

DRAFT

Gilmanton Energy Committee Meeting

Tuesday, May 26, 2020

Remote Meeting via Teleconference

Gilmanton, NH

5 p.m.

Present: Dick de Seve, Sue Hale-de Seve, Cyndi Paulin, Aimee Ruiter, Vincenzo Sisti, Sarah Thorne, Nate Abbott excused absence.

Chair Sarah Thorne called the meeting to order at shortly after 5 p.m.

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Review and approval of April minutes. Sue Hale-de Seve moved, Vincenzo Sisti seconded approval. Adopted.

Vincenzo Sisti further discussed the Gilmanton town buildings baseline energy report. He obtained more propane and electric bills from town buildings. He hopes to have a preliminary draft report on town building energy usage within 2 weeks from today. He will move on the school report after speaking with the Gilmanton School facilities manager. We had hoped to have him attend this meeting, but he was not able to do so. The earlier SAU audit should provide additional useful information for us. Sarah Thorne stated that the New Hampshire Electric Cooperative staff person who has worked with Joe is will to assist us with our projects. Vincenzo stated that business is picking up for him, so he will likely need some assistance from committee members in continuing to obtain data.

Aimee Ruiter reported that she has no new news from the Gilmanton School. Sarah says she understands that the State of New Hampshire will decide in June about how to approach school opening for the rest of the year.

Sarah briefly discussed the community solarization efforts in Canterbury. Sue thought the program looked positive, but our efforts could be delayed by the issues with the Covid-19 outbreak. Sarah wondered if it would be possible to have a remote meeting with townspeople to further discuss this issue. We will look into it.

Further reactions to the Solarize program – Cyndi discussed the potential timing of the program in Gilmanton, and is interested in moving forward with some early steps in that direction. Vincenzo does not believe the Town is ready bureaucratically to move forward. He has found that there are no guidelines, no real rules in place at the moment. This has led to a great deal of confusion as to how any such program would work. He believes the Town needs stated rules, clarity on the tax exemption for solar installations, such as defining residential versus commercial installation. Sarah suggested contacting Clean Energy NH to ask if they have any rules or ordinance templates available. Sarah will also contact Ruth Heath in Canterbury to ask how they may have addressed similar issues. Aimee says she found some good information at the Vital Communities website. Sarah – we need to look at the issue of federal tax credits/incentives ending at the end of 2021. Those would become 0 for residential

solar, and 10% for commercial. Presently, the tax credit is 22% for both.

Conflict of Interest policy - several corrections were made from the previous versions. Vincenzo asked how he and his firm might have to handle potential conflicts moving forward. We discussed recusal of any member with a conflict from developing parameters for potential contracts, and of course recusal if a member were to be part of a group that would be bidding on such potential contracts with the Town.

Sarah raised the issue of a case pending before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) concerning net metering. A group called Northeast Ratepayers Association has filed the case, asking that net metering be completely eliminated. No hearings or decisions have as yet been announced. There are also several bills pending before the NH House on June 11. One, HB 118, would expand net metering, and Sarah suggested we might ask the Selectmen to support the bill, as it could help to lower electric costs for Gilmanton and other town residents.

Next meeting date: Tuesday, June 23, 4:30 or 5:00 p.m. Location will likely again be via remote teleconferencing.

Respectfully submitted,

Dick de Seve, secretary.