

## **Gilmanton Energy Committee Meeting**

Tuesday, September 22, 2020

Remote Meeting via Teleconference

Gilmanton, NH

7 p.m.

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

Chair Sarah Thorne called the meeting to order at shortly after 7 p.m. Members shared various “good news” items.

Review and approval of August minutes. Aimee Ruiter moved, Vincenzo Sisti seconded approval as amended.

Sarah began the discussion of putting content on the Town website under Energy Committee. Nate will check with the Town to determine how to do that. One of the first items should be the Frequently Asked Questions on solar energy.

We next discussed the (hopefully) final version of the Energy Usage Report prior to working to meet with the Selectmen to begin working on energy use improvements for the Town. Dick asked a couple of questions about several lines in the report, and Vincenzo clarified those. Aimee pointed out a typo on one of the headers. We are scheduled to meet with the Selectmen on October 5. A question arose as to whether the meeting still has a ZOOM component. We think it does, but will check. Sarah will forward the energy report and recommendations to the Selectmen and then have Vincenzo make a presentation to the Selectmen. Sarah suggested we review the recommendations and perhaps anticipate questions on implementation of those recommendations to reply to the Selectmen. Sarah has spoken to a couple of energy consulting firms, including EEI (Energy and Efficiency Investments), who did the energy audit for the elementary school. EEI representatives are willing to attend the Selectmen’s meeting. We are approaching the deadlines for budgeting, and Nate stated that October is the key month for budget submission. We should make a budget request at the October 5 meeting. Nate said that the Selectmen have a good deal of flexibility on budget submission, so there is time for us to make the request. Sarah said that EEI will submit a proposed budget, and there is significant cost sharing available through NH Saves. Resilient Buildings Group will also submit a budget proposal to us by October 5. Sarah thought we might try to find a third group to submit a bid; she knows of a national group that does almost all the work involved, including financing. Nate questioned having an auditing firm offering financing. Sarah explained how the auditing firm would do the financing piece. Sarah will review their operation. Nate: big decision for the Selectmen is whether they want to include the energy audit in their budget request. The idea is that the best way to save the planet is to reduce energy costs by reducing energy use; that saves more money in the future. If the Selectmen decide not to go forward with the budget, we can always try to get the audit on the ballot by petition. Nate believes Gilmanton is generally good about doing these positive things. Sarah says there is money available for

implementation once a plan is developed. Dick asked about Revision Energy, a firm on the Seacoast, but Sarah notes that they don't do energy audits. Sarah suggested discussing a phased program with the Selectmen to assist in their understanding of our proposal. The next step would be discussing options for implementation and installation of photovoltaic panels. Discussed electric vehicles and how they are improving rapidly. We will discuss town vehicles generally, not any one department. Nate raised the issue that people have a problem at times doing things long-term, as personnel and leaders change in shorter time periods, and then those new leaders don't necessarily want to be bound long-term. Nate believes we should move the recommendation on monitoring energy usage and costs up to Number 3 on the recommendations list.

Sarah: Carbon Cashback proposal that Aimee brought to the Committee's attention. Timeline for getting that on the warrant. New Hampshire Resolution to Take Action on Climate Pollution. This is an advisory proposal, statement of support for carbon pricing to protect New Hampshire taxpayers from the costs and environmental risks of continued climate inaction. Aimee noted that there is a bill pending in the House that tracks with this proposal. The petition requires 25 signatures and these are due by the second week in January. We discussed whether to endorse the proposal as a Committee or to gather signatures as individuals. The Committee decided against endorsing the proposal as a Committee. We can print out the petition and use to gather signatures.

Solarize: Sarah suggested that we work on this at the October meeting. Members will review the program and task suggestions and then divide up the tasks at our October meeting. Sarah and Aimee will work on this piece, and try to get folks to take on a task.

Community Power Purchase Agreements – something to think about down the road, FYI.

Next meeting date: Tuesday, October 20, 7:00 p.m. Location will again be via remote teleconferencing.

Respectfully submitted,

Dick de Seve, secretary.