

Hartford Energy Commission minutes

March 28, 2024

Present in person Sarah Kelly, Jesse Pollard. Laura Simon. Lynn Bohi, Richard Otis (5:25); Eric Francis, Dana Clawson, staff

Present virtually Esme Cole (5:35) ; Ida Greismer, Selectboard

Jesse called the meeting to order at 5:05pm

Ida introduced herself: She hopes to attend most meetings so she can know what HEC is doing.

Agenda: no changes

Public comment none.

Minutes: Laura moved the February minutes be approved as presented and Sarah seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Coordinator's Report:

- MERP grant \$4000: HEC had been sent some possible ways to spend the funding: website upgrade, and outreach materials. HEC should work with CAST to develop a list. The money should be spent by the end of June. Dana will add what is planned to the website.
- Resilient Hartford wants to publish a newsletter and add HEC to it.
- MERP phase 2 for level 2 audits. DPW was audited in February. WABA audit will be April 19. Reports will be sent. DPW's boiler is probably 4 times larger than it need to be.
- WABA: there was a tour with HEC, Parks and Rec and Selectboard members.
- Window Dressers: The 2024 project has started. There are 169 orders for window inserts. A location in Sharon needs to be found. Some suggestions were: the former fire station, Idlewood restaurant, a building at Joseph Smith birthplace.
- VLCT has a training: It is about the Open Meeting Law. Those who want to attend need an account, and Dana will register and pay for the training.
- Nature Conservancy: There is a resilience building series of events they provide for towns. It looks at strengths and weaknesses, hazardous materials and climate change issues. In November there will be a large meeting. Hartford should think about our dams and those in surrounding towns. Dana will ask other towns to attend the November meeting. We need a steering committee. Laura volunteered.
- Energy Efficient block grant : this has been submitted to fund heat pumps at the Public Safety building.
- Flex load management: Dana turns down the Town Hall heat at 4:30. Usually peak load starts at 5:00. Thus Hartford is not getting as large a financial incentive as expected.

Grants:

- VLCT has a Climate and Energy list that Dana will send. The chosen topics would be a good use for Climate Action Reserve Funds. Also VLCT will help find other funding, and there should be federal funds

- Senator Bernie Saunders got a Federal earmark for Vermont for energy issues.
- Vermont Greenhouse Gas reduction: Money from Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional; Commission is available. Hartford's two largest emitters are White River wastewater treatment plant and WABA.

Solar project: The owner of the solar array in Wilder on Walnut Street has asked the Town if Hartford wants to buy the array. The documents on file say it can be sold after seven years. It has been five years. Dana sent HEC member some documents to read and discuss. The owner has sent no documents but has proposed what seems like an unrealistic purchase price. It was suggested HEC loop COVER into discussions for a possible partnership. HEC will discuss for the next several months.

FERC and Wilder Dam: Dams are re-licensed every 40 ears by FERC. It is a five year process and is happening now. Should HEC make a comment during the current public comment open period? Issues: recreation lands seem to be closed often. The Planning Commission held a public meeting recently. The Selectboard will be sending a letter to FERC. The lands below the dam have lien on their properties saying the dam can flood their land anytime.

Energize Fair: there are 16 people signed up, with a limit of 20. Food will be ordered by April 1

Geothermal: In the Vermont Legislature, the plan is to merge RES bill and geothermal bill after both pass the body each bill started in. This probably will happen in the Committee of Conference. Town Manager Haverstock is working with other towns who want to have geothermal. Dana and others will go to St Johnsbury to discuss economic development on April 15. Esme added that Hartford is ahead of the vast majority of Vermont towns on geothermal.

RES: Esme will share information about the pillars of the bill which passed the House last week.

The meeting adjourned at 6:10pm.

Respectfully submitted.

Lynn Bohi, Clerk

Jesse Pollard 2024
Esme Pollard 2025

Lynn Bohi 2024
Sarah Kelly 2025

Laura Simon 2025
Richard Otis 2026