



ENERGY AND CLIMATE COMMITTEE (ECC)

AGENDA

Wednesday, July 22, 2026

4:30 PM

City Hall, 2nd Floor Conference Room

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**
2. **Approval of Minutes** – June 24, 2026
3. **Community Power Update** – Patrick Roche & Allison McNeill from Good Energy
4. **Community Power Mailer**
5. **Annual Report to City Council** – Review of Draft Document
6. **ECC Donations**
7. **C-PACER Updates**
8. **Work Groups**
 - a. Policy (*Meets as needed*)
 - b. Resilience
 - c. Outreach
9. **Communication Plan**
10. **Staff Updates**
11. **New Business**
12. **Next Meeting:** August 26, 2026 at 4:30 pm

Link to ECC Google Drive Folder:

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

City of Keene
New Hampshire

ENERGY AND CLIMATE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, June 24, 2026

4:30 PM

**2nd Floor Conference Room,
City Hall**

Members Present:

Gordon Leverage, Chair
Maureen Nebenzahl, Vice Chair
Paul Roth (arrived at 4:32 PM)
Steve Larmon
Timothy Murphy
Lisa Maxfield
Jake Pipp, Alternate (Voting)
Catherine Koning, Alternate (Voting)
Matthew Boulton, Alternate (Voting)

Staff Present:

Megan Fortson, Planner

Members Not Present:

Councilor Bryan Lake
Annu Joshi Bargale
Clair Oursler

1. First Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Leverage called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM. Roll call ensued. Bob Milliken of Keene was present.

2. Approval of Minutes – May 27, 2026

A motion by Mr. Pipp to adopt the May 27, 2026 meeting minutes was duly seconded by Dr. Koning and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Roth arrived at 4:32 PM.

The motion carried unanimously.

3. Invasive Species Removals – Bob Milliken, Keene Conservation Commission Member

Chair Leverage welcomed Bob Milliken from the City's Conservation Commission to discuss the Commission's invasive species removal efforts. Mr. Milliken said it had been a slow start to the year but he had set up a few dates for invasive species removals around the City, including June 24th and 26th. His current plan is to create a database and map out all of the invasives on City land.

He has lived in Keene for 40 years and said it is hard to know what is City owned property and what is not. He was gathering maps and would be working with a student intern on mapping the invasives throughout the City and developing a plan to see which areas need the most attention first. Mr. Milliken said he had given up on removal and is more focused on management now. He has been on the Invasive Committee at Hogback Mountain in VT for the past six years and they have successfully removed a few plants from the conservation area, such as wild chervil.

He noted that in Keene, invasive plan management has been mostly handled through manual pulling. Sometimes herbicides were used by the City and he said it works, such as at Ladies' Wildwood Park, where Japanese knotweed was eradicated well. Mr. Milliken does not prefer herbicides because they add something else into the ecosystem. He explained how herbicides target knotweed's roots in a three-year cycle. Mr. Milliken talked about a giant plot by Keene High School where the Commission would be experimenting with knotweed eradication measures (e.g., black tarp, mesh, and manually removing) and how to best manage it at what time and discard the materials. He appreciated some of the supplies he received for the Conservation Commission today, which would be going toward that effort, such as letting the pulled knotweed bake in the sun in black plastic bags before disposing of it.

Mr. Milliken said the Commission is always seeking volunteers for these efforts and there are dates on the website now. He hoped to get more dates and times onto the schedule for summer. He was still learning the maps of Keene to determine what needs to be managed on City properties and to schedule pulls for sites with the most aggressive invasives. He said Japanese knotweed would be one of them. He also talked about the turnips near the Hospital in the guardrail area where the pond leaks water into Ashuelot Swamp; those seeds can last five years in the soil before they germinate and if they go into the swamp they could spread. He pulled approximately 100 last year, 135 in the same area this year, and hoped to get a handle on it.

Dr. Russell mentioned the City of Keene's interactive ArcGIS map and asked if Mr. Milliken has access to it. Mr. Milliken said he has just seen it. Dr. Russell said GIS Coordinator Will Schoefmann maintains it and the Bicycle/Pedestrian Path Advisory Committee (BPPAC) uses it. Dr. Russell also suggested contacts at the Keene State College and Antioch University Environmental Studies Departments; he offered to help connect Mr. Milliken with members of a student ecology group and noted that Antioch students often need work to do as a part of their classes. Mr. Milliken noted that he retired as Director of Technology for SAU29 in December 2025 and thought about reaching out to the Cheshire Career Center's horticulture department because he thought this could be a good field trip for kids.

