in The Keene Sentinel, with data, which made Community Power look really bad, saying that it was costing more than Eversource. Dr. Koning

thought the ECC should keep an eye on it if a lot of people drop out of the Community Power Program.

Ms. Maxfield recalled that at the November 2025 meeting, she mentioned honoring a special community member, who was highly involved with the ECC for many years. Ms. Fortson said she inquired and the ECC would need to decide whether to take that action and then coordinate with the Mayor's and Clerk's Offices to add the Proclamation to an upcoming City Council agenda.

6) Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Leversee adjourned the meeting at 5:33 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Katie Kibler, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,
Megan A. Fortson, AICP - Planner

From: Megan Fortson
Bcc: Energy and Climate Committee
Subject: C-PACER Update
Date: Thursday, February 12, 2026 2:46:00 PM
Attachments: image001.png

Hi All,

Exciting updates regarding the C-PACER Program! At their meeting last night, the Planning, Licenses, & Development Committee unanimously approved the ECC's recommendation that the C-PACER ordinance gets incorporated into City Code. The next step in this process is for the recommendation to go back to the full Council for a vote.

If approved by the Council, the City Manager will instruct City Staff to work on drafting and submitting an ordinance application to incorporate the program into City Code.

Thank you to everyone for all your work on this! A special thanks to Maureen & Bryan for taking the time to attend last night's meeting and represent the committee!

Have a good evening,
Megan

Megan A. Fortson, AICP (she/her)
Planner, Community Development Department
City of Keene
3 Washington Street
Keene, NH 03431
(603) 352-5440 | KeeneNH.gov

From: KSC Eco-Reps
To: Mari Brunner; KSC Eco-Reps
Cc: Emily Duseau; Megan Fortson
Subject: Re: Keene State College Eco Reps Earth Day Celebration
Date: Friday, February 13, 2026 1:27:55 PM

Hi Mari,

We will be providing tables and chairs to all organizations! You are welcome to invite committee members to table with you as well, the more the merrier! Different organizations do different things so you can bring an interactive activity or just information whatever is easier for you, the orgs with interactive activities sometimes gain more student interest, but an activity is not required!

We look forward to having you!

Amanda Rotigliano
She/They
Keene State College
BA Legal Studies | BA History | Honors Program
Eco-Reps President | Class of 2027 Secretary
Student Assembly | Student Assembly Speaker
508-570-8695 | Bellingham, MA | Keene, NH

From: Mari Brunner
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2026 12:07 PM
To: KSC Eco-Reps
Cc: Amanda Rotigliano; Emily Duseau; Megan Fortson
Subject: RE: Keene State College Eco Reps Earth Day Celebration

Hi Amanda,

Thank you for the invitation, I can attend and provide information about the City of Keene Community Development Department. We have several projects that are underway that may be of interest for students, including the Keene Community Power Program and an update to the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (last updated in 1999!).

A few questions for you:

1. Would I need to provide my own table, tent, chairs, etc.?
2. Could I invite committee members from City boards/committees to table with

me? (Energy and Climate, Conservation Commission, and the Bicycle Pedestrian Pathways Advisory Committee all come to mind)
3. Should organizations just plan on bringing information to share, or would you like more interactive activities?

Thank you again for the invitation, it's great to hear from the Eco-Reps! You've been a fantastic partner over the years with the City.

Best,
Mari

Mari Brunner, AICP
Senior Planner - Community Development Dept.
(603) 352-5440 | KeeneNH.gov

From: KSC Eco-Reps
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2026 10:36 AM
To: Mari Brunner
Cc: Amanda Rotigliano
Subject: Keene State College Eco Reps Earth Day Celebration

Hello Mari,

I am reaching out on behalf of Keene State College Eco-Reps, which is an on-campus organization dedicated to promoting sustainability to the campus. On Friday, April 17th from 12-3 pm (with setup beginning at 11:30 am), we are hosting an Earth Day Celebration on the Keene State College campus at Oya Hill. There will be off-campus organizations who will table, with sustainability and the mission of their organization in mind. The Eco-Reps' table will feature plants, information about how students can live more sustainably on campus, and some earth day game.

We would like to invite you to collaborate with us at our Earth Day Celebration! Your organization's presence would add value to our event through education and engagement with students. Please respond to this email invitation to RSVP. Additionally, if you could describe the educational/promotional materials or activities you'll have at your table that would help us advertise this event. Let us know if you have any questions or would like more information.

