

TOWN OF BEDFORD
June 28, 2018
ENERGY COMMISSION MINUTES

A meeting of the Bedford Energy Commission was held on Thursday, May 24, 2018 at the Bedford Meeting Room, 10 Meetinghouse Road, Bedford, NH. Present were: Jeff Kerr (Chair), Andrew Gillis (Vice Chair), John Russell, Alexander Joy, Shana Potvin, William Coder, Bill Foote (School Board Liaison), Chris Bandazian (Town Council Liaison), Catherine Rombeau (Town Council Liaison).

I. Call to Order: Mr. Kerr opened the meeting at 7:00 PM

II. Quorum Count: 5

III. Approval of Minutes – May 3, 2018

MOTION by Catherine Rombeau to approve the minutes. Seconded by Lex Joy. Vote taken – Motion Passed – All in favor.

IV. Reports of Members and Committees

a. Legislative update – Chris

Councilor Bandazian stated that there was no sign of the legislature wanting to override the veto's discussed last time. Governor signed off on Senate Bill 577 to keep the Berlin Burgess wood burning plant going.

b. School projects – Bill

Mr. Foote stated that they don't kick off to do work until the first of July. They've probably started the pre-setup, but they won't worry about that until the first meeting on July 9th.

V. Special Orders

a. Ted Vansant (Consultant) – Address solar landfill

Mr. Vansant of New England Commercial Solar Services, is a solar consultant to a number of different companies including New England Solar Gardens. He still does projects with them, but he works with other organizations as well. He has been in the industry for 18 years and has worked on commercial scale solar projects in the New England region for about 15 of those 18 years. He's also Chair on the board of NH Sustainable Energy Association. They have been working on Senate Bill 446 and other pieces of legislation.

Mr. Gillis explained that a few years ago they put out an RFP to put solar panels on the landfill and Solar Garden was the only one to respond. They were just PPA's; a penny below what the existing power rate was. Now they are looking at building array that they actually own and use

net metering and push that power over to the Town buildings. It's a residential area and there is no 3-phase power there. There was a question of whether the neighborhood could handle the back feed. They would need to do a study. They are trying to figure out how they can build it. Either own it or have it done in a way where it's not a PPA and they use all of the power and once they pay it off, they get 100% of the power as long as it runs.

Mr. Vansant stated that most towns are doing a PPA, because it doesn't require a lot of brain damage. They just buy the power for 25 years and you don't have to go through the permitting and construction part of it. The developer can take 30% for tax credits and the Town can't. Mr. Gillis stated that he has seen systems where either the builder takes the 30% credit or use some other 3rd party that can take advantage of the tax credit or maybe they don't worry about it, because solar panels are pretty cheap. Mr. Vansant didn't think it would be bad to get PPA proposals. They could get a PPA for 6-7 years until they are able to sell it to the Town and then the Town buys it when the tax credit is used up for 50% less than the original cost.

Mr. Gillis suggested getting a bank loan rather than a bond and the loan could be paid off using the money saved by having solar. Mr. Vansant stated that they could use the operating budget to pay the lease. Ms. Potvin wanted to know if the Town had ever taken a loan out like that before and Councilor Bandazian stated no. Ms. Potvin wanted to know what approval they would need and Councilor Bandazian mentioned that it would go to voters at the Budgetary Town Meeting. Mr. Gillis thought they would have to budget for it. Mr. Foote stated that they would build the leases into the bottom line cost. Mr. Gillis thought they needed a document that lays it all out and can take to the Town Council. It was explained that a PPA is Power Purchasing Agreement.

Mr. Vansant suggested that they hire a consultant to do preliminary work to get them to go out for an RFP. He suggested that they start with an RFQ and get the top three and then work with them to get a PPA proposal and an ownership proposal. He also suggested that they get the preliminary engineering steps started. Hire an engineer to do the survey, get the interconnection application in, and get all of the preliminary engineering work done. This will take some of the risk out of it. To have Eversource do a power survey would cost around \$500.00 for the initial application and around \$7,000.00 to do the interconnection impact study. It would be good to have all of the permitting out of the way before the RFP.

