

Thetford Energy Committee 5/13/14 ~~Draft~~ Minutes

Meeting started: 5:05 PM

TEC Attendees: Bob Walker, Joel Legunn, Manny Grewal, Ellen Blumberg, Mike Kiess, Alice Stewart, Chris Hebb

Others: Phebe McCosker, David Fisk, Stuart Blood

Review and approve minutes from 3/4/13 and 4/8/14 meetings – Adopted unanimously as written.

Community Solar Grant Update - TES and North Thetford Church each separately applied for this grant

VECAN and Home Energy Challenge Awards – Paul Markowitz notified Bob that the \$500 Thetford was awarded for most Pledges needs to be spent on a “community” project that benefits town as a whole, not the Volunteer Assisted Weatherization effort that benefits one individual. We agreed town hall weatherization is a good use of the \$500. **Bob will notify SB of our recommendation and work with Brent Mellen to identify how the money should be used on the project.** We took a photo of TEC holding the Challenge Pledge award and the VECAN best project awards. **Bob will send to Alice for posting on TEC website and Tracy for consideration in town report.**

Volunteer Assisted Weatherization Project – Bob updated on April 26th workday, remaining jobs scheduled for Sat. 5/17, projected energy savings, project costs and incentives, and report to granting foundations. Final cost of the project about \$2500. **Bob will check with Brent on final pricing to make sure within \$2500.** Preliminary energy saving estimates: 18.6% projected, about \$400 per year. Qualified for about \$950 rebate from Efficiency VT. **Bob will draft report with final results and thanking donors, grantors, businesses providing discounts and send to listserve. Alice will post report with photos to TEC webpage and newsletter.**

GoVermont – We reviewed Mike’s letter to Ross MacDonald/GoVermont reporting on TEC transportation initiatives and seeking the \$500 grant money. **Mike include photos of bike racks and bike commuter parking signs and poster with the letter. Our intention for the money is that it should go to our TEC special account #324-2000. Ellen please talk with Jill about the expected check.**

Solarize Thetford-Strafford – updates:

- We will use the Solarize posters printed by Catamount and based Strafford poster art.
- **Bob is in process of scheduling open house at Bill and Betsy Peabody from Thetford Hill, who had an array installed by Catamount last year, about scheduling a solar tour / open house with refreshments.**
- Three jobs have been installed, and **14 jobs have been contracted** for a total of **71.52kW – putting us into Tier 3!**
- Still need to schedule about 37 site visits; about 130 total have been requested since the beginning of the program
- **Mike will check with Doc/Catamount to see if it is okay to add the info re %ROI to the Solarize website.**

Energy Tip – Alice will take this last chance to promote Solarize.

Community Solar Discussion – Dave Fisk and Stuart Blood joined us for a discussion on steps toward a community solar array, possible locations, process forward, etc.

RECs (Renewable Energy Credits) are created from a RE project. Selling RECs will decrease cost to project owners, but they can no longer claim the project as their renewable project. That claim goes with the RECs if sold. Most Vt. RECs are being bought by out of state utilities (mostly MA) that have a Renewable Portfolio Standard (requires certain % of renewables). Much interest was stated in maintaining ownership of and not selling the RECs.

Dave Fisk – has looked into:

- Clean Energy Collective (Colorado) – individuals own panels after 5 years in order to get Federal tax credits. Form an LLC for maintenance and operation.
- Soveren Solar (Vermont) – Individuals own from beginning
- Dave and Jennifer leaning toward owning their own panels

Stuart:

- CEC – not willing to negotiate their model.
- Sovergn more willing to discuss model. Stuart suggested right of first refusal on RECs or monetizing
 - o No. Vt. rebate
 - o \$4/watt
 - o \$.75/watt more will retire RECs
- Preferred not to use agricultural land
- Putney (current), Whiting and Allburg (proposed) – conditioned on wetland permit. State said lots of developers were looking at developing in wetlands, and thought CEC was pretty good.
- Twist on Jeff Forward Model – Town builds and sells to individuals who buy at GMP price. Town claims credits.

What roles can the town play

- They allow use of the land and get lease \$
- They own and manage the project
- Town installs own project to power own use

Optional Models – need to research various models. **Mike, Phebe, Stuart, Joel willing to look at models. Bob please ask about VECAN model write-up and/or community owned array.**

- Lease
- Individuals Purchase and own certain # of panels
- Individuals create an LLC and it owns the panels and does maintenance, insurance,

Post Mills Landfill is one potential good site for a community system. Dave wonders if the pile is settling and will be structurally sound for an array. Need to have an engineer check it out.

Phebe will arrange a meeting with Doc Bagley to look into what is required to go above 150KW and how large a system could be put on the landfill site.

Phebe to ask GMP about cost of upgrading 1,800 feet to 3-phase from 1-phase and how much power we could add to the grid at that site.

Phebe to contact Alan Johnson from Hartford Energy Commission re their PV project.

Mike – N. Thetford Church - \$53,000 for 15KW array. Would use 7.5kW. Church would not get tax

credits, because they don't pay taxes. Individuals buying in could get tax credits.

Next TEC Meeting Date – June 10, 5:00 PM, at town hall.