Dr. Larmon asked what other invasives are most aggressive in addition to the turnip and knotweed. Mr. Milliken said bittersweet, which is similar to knotweed in that if one piece of the root is left when you pull it, it will create two more plants. In VT, they are using a directed herbicide on the cut plants. Mr. Milliken said another aggressive invasive is buckthorn. Also, multiflora roses are everywhere. Additionally, he lives right across from the hospital, where he is constantly pulling up burning bush; there is even one at the Recreation Center. Mr. Roth said he just cut them all at the daycare. Mr. Milliken said the birds eat the berries, which are not nutritious, and spread the seeds.

Mr. Roth asked about Mr. Milliken and the Commission's funding sources for this work; do they receive any state money? Mr. Milliken said they do not have any funding sources yet. Mr. Roth wondered if money available for invasives was public or private. Mr. Milliken said there are grants; he had joined the National Invasive Species group, which has a lot of grant possibilities. He said the Commission is trying to take other avenues because it does not have a huge budget.

Chair Leversee asked if the Conservation Commission only works on City lands or public lands too. Mr. Milliken said so far just City lands, but he is open. He just did his first PowerPoint presentation in VT and hopes to do more of that in New Hampshire to let people know what is out there and what they can do. He basically used examples of how to pull invasives that people have been fighting for years, and the different things people are doing to stay chemical free. Chair Leversee said if garden clubs and organizations like the Harris Center made invasives a part of their work, there would be more hands. Mr. Milliken said a bunch of groups are getting together to realize it is a problem. He noted one of the biggest issues is getting cities/towns to ensure that their incoming gravel and dirt does not contain invasives. Discussion ensued on the cost/benefit of making sure you have clean dirt. The invasive jumping worm was mentioned. Mr. Milliken said that during a disaster, the City just needs to move dirt quickly and may not pay attention, but there are ways to prepare and that is another step to take. Dr. Russell said that had been a problem with the City's transfer station compost.

Chair Leversee also thought about the idea of people adopting sections of highways. He cited the knotweed where he lives on Roxbury Road along the watercourse downhill that could be adopted. Mr. Milliken said that is a part of the Conservation Commission's hope. He cited a case of wild parsnips on Court and Elm Streets that he thinks were left over from a house's garden that had been well maintained and is no longer by new tenants; now it is overgrown and he suspects that the snow plow has pushed the seeds down and it started growing. He is going to knock on the door as a neighbor (not a Conservation Commission member) and ask if he can pull/monitor it and offer some education on what it is.

Dr. Russell noted that Keene State College freshmen typically have to do service work and thought that could be something for Mr. Milliken to tap into for a few hundred students. Ms. Maxfield mentioned that it would be a good time of year for the work as well. He said the college always used to be looking for things for the students to do as a part of their orientation.

Chair Leversee appreciated the information for the Committee. He wondered what the Committee should do with this information: follow and report? Ms. Fortson said this is not something the Energy and Climate Committee (ECC) needs to take on. This is under the purview of the Conservation Commission. She thought it would be a good opportunity to have Mr. Milliken come in because this is such a known issue in our community that so many homeowners and residents are aware of. The Commission has a schedule of events, and she was sure Mr. Milliken would appreciate volunteers. Mr. Milliken said getting the word out is the main thing. Once the Commission starts putting more events on the website, he would start getting flyers together and hopefully do talks at the Middle School to invite participants. He would like to educate landowners about things like knotweed. He knows Keene has regulations now about planting new things that are considered invasive, but said some things are grandfathered in. He was looking at a grant to go to the hospital and ask to remove all that. Mr. Roth encouraged that. Chair Leversee noted that Mr.

Roth is the Facilities Director at the Hospital. Mr. Roth said he had just ripped out a lot of plants because he was so tired of trimming.

Dr. Russell noted that the ECC's Climate Resilience Work Group thought it would be a really compelling idea to bring the Conservation Commission, ECC, and BPPAC together sometime, such as annually, to interface more and understand each other's agendas, projects, and goals for the year. That way, they are not replicating but reinforcing each other. Mr. Milliken said that one thing Hogback Mountain has is trail monitors to report back anything they see, so collaborating with BPPAC would be great in helping to map all the invasives he does not see. That mapping and developing a plan to manage is the main goal now. He reported that garlic mustard is also a prevalent invasive in Keene. Dr. Russell said BPPAC does two annual cleanups too, so they are really out on the rail trails all the time and could keep their eyes on the invasives.

