

Starksboro Energy Committee

5:30 p.m. Monday May 10, 2021

Virtual Teams Meeting

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Conference ID: 222 356 293#

1. Attendees
 - a. Megan Nedzinski
 - b. Jeff Dunham
 - c. Richard Faesy
 - d. Peter Antos-Ketcham
 - e. Phil Mosental
2. Approve Minutes from Feb. 1, 2021 & March 1, 2021
 - a. Jeff moved to accept
 - b. Peter seconded
 - c. Approved, with Megan abstaining since she wasn't there
3. Public Comments
 - a. None
4. SEC Appointments for Select Board
 - a. Pete will think about representation to the lower income segment in town
 - i. One year term, at this point
 - b. Robyn had also been approved for a one year term
5. Town Plan Energy
 - a. Response to the Question from the Planning Commission
 - i. If a developer were to propose a wind project on Big Hollow Road or a solar project on Clifford Farm, the town would not have the legal right to oppose without substantial deference
 - ii. Show the maps and circle where the solar and wind resources
 - iii. Ask the ACRPC whether they have any examples of towns that have substantial deference and have gained a seat at the table (done 5/10/21)
 1. Or bring someone from a community that didn't have substantial deference and was steam-rolled
 - iv. By having substantial deference, this would allow the Town to better plan our energy future and not be at the desire of a merchant generator
 - v. This approach is "pro-planning" and "pro-community" and does not promote energy
 1. We need to do thoughtfully and not be short-sighted

- 2. Make it clear that we are pro local control
 - vi. Who makes the decision at the end of the day?
 - 1. Isn't the Select Board the board to make the final decision?
 - vii. Approach Jeff Keeney or Denny Casey to make the point that the town is not protected in case someone comes forward with a renewable project development currently
 - viii. We just need to make the case clear as a starting point
 - ix. We don't want to promote renewable energy at the expense of what's right for the town and in the community's best interest
 - x. Should we reach out one-on-one to PC members?
 - xi. Response should be short and sweet
 - 1. Respond to Jeff Keeney's points by referencing to the specific town plan pages for each bullet
 - 2. Then address the big picture
 - xii. This is only way the Town has local control and will have any voice; substantial deference means that we have at least some voice
 - b. We want to hear directly from the PC their concerns and work their points into the letter
 - i. Focus on Denny and Jeff Keeney
 - c. Megan will draft a letter
 - d. Richard will reach out to Katie at ACRPC to ask for examples of towns that have had and have not had substantial deference; share verbally with the PC (done 5/10/21)
6. Benchmarking Town Buildings Project Update
- a. Defer to when Robyn is ready
 - b. Consider a meeting to focus just on benchmarking
 - c. Richard shared that there will be money coming from the Feds and the State for town energy support, so it would be good to have our benchmarking work done so that we can make a plan
 - d. If there are funds, it would be great to get ready to round out our solar and lead by examples in our town buildings
 - e. Robert Turner is the auditor and suggested we just input the data without waiting for the new treasurer
 - f. We would be interested in scheduling another meeting before June 7
 - i. Ask Robyn where things stand and what's next at this point
 - ii. Have the values been added, or are going to input the values before the training
 - iii. How's it going, does she need help?
 - iv. Richard reach out to inquire (done 5/10/21)
7. Solar PV
- a. GMP 10 year solar adder term is ending; next steps
 - i. The solar adder will be dropped shortly so the credits to the solar group will likely go away
 - ii. Jeff is the contact from AllEarth for the town maintenance agreement
 - iii. It would be good to have information on the solar system start date, financial elements, etc.

1. Reach out to Celine to collect all of the information and deposit it in the benchmarking files to figure out who has the information
 2. Jeff will reach out to Celine and Robert to ask if she can provide and gather background information on the solar project
 3. AllEarth should have a file on our system with all the information
 - iv. Robert Turner was going to be our liaison with the town treasurer
 - b. Determine what to recommend to Select Board
 - i. Wait and see what Jeff finds out above
8. Update on Paul's Electricity Reporting Tool
 - a. Could help us going forward, but less of a priority at this point; benchmarking
 - b. Celine thought she had authorized release of the electrical information to Paul, but we haven't heard from anyone
9. Button Up Campaign/Workshop Update
 - a. Robyn took on when things went virtual, so we're waiting
10. Food Shelf/New Communities Project outreach and coordination
 - a. Waiting for Robyn to provide some materials
 - b. Prep for next winter and start planning
11. Starksboro Residents' House Weatherization Projects
 - a. CVOEO was going to connect with one resident's son to pursue work since his mother has now died
 - b. Richard heard from Geoff Wilcox at OEO that their waiting list is reducing so they are now serving people up to 80% Area Median Income
 - c. The SEC feels that we can provide advocacy and support to facilitate connecting local homes with the Weatherization Assistance Program
 - d. We should start identifying worthy residents and houses that can benefit
 - e. Make a goal of helping 2-3 homes per year
 - f. How can we not make it judgmental but instead focus on this being a neighborly service
 - g. We may also put the word out about to recruit people
 - i. Flyer to post at the food shelf, Front Porch Forum, posted at the store, etc.
 - h. But most success will be neighbor-to-neighbor
 - i. Richard reach out to CVOEO to ask if poster is available (Done 5/10/21)
12. Future Agenda Items
 - a. Review the zoning by-law to make sure it's in compliance with the energy section of the Town Plan
 - b. Coordinate with the Climate Economy Action Center (CEAC) of Addison County
13. Other business
 - a. Phil is interested in finding someone to cut trees for firewood he had downed
 - b. Landowner liability laws protect landowners
 - c. Phil will reach out to Nirmegh Leggett, Tony Porter, Bruce Rublee and others to offer the free downed firewood
14. Next meeting
 - a. June 7
15. Adjourned 7:29 pm