

TOWN OF BEDFORD
August 25, 2016
ENERGY COMMISSION MINUTES

ROLL CALL: A meeting of the Bedford Energy Commission was held on Thursday, August 25, 2016 at the Bedford Meeting Room, 10 Meetinghouse Road. Present: Chris Bandazian (Town Council), Bill Foote (School Liaison), Andrew Gillis, and Matthew Pitaro (Alternate)

Vice Chairman Gillis called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and introduced the members of the commission. Shana Potvin (Chairman), Jim Aguiar (Town Council Alternate), Christine Donati (Alternate), Kevin Flynn, and Courtney Gray (Alternate) were absent.

1. Town Projects:

A. Status of Library HVAC/Geothermal:

Councilor Bandazian stated there is not much to report. The system is still being fine-tuned and is working fine. Some of Town staff went to Grappone Toyota, who has the same system, to look at their display. Eventually there will be an interactive educational display that will have some data about temperatures in different parts of the system. The library staff has gotten a lot of questions from the public, and it has been good from an educational point of view, which was one of the hopes. We are still looking at September for some kind of ribbon cutting but there is no firm date at this time.

Councilor Bandazian stated another Town building that's being looked at is the safety complex. Town staff is evaluating converting the safety complex to natural gas. At this time there are 11 separate rooftop units that heat the complex, so they are just evaluating it. Mr. Foote asked is there a line to it already? Councilor Bandazian replied I think there is a line on Constitution Drive already.

B. Transfer Station Recycling Numbers:

Councilor Bandazian stated we had a better July this year than normal. Every year in the past the Town has had a slump during the summer in recycling percentages. We are almost to the 100th percentile point to where we have been in the last two years. Vice Chairman Gillis stated there is new, bigger signage out there so maybe that is helping. Councilor Bandazian stated tonnage was way up and now it has come back to average. Scrap metal continues to do well.

2. 2016 Focus Areas:

A. Transfer Station:

1. Solar TV Monitor (need a new TV?):

Vice Chairman Gillis stated we had talked about getting an outdoor TV but that would be very expensive. Councilor Bandazian stated the Energy Commission doesn't have a budget but there is the potential for available grant money for something like this. There are some grants in the \$2,000 - \$5,000 range that are generally available for this type of project. Mr. Pitaro stated maybe it could be put on the billboard as you are heading up to the transfer station. As people are sitting in line, they could be reading what is posted on the monitor. Vice Chairman Gillis stated we could use wireless to feed it and have a bigger board. There are all kinds of recycling data that could be posted for everyone to see. Right now there is no signage in the actual trash area to tell residents to bring their recyclables to other locations at the transfer station. Councilor Bandazian stated Public Works makes its own signage so maybe they could do that. Vice Chairman Gillis stated we have all that recycling data so we would be able to tell if that has made a difference. Councilor Bandazian stated I can look into that. Mr. Foote stated there is a social engineering component too. We could maybe have someone there checking to see if there are recyclables in their trash. Other communities do this, but in many places it is not very well received. We could probably make the case for savings, for example, based on 5 percent diversion for certain items.

B. Schools:

1. Recycle Bowl-Keep America Beautiful:

Mr. Foote stated I have submitted the information to the Superintendent. I spoke with him today, and he said he has passed it around but didn't have any feedback yet. I will probably find out at the first meeting in September.

2. Styrofoam Trays in Schools:

Mr. Foote stated I have talked to the School Board about this too. There is possibly another direction we may be heading but I can't talk about that right now. From the information I have seen it looks like the difference between cardboard trays and Styrofoam trays varies \$0.05 - \$0.06.

3. Student Liaisons from BHS:

There was no change in the status of this item.

3. Facebook Page Updates:

Chairman Potvin continues to add and update information on our Facebook page.

4. HAREI Partnerships & Events:

A. Planned Energy Raisers:

Vice Chairman Gillis stated HAREI continues to be very successful. There have been a lot of new systems going up. It seems to have taken on a life of its own. There used to be on a core of people to keep it moving but a lot of people who have had the systems installed have joined in to help out. I have approved a few plans and am trying to make sure that people are getting their discounts with suppliers. There is a lot of paperwork involved, so we try to assist with that aspect as well.

5. Bedford Green Business Award Nominations:

A. List of Parameters for Nomination:

Vice Chairman Potvin is working on this.

B. Perpetual Plaque at Town Office for all Award Winners:

Councilor Bandazian stated we are looking into getting the plaque.

6. Old Business: None

7. Approval of Minutes: (Prior meeting minutes were circulated to all members.)

There was no quorum present to approve minutes.

8. New Business:

Vice Chairman Gillis stated we need a bond or to find some way to pay for putting solar on Town buildings. The bond could be paid back with energy savings. There are a lot of State grants that could help but we need some numbers, a model. It seems like you could make money once the system is paid for. These systems have a 25-year life span and are warrantied for 25 years, and if we could pay it off between 5 – 10 years, we could be making money. We may need to hire a management company to make sure everything is working and to help with maintenance, but it doesn't seem like it would be much. I don't know if solar installers have a contract structured in a way to do that but maybe a contract could be written up. I can ask them to write me up a proposal and I can bring it back to the Commission. I would like to add this as a regular monthly agenda item. Mr. Foote stated I will bring it up with the School Board that there wouldn't be any out-of-pocket expense.

Mr. Foote stated our School Board financial retreat is coming up, and I was thinking about bringing up solar. It is not a question that the School District can't do it; it is that all of the roofs are in good shape and they don't want them to get damaged. Vice Chairman Gillis stated there are places where they are using cinder blocks to place the panels on and they install very quickly. Also, Dean Kamen's building in Manchester has a very large system that is on a giant metal frame that only touches the roof in four places. It is probably expensive, but that is probably the best solution. Mr. Pitaro asked why didn't we do solar on the library instead of the geothermal, and would that system

be suitable for other buildings? Vice Chairman Gillis replied a geothermal system is still run by electricity but at much lower usage. The ultimate savings would be to use solar to power the geothermal system. If we can get a 10-year payback with a 25-year system, that is great.

Councilor Bandazian stated Bedford's Old Home Day is September 24th. Our next meeting is on September 22nd so we need to start planning now. It would be great if HAREI could be there. Vice Chairman Gillis stated we could have the same two groups that were there last year. I will send an email to HAREI. Potentially we could have a little display about the geothermal system at the library as well.

Mr. Pitaro stated with the Macy's redevelopment project and the new Murphy's Tavern going in, maybe we could ask if they have energy conservation in mind during construction. Do builders usually steer toward energy conservation in general? Vice Chairman Gillis replied every year the federal government updates codes for buildings to be more energy efficient but they usually just pass in small percentages, and they get a lot of pushback from developers. Councilor Bandazian stated a lot of it is happening organically as it only makes sense. It would be interesting to have Wayne Richardson from the Building Department come in to talk about commercial development. When the Energy Commission first started, LED's were new, and now businesses are installing them on their own because it only makes good sense. Also, people are making better building envelopes. Mr. Pitaro stated the social aspect and community outreach seems to be the best way to get the education out there.

Adjournment:

MOTION by Mr. Pitaro to adjourn at 7:48 PM. Councilor Bandazian duly seconded the motion. Vote taken - all in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by
Valerie J. Emmons