

APPROVED

## **Gilmanton Energy Committee Meeting**

Thursday, April 30, 2020

Remote Meeting via ZOOM

Gilmanton, NH

6 p.m.

Present: Dick de Seve, Sue Hale de Seve, Cyndi Paulin, Aimee Ruiter, Vincenzo Sisti, Sarah Thorne, Nate Abbott; special guest, Ruth Heath, Canterbury.

Chair Sarah Thorne called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. There were a few technical difficulties with the ZOOM meeting.

Review and approval of February minutes.

Ruth Heath, from the Canterbury Energy Committee, joined the meeting to share her experiences with their solarize initiative. Solarizing is a term used to describe a community-wide initiative to engage residents in installing solar panels on their homes, and "bundling" them in a purchasing unit to attract an installer at a lower, economy-of-scale price. They used the community newsletter, the farmers' market, existing solar owners, and the community fair to publicize the initiative. Canterbury held a Solar 101 workshop in late February, 2019, with 43 people attending. They used the Vital Communities toolkit to assist them in their planning. The committee contacted 12 installers, sent out requests for proposals, with a deadline for submitting proposals about 4 weeks hence. They selected 603 Solar. About 100 people attended the next meeting with the installer, and 41 people signed up to get installations on their homes. The installer had a relationship with the VT State Employees Credit Union which could provide financing. Customers are able to pay essentially the amount of their pre-solar monthly electric bill to pay off the loan. Canterbury rushed to get the installations done in 2019 due to the declining federal tax credit. Not all of them were finished by year end, but the installer made up the difference in the lost subsidy.

Vincenzo Sisti discussed the Gilmanton town buildings baseline energy report. He is looking to also move on to obtaining and reviewing reports from the town SAU building report.

Sarah Thorne had hoped that Gilmanton could qualify for an energy grant from the state, but the Town is above the required median income level. EEI audited the Gilmanton School's energy usage in 2017. We need to obtain that audit for the Committee's information. EEI specializes in school building audits, which should help us moving forward. Sarah contacted the Gilmanton School's facilities manager, who is willing to speak with us about he's done at the School. We hope to have him available for our next meeting on May 26.

Aimee Ruiter has agreed to establish a Facebook account for the committee as a way to advertise our existence and purpose and to obtain information and feedback from the public. As part of that process, Vincenzo Sisti pointed out that we need to be careful not to engage in full Committee discussions on

that platform so as not to run afoul of RSA 91-A public meeting requirements.

Nate Abbott moved, Dick de Seve seconded adjournment. Approved.

Next meeting date: Tuesday, May 26, 4:30 or 5:00 p.m. Location will likely again be via remote ZOOM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dick de Seve, secretary.