Vice Chair Nebenzahl thought the key would be education as Mr. Milliken mentioned. Vice Chair Nebenzahl thought having his slide show at the Library could be an idea because education is most important. Mr. Milliken said a lot of people do not realize what is happening, and said we created it. He said most of these things were brought in during the Victorian era, when people thought they were nice plants or food people brought from other countries that escaped their gardens. Discussion ensued briefly about how Japanese knotweed is eaten.

Dr. Russell and Mr. Milliken exchanged contact information. The Committee thanked Mr. Milliken and he departed.

4. Annual Report to City Council

The 2025 Annual Report was in the meeting packet for the Committee's reference. This year's deadline would be approximately July 1st, but it was not a firm deadline. Chair Leversee suggested that he and Vice Chair Nebenzahl draft something on behalf of the Committee within the next week, share it with the Committee, and members could share any thoughts/additions before it is submitted to the Council. Mr. Murphy suggested perusing the ECC's agendas from the past several months for ideas. All agreed that it should be a high-level summary of highlights.

Dr. Russell said that for the BPPAC, it is largely about who the Committee is, and bullet points of things taken from the agendas and what projects were. He knew Councilor Ed Haas wanted to help committees develop a more standard template for the reports and even maybe formatting suggestions. Dr. Russell would check with him at the next BPPAC meeting to see if that was ready or if he would be developing it.

5. Community Power – Program Updates & Content Ideas for Mailer

Ms. Fortson reported a change with Community Power in that the supplier was purchased by another company, so it goes by a new name. Patrick Roach is still with Good Energy, just under the new name of Priority Power. Mr. Roach and Allison from Priority Power would attend the July ECC meeting to provide an update on the status of the Community Power Program. Ms. Fortson included an email memo in the agenda packet for this meeting about the program numbers. Dr. Koning asked if they would have up to date costs looking into the future. She had been getting a

lot of mailers about getting cheaper clean energy elsewhere. She said she thinks most people do not know they are on Community Power, so that should be a part of the mailer, including what they get as a part of that, and maybe calling attention what these other groups are doing.

Dr. Russell asked if businesses and organizations can be on Community Power. Discussion ensued to confirm. Mr. Roth noted that Maple Avenue is on Community Power. Dr. Koning said it is not defaulted for companies, though. Dr. Russell said the Historical Society of Cheshire County was wondering whether they could move onto it. Mr. Roth thought they would just have to elect to do so.

Ms. Fortson thought another thing Mr. Roach would want to discuss at the next meeting is potentially having a different default rate for people who are on assistance with Eversource. So, everybody else would be rolled into a certain default, but people who are getting any sort of assistance would potentially have a lower default cost option. Ms. Maxfield asked if that is something already preset in the Eversource database and Ms. Fortson said yes because all of the billing and everything still comes from Eversource, it is just the electrical supply source that is different. Mr. Roth asked how that would work with the current contract because it is not an option right now. Ms. Fortson said it is not an option right now but could be something to consider in the future. Mr. Roth noted the City is still under the current contract. Ms. Fortson agreed and would have to ask the Senior Planner but doubted that at this point the rates could be modified. Staff is thinking that this could be an option for the third phase of the Community Power Program.

Ms. Maxfield noted that the vast majority of Community Power participants used to be at 25% and now the vast majority are at 50% clean energy, which she called pretty amazing. She called it a huge jump. Dr. Koning noted that 50% is the new default, so Ms. Maxfield said it worked—everyone agreed so far. Chair Leversee noted the numbers were down slightly total, but the percentages were up. As a mailer option, Ms. Maxfield suggested writing down what the extra cost is over an annual basis; Mr. Murphy agreed and said to give it some context.

Ms. Fortson said to come to the next meeting prepared with content mailer ideas for Mr. Roach. Dr. Russell asked to include previous mailers in the next agenda packet for the Committee's review.

6. Work Groups – Organization, Leaders, & Membership

a. Policy (Meets as needed)

Mr. Boulton reported that the Policy Work Group had not met.

b. Resilience

Dr. Larmon said the Resilience Work Group had a productive meeting about a number of issues. Dr. Russell reported that the Work Group developed a rough working list of environmental, ecological, and energy-related organizations. Eventually, they will transfer that all into a spreadsheet with contact names and other information to have as a reference for organizations the Committee can collaborate with on education or outreach, etc.

Dr. Russell said a lot of the meeting was about heating and cooling centers, especially cooling centers. There are two identified within the City: the YMCA and the Keene Public Library. Neither of them is overnight. So, the Work Group researched and found useful documents from both the state and general information about what constitutes a heat emergency. One thing they want to explore answers to are overnight indoor temperatures of 80 degrees or more; neither indoor cooling center is overnight. Dr. Larmon would be taking the lead on that part of the project. Dr. Russell said there is a Center for Public Health in the State of New Hampshire, which has a cooling center fact sheet, and it provided some starting points for the group to follow up on.