Thank you for your consideration and hope to see you there,

Amanda Rotigliano

2026 Monadnock Region Earth Festival

April 25 @ 11:00 am - 3:00 pm

Join us for the 2026 Monadnock Region Earth Festival to celebrate our community's commitment to preserving and sustaining our planet and healthy living for all!

Festivities will be happening in and around the store, along the bike path, and Railroad Square!

Farmer's market style festival with vendors and educational opportunities!

BBQ from MFC's Prepared Foods Team!

Enjoy Live Music from Local Bands!

Green Up Keene with The Board of Directors

DETAILS

Date:

April 25 (2026-04-25)

Time:

11:00 am - 3:00 pm

Event Categories:

Board of Directors, Co-op Event, Community Event

monadnock® FOOD CO•OP
good. local. food.

From: Frank Richter
To: Megan Fortson
Subject: Will Keene sign a letter to extend municipal net metering?
Date: Monday, February 16, 2026 9:30:12 AM

Megan,

Clean Energy NH has identified a bill currently before the NH State Legislature that directly affects Keene's ability to invest in municipal solar.

Would you ask your Select Board or City Council to consider signing on to the attached letter in support of SB538? This bill ensures 20 years of net metering credits for solar projects that serve political subdivisions (towns, cities, counties, school districts, other governmental entities).

We are hosting a **Virtual Lunch Hour** for municipal officials and committee members next Thursday to learn about SB538 and answer questions. We'd love to see you there and will follow up with a link to the recording.

Thursday, February 19, 12pm - 1pm
Click here to join by Zoom: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87282442699
Meeting ID: 872 8244 2699
One tap mobile +16469313860,,87282442699#

Why This Matters

1. **Solar is a good investment for NH towns.** Many NH communities already rely on municipal solar to generate predictable revenue and savings, budget relief, and long-term cost control for taxpayers.

2. **Municipalities rely on net metering to make solar financially feasible.**

    - Net metering allows towns to get credit for any excess energy sent back to the grid (e.g. excess energy produced on a sunny day offsets energy used on a cloudy day).

    - Group net metering allows towns to share excess energy with other electric meters (e.g. a municipality could oversize a solar array at the transfer station and share those energy credits with the fire station across town).

Here's the problem: Under current rules, net metering credits are only guaranteed through 2040.

Long term net metering uncertainty is **particularly problematic for the many municipal solar projects that rely on outside financing** (e.g., when a town leases land to a solar developer, collects lease and tax payments, and purchases power at a fixed rate). Right now, **uncertainty in state policy is preventing many such projects from moving forward.**

SB538 guarantees 20 years of net metering credits for municipal solar projects. Specifically: SB538 guarantees that municipal group net-metering projects serving only political subdivisions (e.g. towns, schools, and counties) will remain eligible for net-metering tariffs for a full 20 years from when they began receiving compensation, rather than having eligibility end in 2040.

Please read the attached letter for more examples and context.

What You Can Do

1. A Formal Vote Is Ideal
The strongest signal is a vote by a municipal governing body (e.g., Select Board, City Council), authorizing participation in the sign-on letter.

If helpful, here is **sample motion language** you are welcome to adapt:

> *To authorize the Chair of the Select Board to sign, on behalf of the Town of [Name of Municipality] a letter in support of SB538 (2026), relative to extending net metering eligibility terms for municipal energy projects.*

If your board prefers slightly different wording, that's completely fine—the key thing is a clear vote authorizing the signature.

2. Energy Committees Can Sign On, Too!
Local Energy Committees and Commissions are also welcome to sign the attached letter. If you go this route, CENH strongly encourages Energy Committees to:

1. Notify your Select Board or City Council that you are doing so, and

2. Share the letter and background with them so they are aware of the issue and the committee's position.

That coordination helps ensure local elected officials are not surprised when the issue comes up at the State House—and it strengthens our overall message to lawmakers. We have seen instances in which energy committee volunteers have gotten out ahead of their select board, and have been removed from their energy committee as a result.

3. Let Your Legislators Know This Matters Locally
In addition to signing the letter, we strongly recommend that at least one local official (Select Board member, councilor, or committee chair) reach out directly to your State Representative or local Delegation. Even a short note is effective. For example:

> *"As a municipal official in [Town], I want to flag SB538 as important to our community. Community-scale solar projects can deliver real tax revenue and energy savings for municipalities, but uncertainty around net-metering terms is stopping projects from moving forward. We hope you'll support SB538 as a practical, pro-municipal fix."*

Hearing directly from local officials—especially those responsible for budgets and tax rates—makes a real difference. You can do this in a short email, but a brief phone call can be even better. If you're uncertain who your local representative is or how to contact them, you can find that information here.

