

Draft Hartford Energy Commission minutes

August 28, 2025

Priorities:

Hazardous materials: culvert crawlers Education & Town Involvement: EV expo, block party

Municipal Ops: Wastewater Treatment Geothermal: hotel Coolidge, technology, logistics

Present in person: Jesse Pollard, Lynn Bohi, Esme Cole, Cathy Geiger (5:08); Erik Francis guest; Dana Clawson, staff, Ida Greismer, Selectboard liaison

Present virtually: Richard Otis, Laura Simon; guest Sherry Boshert, LEAC

Jesse called the meeting to order at 5:05pm.

Minutes: Laura moved and Esme seconded that the minutes pass as presented. The motion unanimously passed.

Public Comment: Ida said the Selectboard is keeping up with Coolidge Hotel process and that parking is a big issue. Jesse said there is a grant application due at the end of this month to do a study parking. Sherry will save her comments until the EV Expo comes up. Erik reminded HEC that parking EVs underground is not a good idea. Dana said EV chargers are not permitted underground or in parking structures by Vermont fire code. Erik has been talking to the folks working at the railroad station who are revamping the platform. One side of the tunnel has been walled off. Erik asked if there would be space to run geothermal pipes through the tunnel. The workers suggested running the infrastructure for the pipes under and along the railroad. The railroad runs pipes along and under the rails frequently. Erik noted that having the Wilder dam be “run of river” in the future might make having battery storage at the dam possible. HEC could think about putting this in the enhanced energy plan.

Coordinator's report:

- Sarah held a flood event at Lyman Point Park that was successful.
- Vermont Works for Women class ends next week. There are 15 students. A blower door test training was part of the class. All students will have OSHA certification. Heat pump installation training is October 12.
- Chargers: Level 2 chargers will be in the South Main Street parking lot tomorrow. Norwich Technology will be receiving the NEVI grant funds to install 8 chargers in the downtown parking lot.
- The Wilder park and ride will be getting lights and maybe cameras.

2025-2027 projects:

- EV Expo is September 6. Hec needs to have a table at this. Esme and Lynn will person the table from 11-3.
- Styrofoam recycling is first Saturday in October.
- Level 3 chargers will be installed in the next 3 months.
- Window Dressers is October 2-8. More volunteers are needed,
- Hazard Mitigation Plan – Resilient Hartford/ CAST are spearheading this. HEC will review it for possible suggestions. The timeline is October 2025 to March 2026.
- Enhanced Energy Plan is due in 2027. HEC will write this and give it to Planning Commission to present to Selectboard. It was asked if a grant might be available for HEC to hire someone. Given the Federal situation, it seems unlikely. This needs to be a realistic document, one that can be done. When approved, Hartford will get preferential treatment by the PUC deferring to local ordinances.

Hotel Coolidge: A subcommittee was formed to look into if any charter changes need to be made and to look into tax stabilization. Debbie New and Esme talked. There is a specific law passed in 2024 that allows towns to form geothermal utilities. Regarding tax stabilization, Jesse is meeting next week with an investment corporation which might help finance new infrastructure projects. Vermont Gas Company has said they are willing to operate the utility. They know how to drill and lay pipes and are considering expanding their field of operations. Work needs to be done on realistic costs, forming a utility district or department, tax stabilization policy which includes building ADUs.

EV Expo: The food vendors need permits. There are 117 pre-registered as of today.

The meeting adjourned at 6:12pm.

Lynn Bohi, Clerk

Esme Cole Oct 2025	Laura Simon Dec 2025	Sarah Kelly 2026
Richard Otis 2026	Cathy Geiger 20207	Lynn Bohi 2027
Jesse Pollard 2027		