Councilor Bandazian asked about energy grants and where they are going. Mr. Vansant stated that it's biomass, small wind, and hydro.

Mr. Kerr listed some components to consider including the structural integrity of the landfill, 3-phase power and Eversource study of being able to absorb the power. Mr. Vansant added the engineering survey as one of the components.

VI. Old Business

- a. Green Resident Award - Shana
 1. Update on nomination form

Ms. Potvin hadn't done anything on it. She was going to start a Google document that everyone could be contributing to. Mr. Kerr was wondering if this was something they still wanted to pursue. Ms. Potvin stated that the point of it was similar to the Green Business Award where originally it was a self-nominating thing. They fill out the form and submit it, and then when they get some they review them and give the award. The resident award turned into using scores and they talked about audits and then discounting the audits to make them more verifiable. She thought they should discuss if they were going to take that on. She would be happy to create the nomination form, but she would be using the home energy score parameters and they are not qualified to judge that. It would have to involve an auditor and significant commitment for somebody to do all of that.

Councilor Bandazian mentioned getting information from the other regional energy initiatives to see what they are doing. Ms. Potvin stated that she would do some digging.

b. New Solar Up campaign – Shana

Ms. Potvin hadn't done anything on this, but she was going to start a survey for the 90 or so existing solar users and then use that to promote a new campaign. That would require an RFP to get the vendor; it would be a big process setting the SolarUp campaign up. They could talk about HAREI and doing it a different way where it's more of a barn raising or solar raising that they would be promoting. The first step is the survey.

c. Social Media Update - Lex

The account that was attempted to be made with Twitter will need to be tabled due to the requirement of an email and phone number to make the account. The commission would not want the account tied to an individual's phone number and it cannot be attached to a landline because a text needs to be received for verification purposes. The commission decided that Facebook will be the primary social media outreach.

d. Website updates - Chris

Councilor Bandazian stated that things are being added.

e. Transfer station - Lex and Catherine

1. Update on Spring Cleaning article

Councilor Rombeau stated that she sent the article to the two papers and was wondering if anyone had seen it. She thought maybe it would make more sense to do a letter.

f. Bedford 2020 Master Plan update Representative

1. Volunteers (2) needed

Councilor Bandazian stated that the Planning department is working with a new consultant to find out how they want to approach things. No names yet.

g. Grass Roots Fund

Mr. Joy stated that there was no deadline for submission of the grant. The Grass Roots Fund is interested in projects that don't terminate. They want programs that keep going and renewing. He's looking for ways to pitch it or include it in some larger educational program. He would like to solicit ideas. He wanted to know if they had a way to capture the graphics they want to display on the monitor; maybe a few sample slides of what they want it to look like once they have more data or the opportunity to show it. Ms. Potvin stated that she has an old slide show. She will review it and see if it's pertinent and if it is, she will send it to him. Mr. Joy stated that when they apply to this grant there is a form to fill out, but the form is behind whatever login interface exists on the site, so you can't actually see the specifics of what they are demanding until you log in. He wanted to know if they had an existing account for the Grass Roots Fund and if not, they can go make one, but to make one they need another email address and it should be tied to the Town. Ms. Potvin suggested they create a bedfordenergycommission@gmail.com.

VII. New business

a. Recycling – Glass out of single stream as of July 17

Mr. Kerr stated that the blue colored bins are now at the transfer station. Transfer Station has signed a new contract with Waste Management. Councilor Bandazian stated that they are paying Waste Management \$30/ton to take away the glass plus to haul the glass.

Mr. Foote explained his comment about glass recycling. He thought he was going to take all his plastic out and just throw it away because of the cost. Then pull out the glass and let them crush it for asphalt and throw all of the scrap aluminum and steel in the scrap dumpsters, because they get money for that. At that point, the compactors would have nothing but clean cardboard and paper. It doesn't work out like that, because the cost structure now with the new agreement it isn't a detriment to the Town. He was wondering if a wash is the outcome they really want or do they want to see a productive return in recyclables versus paying roughly the same amount they do for the stuff they throw into the roll offs.