Next Steps

1. Please let us know whether or not your municipality or committee plans to sign on,

2. If so, tell us who the authorized signer will be, so the final letter accurately reflects your participation.

We intend to compile the final letter with all signatories listed by March 26, 2026 (the date of "Crossover," by which time SB538 will have moved to the NH House of Representatives from the NH Senate).

We're happy to answer questions, provide additional background, or help think through how this fits with

projects your community has explored or considered.

Thank you for all the work you do on behalf of your community, and for considering adding your voice to this effort.

Best regards,

Frank Richter | **Energy Circuit Rider**
Clean Energy NH | Energy Circuit Rider Program
Check out our new Community Resources webpage
125 N. State Street
Concord, NH 03301

Senator Kevin Avard, Chair
Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
New Hampshire State House
Concord, NH 03301

Re: Support for SB538 – Ensuring Long-Term Value for Municipal Renewable Energy Projects

Dear Chairman Avard and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the undersigned communities, we write in strong support of SB538, which extends a 20-year term of eligibility in the net metering 2.0 tariff for "municipal group hosts" and other political subdivision energy projects. Net metering is the cornerstone of the economics of these projects because it allows project owners to get credit for the excess energy they send back to the grid. Without a guarantee that they'll continue to receive compensation at a predictable rate after 2040, banks, investors, and developers are reluctant to build these projects. For New Hampshire municipalities, school districts, and counties, local renewable energy generation delivers predictable revenue and savings, budget relief, and long-term cost control for taxpayers.

For example, a 5 MW AC solar array is currently under construction in Concord and will supply power to multiple state, school, and municipal facilities signed on as "offtakers" for the project. During its first 15 years in operation, this project will offset over $1 Million in state and municipal electricity costs, generate more than $1 Million in new tax revenue for the City of Concord, and invest over $1 million in local electrical grid improvements. The project will also generate lease income for the private property owner providing the site for this project.

These benefits are not speculative. They are stable, predictable, measurable, and flow directly into municipal budgets, school operating costs, and the local economy. This has a direct benefit for local tax-payers.

The net metering 2.0 tariff for "municipal group hosts" allows a municipality, school district, county, or other political subdivision to build a renewable energy project on one site and use some of that generated power to offset electricity bills at other public facilities. On a small scale, this means an oversized array on the roof of a town hall can generate power for the fire station across town. On a large scale, multiple communities can collaborate to establish a single multi-megawatt solar array rather than multiple smaller arrays, as in the Concord example cited above. Projects can be located on public or private land, as long as the energy is credited to electric meters owned by political subdivisions.

However, uncertainty around how long projects are eligible to receive net metering compensation is fast becoming the single largest barrier to more municipal renewable energy projects like these going forward.

As documented in testimony submitted by Clean Energy NH in support of SB538, solar developers have already abandoned at least 274 MW of large scale solar projects in New Hampshire, and 12 solar companies have exited

the state entirely due to the lack of bankable term certainty. With no guarantee of how compensation after 2040 will be structured and a shrinking payback period, banks and developers are unwilling to invest in these projects.

The result of this lack of certainty represents a lost opportunity on the order of 40–50 large scale projects statewide. For New Hampshire communities, that means $120-$150 Million in lost municipal property tax revenue, lease income for landowners, and electricity savings.

For the communities listed below, and for municipalities across New Hampshire, this bill is about protecting local revenue, reducing long-term energy costs, and ensuring that more viable projects can proceed for the benefit of taxpayers.

We respectfully urge the Committee to recommend SB538, Ought to Pass, and to give municipalities the clarity they need to responsibly plan, finance, and benefit from local energy projects.

Sincerely,

[Name]
[Title]
On behalf of the [Governing Body or Energy Committee]
[Municipality Name]

[Name]
[Title]
On behalf of the [Governing Body or Energy Committee]
[Municipality Name]

[Name]
[Title]
On behalf of the [Governing Body or Energy Committee]
[Municipality Name]

[Name]
[Title]
On behalf of the [Governing Body or Energy Committee]
[Municipality Name]