Dr. Larmon talked about the issues with having a cooling center, what a center has to provide, and the liabilities. He said it is amazing how little information there really seems to be out there about trying to find out where this is centered in the community. He discussed with Ms. Fortson who would really be responsible for it: maybe it is Facilities, maybe it is Emergency Management. He was unsure who to call for these things. Ms. Fortson said for an emergency it would be the Emergency Management Director but to establish a permanent cooling center, she would need to ask around more. Dr. Larmon thought it was at least fertile ground for more information and thought the state may have more information for Manchester. Dr. Russell said the document they saw from the state inferred that there is a process for establishing cooling centers. While it may be different, Dr. Larmon anticipated similar issues for heating centers in the fall, so he thought it would be good to establish a framework to preempt things that may be coming.

Discussion ensued briefly about what constitutes an emergency at night being a grey area. Mr. Roth wondered that if it is 80 degrees at night, who would make the determination that there is a heat emergency: is it NOAA, the Mayor (NH is a “Mother May I?” State, so can we make the call)? Dr. Larmon added that 80 degrees and dry is very different from 80 degrees and humid.

Dr. Koning asked if anyone heard the NPR piece on modular houses having no insulation, especially older ones, so they are really vulnerable to this situation. She said some specific outreach to them may need to happen to let them know where the cooling/heating centers are and to help them upgrade their homes as time goes on. It made Dr. Russell wonder if there is anything in the building Code for new residential buildings that addresses both heating and cooling potential. He said there are a lot of different avenues and right now the Work Group was gathering information into one place and then bringing it to attention.

The Resilience Work Group comprises Dr. Russell, Dr. Larmon, Mr. Roth, Mr. Murphy, and Carolyn Sweet of Keene Housing. Ms. Sweet from Keene Housing does the scheduling, and Dr. Russell reports to the Committee.

Mr. Murphy said the Work Group also discussed not waiting for emergencies but trying to get ahead of them, whether they are related to heating and cooling issues or flooding. They also discussed the importance of coordinating with City staff and other City committees that are working on related content; they are not working in a vacuum. There is overlap with Committee’s like the Conservation Commission. So, this aligns with the idea of periodic joint meetings.

Mr. Boulton asked if the Work Group’s research showed that whether power is available changes the thinking about cooling centers. Dr. Russell and Dr. Larmon said yes, if it is a place without a

generator, you are stuck; a generator is a checklist item. Mr. Boulton added that whether it is an emergency or not could depend on if the City is having an outage, which could make a lot more people vulnerable. There was agreement. Dr. Russell thought this was something the Resilience Work Group would probably work on in coordination with the Outreach & Education Work Group to share resources on affordable in-home cooling.

Mr. Boulton asked if the City does emergency scenario planning, such as for a hurricane. Ms. Fortson said yes, recalling the March 2025 presentation from the City's Emergency Management Director and Public Works Director. The City just updated its Hazard Mitigation Plan, and it includes heatwaves. Ms. Fortson reported that Mr. Blomquist would be retiring as Emergency Management Director and Fire Marshal / Building Official, Rick Wood, would be taking over effective July 1, 2026. Mike Hagan, Building & Safety Manager / Plans Examiner, would be taking over as Deputy Emergency Management Director. Ms. Fortson also confirmed the City must update its Hazard Mitigation Plan every five years. Mr. Murphy added that the City has an Emergency Operations Plan as well, which sounds like it outlines the chain of command and who is responsible for what in an emergency situation.

Chair Leversee said the other pre-planning he thought about is determining who is most vulnerable. He thought about instances in Europe of people who did not have access or a way to get to the support they needed. Mr. Murphy said it is common that the elderly are not in circulation, so the Committee cannot forget about that. Chair Leversee agreed that once a cooling center has been established, it is a matter of getting people there. Mr. Pipp said the Library is easier for more vulnerable people to access than the YMCA and there are shuttles to the Library, which could be a part of the education and outreach: helping people know it is there and how to get there. Dr. Russell agreed that the YMCA is the larger space but farther from the largest concentration of population, so having a document that shows what it takes to be a cooling center would be helpful. He said we might need more centers. Chair Leversee also talked about having portable cooling units to bring to people.