Mr. Kerr mentioned Mr. Foote's thought about the cost of hauling plastic in the recycling versus the cost of hauling plastic in the trash; taking it from one bin and putting it in another and thought financially it made sense to do that. Councilor Bandazian thought it would be a wash, but that they needed to get more experience with it.

Mr. Kerr talked about plastic and incinerating it and throwing it in the trash rather than recycling it. Even if they try to recycle it, it could still end up in the ocean. If it goes in the trash and gets incinerated, it won't end up in the ocean. He thought it was better to throw it in the trash rather than recycling. He would like to know where it's getting recycled and make sure it's getting recycled responsibly. It was confirmed that Waste Management was also taking the recycling. Ms. Potvin thought if they went to them they could find out where it's going. Mr. Kerr wanted to know if a Councilor could contact Public Works and see if they could get more information from Waste Management on how the recycling is handled. They talked about educating the public about recycling including costs. Mr. Russell mentioned having Waste Management come and explain the recycling process. Mr. Kerr thought it would be more interesting to have a tour of the recycling process where Bedford's recycling goes.

VIII. Reminders: Next upcoming meeting is July 26

Mr. Coder mentioned the discussion with Mr. Vansant and wanted to know where they were going next. Councilor Bandazian mentioned researching the Madison RFQ to see what they addressed in their RFQ. Mr. Coder wanted to know if there was a rule as to what the Town issues, RFQs or RFPs. Councilor Bandazian stated that they usually do RFPs. They tend to pre-qualify the bidders on RFPs. Mr. Foote wanted to know who would right the RFP. Councilor Bandazian stated that realistically they would look at what Madison did and edit it. The DPW would put the wrapper around it and make it public. Mr. Kerr stated that he updated the RFP that they did before to say no PPA only purchase. Regarding what's next, they need to get the information to the Town for the Town to make a decision on it. He wanted to know from Councilor Bandazian and Councilor Rombeau what the Council would need from them. Councilor Bandazian responded the business case. Mr. Gillis stated that in order to get the business case, they need to do some stuff like the engineering work, because there is a lot of cost involved that wouldn't be apparent until that was done including the application to Eversource. Mr. Kerr wanted to know if they should try and undertake some of the work themselves versus coming up with an RFP that says give us a PPA for 6 years then they'll have the option to switch over to own it. Councilor Rombeau wanted to know the process they did for the geothermal for the Library. Councilor Bandazian stated that there was a lot of background work that was done, the building envelope work was done, and there was some preliminary study with an engineering consultant and they spent more money on another consultant and then got a consultant to help with the grant application. Mr. Coder thought that since the Energy Commission didn't have a budget, some of those things are going to be problematic. Mr. Kerr thought they would have to have a plan that says if they spend \$7.5k on the Eversource study and whatever it costs to get an engineering estimate for looking at the structure of the landfill, they could take that to the Town Council and say with this money we can have this done and move forward with either a purchase option or a PPA option but at least they would have a better idea of what the cost would be. Or they could leave it all to the PPA and then just pay somebody to do the PPA and they would take care of all of that. Mr. Coder wanted to know if the Commission would be open to solicit another presentation by Revision. Mr. Gillis pointed out that Mr. Vansant has consulted on this work, but Revision has actually done it. Mr. Coder mentioned that Mr. Weeks talked about the economics and the business side of it. The Commission agreed that it would be a good idea to have Mr. Weeks come in for a presentation.

Mr. Kerr mentioned that a contact was trying to put together a solar conference to put together municipalities that are looking at solar and providers so it could be an information exchange. The contact would like to use Bedford as one. He told that contact that Bedford would be interested in being in the case study.

IX. Adjournment

MOTION to adjourn by Ms. Potvin at 8:17 PM. Seconded by Mr. Joy. Vote taken – Motion Passed.

Respectfully submitted by,

Kayla Chase