

**TOWN OF BEDFORD**  
**September 22, 2016**  
**ENERGY COMMISSION MINUTES**

A meeting of the Bedford Energy Commission was held on Thursday, September 22, 2016 at the Bedford Meeting Room, 10 Meetinghouse Road, Bedford, NH. Present were: Shana Potvin (Chairwoman), Andrew Gillis (Vice-Chairman), Chris Bandazian (Town Council) and Matthew Pitaro (Alternate).

Ms. Potvin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and introduced members of the Commission. Jim Aguiar (Town Council Alternate), Bill Foote (School Liaison), Kevin Flynn, Robert Grogan and Courtney Gray (Alternate) were absent.

**1. Town Projects:**

**A. Status of Library HVAC/Geothermal:** Councilor Bandazian stated that we cannot give a date yet for the ribbon cutting ceremony, as there is one final purchase order pending with the Finance Department for the purchase of the monitor. The HVAC contractor rebalanced the system today and that is one of the final adjustment steps. Councilor Bandazian will keep the Commission informed of progress.

**B. Transfer Station Recycling Numbers:** Chairwomen Potvin stated that the recycling numbers are down again this month at only 13.34% recycling. Councilor Bandazian noted that in the past the trend of recycling has increased in the winter months and then dropped in the summer, but this year every month has been low except for July, which concerns the Commission. Recycling of scrap metal has continued to be consistent, but all other forms of recycling are down. Councilor Bandazian stated that this month's numbers may be the lowest they've ever been for recycling. Councilor Bandazian informed the board that he looked into the prices of outdoor monitors for the Transfer Station and found them to be approximately \$3,500 - \$3,600 each. There wasn't enough time to put in for a grant due to the grant application period closing for the Grassroots grant, but a new application period will open in about 6 months. Councilor Bandazian said if we could obtain a grant for \$3,500 then it would be possible to complete this project and move the monitor outside where it would be more visible to all residents.

**2. 2016 Focus Areas:**

**A. School Projects:**

Recycle Bowl – Keep America Beautiful: No update.

Styrofoam Trays in Schools: No update.

Student Liaisons from BHS: Sixteen students showed interest in becoming liaisons. Students were tasked with doing an individual assessment, as well as a senior project. Chairwoman Potvin said hopefully we'll be able to get a project going or get a liaison in place in the near future.

Recycling in Schools: There was a concern brought forward that the recycling in the schools may not actually be being recycled. Chairwoman Potvin will follow up with Bill Foote (School Liaison) about this at the next meeting. There was a BHS student present at the Commission

meeting who asked to speak on this topic. She stated that she has witnessed many recyclable items being thrown away at the high school and she feels that perhaps it is a matter of people not realizing how important recycling is and/or not knowing exactly which items are recyclable. She hopes that by raising awareness in the schools, there may also be an increase in recycling throughout Town.

Vice-Chairman Gillis agreed and stated that the Commission has seen many ideas to raise awareness, including creating better labeling on the recycling and trash cans, to creating visual awareness cards, etc. The Commission hopes that by getting student liaisons in place, they may be able to implement some of these ideas in the school system.

Chairwoman Potvin would like to find out if there is a way to measure the school's recycling rate similar to how the Town tracks recycling. Chairwoman Potvin will make a note to ask Bill Foote about this at the next meeting.

**B. Discussion of a Viable Financial Model for Green Energy Initiatives:** Vice-Chairman Gillis shared some information with the Commission that he obtained from the Hollis Energy Commission. He found that Hollis has been transitioning to wood pellet fuel, which is carbon neutral. He noted that Hollis is also working on a major research project to help determine which energy methods would work best for their facilities. Similarly, Bedford may be able to apply for a grant that would allow us to hire a consulting firm to gather the data and present us with a report that would summarize our options. The Commission members agreed that having a composed data report would greatly improve their chances of getting people on board with potential energy projects in Town. Vice-Chairman Gillis pointed out that the price of solar energy has substantially decreased over the last few years.