Dr. Russell circled back to the idea of the three committees meeting. He said now that the City has approved an Assistant Sustainability Planner position, it could be an ideal time for such a meeting. Those would be the three most likely groups to interface with that person. Discussion ensued as the Committee celebrated the Council approving the Assistant Sustainability Planner position.

Mr. Murphy was confused by the Assistant Sustainability Planner title, as to him it implied they would report to a Sustainability Planner. Ms. Fortson noted that they would report to the Senior Planner like all Planning staff. The intent is that they are a regular Planner with a focus on Sustainability. Fifty percent of their time will be spent on regular Planning tasks and the other 50% on long-range planning efforts, such as the implementation of the Master Plan, as well as working with the ECC, the Community Power Program, etc. Mr. Boulton asked if Ms. Fortson could estimate when the position would be filled. Ms. Forton replied that it really depends, noting it is an interesting job market, but she had heard that other communities were receiving quite a bit of interest in similar positions that they had posted. She noted that once there is an appropriate fit, the City's onboarding process is can be a few months long since it includes a background check, etc. The Committee celebrated the fact that the position was posted. They agreed the Committee had been working toward this for at least 10 years and more seriously during the past year.

Mr. Pipp said he attended a City meeting and the City Manager framed this position as just adding some hours per week to someone who is already on staff working parttime. He asked if that would be the case. Ms. Fortson said no, the City's Planning Technician position was converted into the fulltime Assistant Sustainability Planner position.

c. Outreach

Chair Leversee said the Outreach Work Group met on June 23, 2026. Dr. Koning reported that it was a relatively short meeting because of the confusion they are in right now because of this Communication Plan. They really talked about the Monadnock Energy Fair on September 19, 2026, which is hosted in Keene and Peterborough on an alternating basis. It is run by a whole group of volunteers, it is not just the Monadnock Sustainability Hub, which lost its Program Manager, so Dr. Koning said volunteers would be needed. The venue is secured at the Recreation Center and the Hub's part-time Program Manager, Jen Risley, is contacting the vendors. Dr. Koning hoped the Committee members would put the day of and a few days before on their calendars to help out.

Dr. Koning said they would also need help with the raffle. Last year they started a passbook system where participants go to each vendor and get a stamp to enter a raffle. She said the vendors love it. She asked Committee members to consider donating raffle prizes; Chair Leversee already offered to reach out to Ted's Shoe and Sports. Others asked the type of raffle prizes she was seeking. Dr. Koning mentioned gift cards, etc. Discussion ensued and Ms. Fortson mentioned wanted to confirm that the Committee can accept the raffle prizes as donations without going through the City Council based on her past experiences. Dr. Koning suggested that potentially the donations could just be given to the Monadnock Sustainability Hub. Ms. Fortson would ask the question, stating that it could be a non-issue.

Dr. Koning shared an event on June 24th called "*Big Oil, Big Lie*" at 6:30 PM at the Keene Public Library. She said it would be learning about the whole playbook of fossil fuel companies and how the Koch brothers made it so "climate" is a bad word.

7. Task Groups

a. Communication Plan

At the ECC's retreat, they agreed to work toward establishing these two Task Groups this year.

Dr. Koning said the Outreach Work Group was unsure where to go next because of the Communication Plan. They felt like they did not know what they were doing until there was a Communication Plan; there are co-sponsored events (e.g., the Button-Up Workshop) and mentions of a newsletter and dashboard. Ms. Maxfield thought the Outreach Work Group needed direction from the ECC on where the Work Group's talent should go. She wondered if the Button-Up Workshop would be a good place to mention heating and cooling once the ECC has the information. Dr. Koning said that would be the kind of information for a Communication Plan. Ms. Maxfield said the Button-Up workshop is about more than just saving money on electricity, it is also about being comfortable in your own home.

Dr. Russell said he thinks the Communication Plan is really important and volunteered to be on the Task Group. He saw the parallels of developing a Communication Plan as establishing something that all Work Groups can use. Ms. Maxfield noted that Dr. Russell is on several City committees so having him as a liaison on this Task Group would be a good thing.

The group agreed that in the past, members had volunteered for these groups and then used their collective wisdom to develop a charge/vision for them and bring it back to the main group.

Ms. Fortson reported that Charles Redfern resigned from the Committee.

