

Approved

Gilmanton Energy Committee Meeting

Tuesday, November 24, 2020

Remote Meeting via Teleconference

Gilmanton, NH

7 p.m.

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

Chair Sarah Thorne called the meeting to order at shortly after 7:07 p.m. Members shared various “good news” items.

Review and approval of October minutes. Aimee motioned approval, Vincenzo seconded approval as written. Approved.

Sarah got a note from Heather Carpenter that Town reports are due on Dec. 21, 2020. We discussed what to include in the report, and should focus on the Solarize campaign and the warrant article (proposed). Sarah will draft a report and ask for comments.

Sarah: second meeting with Board of Selectmen. Sarah and Nate attended the discussion. We were given a lot of time. The Board wanted the Ironworks fires tation included in the audit. The town pays for the energy consumption of the building, hence the interest. Nate will be meeting with Chief Hempel in early December to discuss the building. All interested can attend by ZOOM. Nate briefly discussed some of the unusual energy needs of the fire station building. Sarah asked if there had been any discussion of the Town taking ownership of the building. Nate said there had been, but nothing has come of it to date. Sarah thanked Nate for setting up the meeting, and we look forward to learning what can be done to audit the building and improve its energy efficiency. The Selectmen were interested in examples of projects in other towns and the savings generated. Sarah will look into that so that we have some good examples. The Board put \$250 into our budget for NH Clean Energy membership. We should attend the budget committee meeting and the deliberative session, and the Board voted to support the request for \$15,000 for a comprehensive energy audit.

We went on to discuss the proposed warrant article: to see if the Town will vote to raise the sum of \$15,000 for a comprehensive energy audit of Town buildings (want to change language to municipal buildings) excluding the old Town Hall. We should propose changing the language at the budget committee meeting. Vincenzo suggested adding “efficiency” to “energy audit”. That is how things were left at the end of the Select Board meeting. The Board did not select any of the three proposals for audit, but want to wait until after the town meeting so we know what we have to work with. The Selectmen can set a time frame for submission of final audit proposals. Nate believes approval of a warrant article would give the Board implicit authority to expend the appropriated funds. Sarah is asking them to provide a remote option for the meeting. Nate described the process for the budget process. There are several meetings, with various departments slated for each meeting. The committee

decides on the budgets at those meetings. We discussed various options for going forward depending on what the budget committee decides. Then the proposal would go to the Town deliberative session in February.

Sarah spoke with Joe Lojewski of the NH Coop, who deals with municipalities, about the potential energy audit. He originally said we should hire a company for a full audit; this time he hedged a bit and said there is merit for a level 1 audit, especially if the Town might have a problem getting funding for a full audit. Joe thinks the biggest paybacks will be from the Ironworks fire station and the school. He had then recalled doing a walk-through of all Town buildings except the school. That gave him enough information to determine the best payback options. This can help us to set priorities for the audit. NHSaves would look at the recommendations and run a cost/benefit report on those. Those that meet the test would receive some cost sharing funding assistance. Lighting is the top priority for them, as the cost sharing program may end at the end of 2021. Vincenzo says that the Town has done a good job of upgrading lighting in Town buildings. Vincenzo says that the fire station will update its roof in the spring. They have not yet done LED lighting. We reached agreement to go forward with our \$15,000 proposal. This would give the Selectmen a good, solid report to go forward with. Nate says the Town does tend to go forward when it has a substantial, definite plan to work with.

Solarize Campaign: Aimee and Sarah did not have a chance to meet since the last meeting. Sarah talked to several installers who thought our timeline looks very good. Sarah will prepare a timeline and distribute it to all members and then discuss at our December meeting. Aimee reached out to several folks on the Town Facebook site who expressed interest in participating in planning.

Conflict of Interest policy: committee members need to send to Sarah, if not sent.

Vincenzo reported that the planning board supported a solar ordinance for public discussion. Public input session for the planning board will be Dec. 10. Sarah reported a 30 MW system in Fitzwilliam. A 75 MW system has been proposed for Webster.

Dick moved, Nate seconded adjournment. Approved at 8:10 p.m. Next meeting would be Tuesday, Dec. 15 at 7:00.

Respectfully submitted,

Dick de Seve, secretary.