Chairwoman Potvin looked at an in-depth NHSEA Group Net Metering Guide online that discussed different possibilities of creating a co-op that may be eligible for a tax credit, but the details at this time are unclear. The Group Net Metering Guide is a compilation of the current NH laws regarding energy initiatives and explains the options of tying into the power grid or remaining separate from the grid. Chairwoman Potvin will keep this on the agenda for continued discussion at upcoming meetings.

Mr. Pitaro asked what happens to the Town's surplus from the oil budget lines if the heating season costs less than budgeted. Councilor Bandazian explained that the Town's total surpluses are put into a reserve fund after the end of the year, if the leftover funds are not utilized on other projects before the end of the year. Mr. Pitaro asked about the possibility of the Energy Commission getting the leftover funds that were associated with energy budget lines, so that the commission could use the money for energy initiative projects. More discussion would have to be had with Town Council and the Finance Department before such a change could be made.

### **3. Facebook Page Updates:**

The library geothermal poster was put up on Facebook and 14 people responded. Chairwoman Potvin will continue to post updates on the Commission's Facebook page as information becomes available.

#### **4. HAREI Partnerships & Events:**

**A. Planned Energy Raisers:** Vice-Chairman Gillis stated that HAREI is moving along and that there has been a lot of cooperation between people regarding the use of equipment. One individual even purchased a roofing tile lift that he modified for lifting solar panels, rather than having to carry them up a ladder individually. Mr. Gillis informed the Commission that the Town of Bedford has recently implemented a regulation that requires individuals to have an engineer sign off on solar panel projects in order to ensure that the structure can handle the added weight on one side of the roof. Vice-Chairman Gillis said that the group has found an engineer that has lots of experience with these calculations and is willing to provide them at a lower rate than some other engineers, due to the fact that it takes him less time to complete the calculations, so that is a new resource that is available to people as well. We are encouraging people to post their data usage online publicly so that others can see how well energy alternatives are being used around them. Vice-Chairman Gillis stated that MIT is now offering a program that allows towns and cities to provide their LIDR maps to MIT for analysis. MIT will map it so that individuals can go online and find out exactly how many solar panels they could potentially install on their house or building based on the structure's dimensions and determine how much energy they could produce with such solar panels. Although the cost of LIDR maps are very high, approximately \$150,000 each, they can be used for things such as planning and zoning as well, since they can accurately map every structure in a Town to within an inch. The Commission agreed that this fairly new technology is intriguing.

#### **5. Bedford Green Business Award Nominations:**

**A. List of Parameters for Nomination:** Chairwoman Potvin had started gathering categories and parameters from other organizations that have green business type awards. After a review of Chairwoman Potvin's findings, the Commission plans to focus on the following categories as they continue to develop the parameters.

- Strategy & Vision
- Supply Chain Management
- Energy Management
- Water Management
- Waste Management & Material Productivity
- Land Use & Biodiversity in the Environment

Chairwoman Potvin will begin drafting definitions for each of the above categories that will be circulated amongst the Commission members for additional input. The Commission discussed developing additional documents that could be used for this process, such as an application form or a nomination form, etc.

**B. Perpetual Plaque at the Town Office for all Award Winners:** Details of the plaque design will be tabled until a mission statement is developed and accepted by the Energy Commission.

#### **6. Old Business: None**

7. **Approval of Minutes:** None

8. **New Business:**

Save the date for the NHSEA Local Energy Solutions Conference: Nov. 19, 2016. This is a free conference for anyone to attend. More information is available online at <http://www.nhenergy.org/les-conference.html>.

A new member of the Energy Commission has been appointed. Her name is Cathy Champagne; she will be sworn in next week.

Next meeting is October 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7pm. The November meeting is on Thanksgiving, so Chairwoman Potvin will ask Dawn if the meeting room is available for November 17<sup>th</sup> instead.

Councilor Bandazian informed everyone that Phase III of the energy efficient lighting in the BCTV studio has been completed.

**Adjournment:**

Discussion adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted by  
Danielle E. Basora