The Committee decided to form the Communication Plan Task Group from the Outreach Work Group and volunteers: Vice Chair Nebenzahl, Chair Leverage, Dr. Koning, Dr. Russell, and Ms. Maxfield. They would have a poll to decide when to meet about the Communication Plan. Dr. Koning would be in charge of convening the Task Group. The Committee agreed that as this Task Group is active the Outreach Work Group may be dormant for some time.

b. Benchmarking Dashboard

Ms. Maxfield felt that the Benchmarking Dashboard should come after the focus on the Communication Plan. There was agreement. Mr. Roth also thought the Assistant Sustainability Planner would be involved in this and bringing a lot of data. Dr. Koning said she looked up examples before the meeting and sent them to Ms. Fortson; some are sophisticated and some are simple webpages. Those could provide the Committee and the Assistant Sustainability Planner with some sense of what to think about. Ms. Fortson said she would send out a wrap-up email with that information and the slides from Mr. Milliken, as well as information about the raffle donations, early the week after this meeting. The Committee agreed to make the Communication Plan a standing agenda item and to remove the Benchmarking Dashboard at this time.

Vice Chair Nebenzahl asked if the C-PACER Ordinance ever happened. Ms. Fortson reported that it was still in progress. She met with the Senior Planner the day before this because they had the City Attorney review everything to ensure it will be okay. This program is a little bit more complicated than it seems on the surface. There is concern about what the City can really assign to the capital provider as tasks and administrative responsibilities, and what the Assessing Department is really going to have to do to run the program. They were still working through it, responding to edits from the City Attorney, sending her information, and potentially contacting the Business Finance Authority (BFA) for more information. Vice Chair Nebenzahl said she would include it in the annual report, but that the Committee is working toward the Ordinance. Mr. Roth asked if other New Hampshire towns had adopted C-PACER. Ms. Fortson said yes: Rye, Lebanon, and Bristol. Discussion ensued about how Lebanon is comparable size and profile (i.e., a college town) to Keene, and Mr. Boulton asked if the City was talking with Lebanon about the program. Ms. Fortson said no. Mr. Boulton said it may be very helpful.

8. Staff Updates

No further updates provided.

398
399 **9. New Business**
400

401 As a Committee, Mr. Murphy wanted to formally acknowledge Mr. Redfern's resignation and
402 thank him for his service.
403

404 Ms. Maxfield recalled asking to have a formal City Proclamation to honor someone who was not
405 on this Board but was a big part of the Clean Energy Team for decades and a big part of the reason
406 the City has an Energy Plan. Discussion ensued on how to make this Proclamation happen. Ms.
407 Fortson said the Committee would need to formally vote to do so, write a letter, and it would go
408 through the City Clerk's office to get on the City Council agenda. The Proclamation would be
409 presented in person. Discussion ensued about whether the Committee needed to have a private
410 session and minutes in order to discuss the actual person. Ms. Fortson thought it would be a good
411 idea to speak with the person in advance so they can come accept the Proclamation in person. Ms.
412 Fortson offered to reach out to the City Clerk's office to confirm the process and what information
413 they would need from the Committee about the person. Ms. Maxfield agreed to reach out to the
414 person and fill out the Clerk's template.
415

416 Dr. Russell referred to the red pines that were cut down on Maple Avenue. He said some of the
417 BPPAC are very interested in putting forth a plan to have a crushed stone surface that makes it
418 easier for kids to ride their bikes on the path that remains there. The next University of New
419 Hampshire Extension Natural Resource Stewardship Program is taking place in Keene and
420 focusing on that corridor. Dr. Russell was considering applying for it. It would be 11 weeks of
421 hands-on work. He was playing the role of keeping the ECC informed of what the BPPAC is doing
422 and whatever natural landscaping happens there. The third component he wanted to mention is the
423 Historical Society of Cheshire County having some sort of signage marker for Mary Dinsmoor,
424 who donated that land, and the history of the place; it is a City park. Mr. Roth said the City is not
425 planning anything where the trees were removed and Dr. Russell agreed but said what will happen
426 is that invasive species will take over, so others want to be proactive. Volunteers are welcome.
427

428 **10. Next Meeting: July 22, 2026 at 4:30 PM**

429 **11. Adjournment**
430

431 There being no further business, Chair Leversee adjourned the meeting at 5:45 PM.
432

433 Respectfully submitted by,
434 Katie Kibler, Minute Taker
435

436 Reviewed and edited by,
437 Megan A. Fortson, AICP – Planner / Deputy Zoning Administrator



CITY OF KEENE

July 20, 2026

The City of Keene is pleased to introduce our electricity supply program, Keene Community Power. Please read on to learn about the program and your options for participation.

The City of Keene has negotiated prices for multiple electricity supply options that are available to our entire community.

Your account is scheduled for automatic enrollment in “Keene Standard” which costs less and has more renewable energy than the current residential Default Service supply from Eversource.

