

Hartford Energy Commission minutes

September 28, 2023

Present in person: Sarah Kelly, Laura Simon, Lynn Bohi, Esme Cole: guests Tad Montgomery, Richard Otis; Dana Clawson, staff

Present virtually: Jesse Pollard

Jesse called the meeting to order at 5:04pm.

Members and guests introduced themselves to Sarah and she to us. Sarah is a geographer and often focusses on water and energy. She works at the Irving Institute on energy justice.

Agenda: no changes

Minutes: Laura moved and Jesse seconded that the August minutes be accepted as presented. The vote was unanimous.

Public comments: Tad reminded everyone that the EV Expo is this Saturday, September 30 behind the Lebanon City Hall. Lebanon is pursuing a grant for an electric street sweeper. Tad is investigating an electric charger for City vehicles when the power goes out.

Coordinator's report:

- Hartford's and Lebanon's fire departments have a mutual aid agreement. Dana is interested in off the grid EV chargers for times when the power goes out that could be a resource for emergency vehicles in multiple communities.
- Green Mountain Power is seriously considering a NOMAD, which is a movable battery which could travel the state and be in place prior to a storm.
- MERP grant: Hartford received a grant for stage two building audits for the WABA and for the Department of Public Works building.
- Trailblazers: The training is finished as is the Vermont Adult Learning training for heat pump installation. There were eight women graduating from Trailblazers, seventeen from heat pump training, and seven women from both programs.
- Vermont Clean Cities: A fleet inventory was conducted. A need to train mechanics about EVs was brought up. The training is scheduled for October 25 and 26. There will be at least one session/class and probably more.
- Bugbee: There is a need for a cooling shelter. Some towns have a phone tree to warn vulnerable people. Bugbee is a designated shelter but feels a need for help with how to declare which days qualify for a warning. Suggestions were called for: Vermont Agency on Aging, DHMC has a medical and climate group. Laura will connect with VT AAA and Sarah will talk with DHMC group.

District Heat A.K.A geothermal: We are waiting for SHARC's proposal and thoughts. They have a heat pump that will work with the wastewater (WW) treatment plant to heat downtown. However, the distance between the two may be too great. SHARC also suggests that the Town start by replacing the

current semi- functioning heat pump system at the WW plant. The project should start by 2025 to be eligible for the expected federal incentives.

Esme was asked about the status of the geothermal bill in the Legislature. There was a recent meeting of the Climate Caucus to refine the language. Esme stressed the importance of it moving forward. The Town Charter may need to address the issue of setting up a heat district, governing board and ownership issues.

Braley solar: Solar arrays between 150 and 500KW need several approvals prior to final approval from the PUC. They received Planning Commission approval after two meetings. Next is the Selectboard on Tuesday, October 3. The land is zoned R3, but there is not enough water and sewer capacity for large scale development. The parcel was logged relatively (2 to 10 years) recently. Selectboard has been given the VLGS guide and filled out survey to help the board to understand the issues involved.

Climate Action reserve fund: Parks and Rec has asked for funds to purchase electric tools. P&R does not yet have a cost analysis. A vote on spending from the Reserve is postponed.

Events:

- EV event on Saturday, September 30 in Lebanon
- Braley solar at Selectboard Tuesday, October 3
- Hartford charter Tuesday, October 17
- REV conference October 18 and 19. HEC has funds to pay. Sarah and Esme will attend.
- Trunk or Treat Saturday October 28 from 4-6pm

Subcommittees:

- Public engagement: In the past, HEC has had a flyer. Currently we can report on the past 2-3 years activities from CAP. Everyone should remember the CAP has a carbon neutral date in 2027. Sarah will investigate.
- Natural gas (methane) issue is being taken up by the Vermont Supreme Court at Hartford High School on October 26
- Window Dressers is October 12 to 18 at Damon Hall in Hartland. There are 201 inserts ordered. Please sign up and invite others to do so. Currently 25-30% of shifts are filled.
- CAST is working on reorganizing and asking themselves how to be an organization.

Next month agenda; November is new officers and liaisons, Trunk or Treat volunteers needed

The meeting adjourned at 6:01pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Bohj, Clerk