You may opt out and not participate. You may also select another supply option offered by Keene.

The deadline to opt out of the program before your enrollment begins is August 22, 2026.

Keene Community Power is a City-operated group purchasing program that pools the electric use of residents and businesses in order to provide competitively priced electricity options in addition to cleaner electricity options.

If you participate in Keene Community Power, it will change the source and cost of your electricity supply. It will not affect the cost or quality of service for the delivery of electricity from the utility, Eversource.

By receiving this letter, you will be enrolled in the “Keene Standard” option in one to two billing cycles after the opt-out date above, unless you take one of the following actions:

- ① Choose to enroll in another Keene Community Power option** **OR** **② Choose to opt out and continue with Default Service from Eversource**

The table below shows pricing and other information for Keene’s electricity supply options and a comparison to Eversource’s current “Default Service”.

	Eversource Default Service (if you opt out)	Keene Standard (automatic)	Keene Basic	Keene 10	Keene 100
Price					
Residential & Commercial	14.009 ¢/kWh	12.100 ¢/kWh	11.220 ¢/kWh	11.580 ¢/kWh	13.900 ¢/kWh
Industrial (GV)	8.601 ¢/kWh*				
Total Renewable Energy 2026	25%	50%	25%	35%	100%
Duration	August 1, 2026 - January 31, 2027 <i>*July 2026 - Industrial price changes monthly</i>	Enrollment until December 2027	Enrollment until December 2027	Enrollment until December 2027	Enrollment until December 2027

The Keene Community Power program cannot guarantee savings for the entire contract term, because Eversource’s Default Service rates are not known for the entire contract term. Renewable energy percentages above are rounded to the nearest whole percent.

HOW KEENE COMMUNITY POWER WORKS

- If you participate in Keene's program, the impact on your electricity bill from Eversource, will be:
 - The Supplier portion of the bill will change to reflect your participation in Keene's Program.
 - Eversource will continue to provide all Delivery Services, including responding to power outages, and Eversource will continue to send you the electricity bill.
 - Customers that receive a discount on their electricity bill through the Electric Assistance Program (EAP) will continue to receive their benefits.
 - Budget billing customers will continue to receive budget billing for the Delivery Services portion of the bill.
 - Customers that receive credits from solar or hydroelectric net metering should visit the Program website to read our Net Metering FAQ to learn more about how your benefits may be affected: KeeneCommunityPower.com.
- **Pricing:** Program prices apply to service beginning and ending on the days of the month that your meter is read. Program prices include a fee of \$0.001 per kilowatt hour (kWh) for the City's aggregation consultant. Any applicable taxes will be added by Eversource to your bill. The City will announce price changes at least 30 days before any such price change takes effect. Product details will always be available at the City's website for the Program: KeeneCommunityPower.com.
- **Renewable Energy:** All program options include renewable energy to meet the State of New Hampshire's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS). Keene Standard adds 25% voluntary renewable energy to the RPS. Keene 10 and Keene 100 add voluntary renewable energy to total 35% and 100% renewable energy, respectively. All voluntary renewable energy comes from sources that qualify as NH Class I, the State's designation for new renewable energy located in or imported into New England.
- **Supplier:** The program is served by Direct Energy, PUC license number: CS-047.

NEXT STEPS

As a recipient of this letter, no action is necessary for you to receive the "Keene Standard" electricity option.

To Choose Another Keene Community Power Option: Call our Program's electricity supplier, Direct Energy, at (866) 968-8065, or submit a request at KeeneCommunityPower.com.

To Opt-Out & Not Participate: To remain with Default Service from Eversource for your electricity supply, you must opt out. To opt out before being enrolled you must take one of the following actions on or before **August 22, 2026:**

Postmark and mail the enclosed opt-out card *or* call Keene's Supplier, Direct Energy at (866) 968-8065 *or* submit the opt-out form at KeeneCommunityPower.com

If enrolled in Keene's program, at any time in the future you may still opt-out of the program, without penalty, or switch to another Keene option by calling the supplier or using KeeneCommunityPower.com.

QUESTIONS & SUPPORT

- For information or customer support about Keene's program, please visit KeeneCommunityPower.com, or call (866) 968-8065.
- If you have questions about the Delivery Services portion of your bill or about Default Service supply, contact the utility, Eversource, at (800) 662-7764, or by visiting Eversource.com.
- If you are receiving electricity supply from a competitive supplier and believe you have received this opt-out letter in error, you must notify Keene's Supplier as outlined above. This will ensure you continue to receive your electricity from that competitive supplier and prevent any possible early termination fees.



July 1, 2026

Keene City Council
3 Washington Street
Keene, NH 03431

Draft

RE: Annual Report to the Mayor & City Council from the Energy & Climate Committee

Dear Mayor Kahn and Members of the City Council,

I am pleased to submit this annual report on the status, activities, and accomplishments of the Energy & Climate Committee (ECC). Over the past year, the committee has worked diligently to fulfill its charge as outlined under City Code:

1. Monitor and advocate for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.
2. Promote energy conservation and efficiency, as well as the use and production of renewable energy.
3. Increase awareness of and resilience to the expected impacts of a changing climate.

Two members of the committee resigned this year after years of significant service: Kenneth Swymer Jr. (former Chair) and Charles Redfern (Alternate). The committee thanks them for their good work. Timothy Murphy stepped in on short notice and served effectively as Chair until January 2026. The committee currently has two vacancies for full-time members and one vacancy for an alternate slot.

Since July 2025, the committee has functioned with three working groups: Policy, Resilience, and Outreach. These groups have met monthly or as needed to vet issues that are brought to the ECC and to follow up as needed to move items forward with all action items requiring vote of the full committee during a public meeting.

As an example, when the C-PACER program initiative was brought to the committee, the Policy working group helped organize a session for the committee with representatives from the NH Business & Finance Authority. Once the committee voted in support, the Policy Workgroup followed up with City Staff to develop the proposal, which was then approved by committee, and eventually presented to the City Council. The City Manager was then directed by City Council to draft an ordinance for the adoption of the C-PACER program in Keene, which is currently being worked on by City Staff.

At our annual retreat in May, the committee decided to continue with the current working groups, with the Policy working group meeting as needed. Additionally, the ECC decided to establish two ad hoc Task Groups, one to develop a Communications Plan and the other to work with City Staff on a Benchmarking Dashboard to track progress on overarching goals as well as the new Comprehensive Master Plan. Our hope is to make progress on each of these items with the help of the new Assistant Sustainability Planner, once the position has been filled.

Regular Work: Accomplishments for the year include our regular participation in events related to our charge, including a tabling at the Earth Day Event at Keene State College (04/17/26); the Monadnock Region Earth Festival in Railroad Square (04/25/26); and the Button Up Workshop in November 2025, which had ~25 attendees. Additionally, the ECC provided support and feedback on the updated Community Power Program rate setting and tracking of participation. Chair Leversee was interviewed about current ECC work and initiatives by Raleigh Ormerod for his radio show on WKBK in March. There is a sense on the committee that it is time to document progress towards our renewable energy goals with an expectation that the new sustainability staff and dashboard will help that effort.

Focused Initiatives: A major focus the year has been work related to establishing Sustainability-focused staffing for the City. At their meeting on June 18, 2026, City Council voted to approve the creation of an Assistant Sustainability Planner position, which has since been posted online and opened for applications. ECC alternate members Catherine Koning and Matthew Boulton are due recognition for their success with raising private funds in support of this position, which is a public-private partnership.

New Initiatives: The ECC played an active role in shepherding the C-PACER Program through the Planning, Licenses, and Development Committee and City Council showing support at each step of the process, which is still underway. We hosted a presentation from the NH Saves Weatherization Program, which is expanding to include the Keene area. Additionally, Clean Energy NH requested letter of support for Senate Bill 538 (SB538) related to Net Metering, which was drafted by the committee and forwarded to City Council.

Collaborations & Reduction of Redundant Efforts: There is an overarching effort generated by the Resilience Workgroup to remain current on the efforts of City Departments to see where there are opportunities for ECC support, collaboration, and reduction of redundant efforts. For example, Kürt Blomquist, Former Emergency Management Director, and Don Lussier, Public Works Director, came to our March 2026 meeting for a good discussion of climate resilience efforts completed by the City, including the creation and adoption of an updated Hazard Mitigation Plan.

The committee has noted that there is an opportunity for public education related to stormwater management by private property owners using rain gardens and other strategies that seems appropriate for coordinated efforts that are beyond the scope of what city departments can manage. An example of an organization that can support collaborative efforts is the Monadnock Sustainability Hub.

My personal thanks to ECC members for their dedicated good work. Vice Chair Maureen Nebenzahl has played a more active role in setting agendas and follow-up than has been typical, a change that bodes well for the committee's function and continuity of leadership. Finally, thanks to Megan Fortson and Mari Brunner for their tireless good work in support of the ECC.

Respectfully submitted,

Gordon Leversee,
Energy & Climate Committee Chair