

**TOWN OF BEDFORD**  
**ENERGY COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**August 25, 2022**

A meeting of the Bedford Energy Commission was held on Thursday, August 25, 2022 in the Town Meeting Room, 10 Meetinghouse Road.

**I. Call to Order:** Chairman Russell opened the meeting at 7:00 PM.

Present: John Russell (Chair), Chris Bandazian (Vice Chair) (Town Council Liaison), Tom Elwood, Chuck Nettleship, Bill Foote (School Board), Carolyn Mahoney, Bing Lu  
Absent: Andrew Gillis, Sue Thomas (Town Council alternate), Mindy Bator (SB alternate)

**II. Approval of July 28, 2022 Minutes**

**MOTION by Mr. Nettleship to approve the minutes of the June 23, 2022 meeting as amended. Seconded by Mr. Elwood. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 6-0-1 (Mr. Foote abstained).**

**III. Reports of Members and Committees**

**a. School projects progress and planning**

Mr. Foote stated that they got Memorial School finished. They had some ventilation equipment that they ordered for last summer and it didn't come in until March of this year, so that should have gone in. He wasn't sure if they accomplished anymore. He wasn't sure where they were with the other schools. A lot of the projects were held up by the fact that they not only had to do engineering, but they had to get the equipment. Long lead times were probably going to push that back until next summer. His dream of having at least one of the schools completed by the end of the summer did not become a reality. Other than that, it's been maintenance and getting ready for the opening day of school, which was today.

Chairman Russell wanted to know Mr. Foote's satisfaction with the work done at Memorial School as that was one under discussion. Mr. Foote stated that all the older schools were under discussion. With the availability of supply chain issues, it's going to slow everything down. The money is set aside, and they were going to have plenty of time now to do the engineering, but a lot of the stuff they can't do during the school year, so it would have to be held off until next summer.

**IV. Old Business**

**a. Solsmart**

Chairman Russell stated that he had the following update from Lori Radke: The Planning Department was working with Solsmart on the Bronze designation. She can follow-up with Jill to see where they were at with the process.

Chairman Russell was wondering if anyone on the Commission would be interested in taking over for Ms. Radke. They were going to go for a bronze designation for the Town. There is also a silver designation and a gold designation. It's a nice idea for selling the Town as interested in solar

development and what they could do to enhance projects. They have the Town solar project and various other things in the works as well. He thought they would do rather well this process. Ms. Mahoney wanted to know what it entailed. Chairman Russell stated that it was basically tracking with the Town. Ms. Radke would clue her into everything. Maybe there were one or two folks that might be interested in taking it on. Ms. Mahoney stated that she would be interested in doing it.

## **b. Solar Projects**

### **1. Transfer Station**

Councilor Bandazian thought maybe in October they would have more clarity on budget and where Eversource and the Direct Congressional Spending was going. Chairman Russell wanted to know if there was any feedback from Jeff Foote and Councilor Bandazian responded no. Chairman Russell wanted to know about that form they had to complete. Councilor Bandazian stated that it was waiting for Eversource information. He thought it was moving forward. In terms of the Federal government, he couldn't see them leaving things hanging until November. Chairman Russell found it hard to believe that they were going to lose that \$500k. Councilor Bandazian stated that he would be very disappointed if they did. They may, because they don't have a project to use it on.

Mr. Foote wanted to know if the Transfer Station was supposed to be re-looked at in 2024-2025. Councilor Bandazian state that the long-term plan was to spend a lot of money on the Transfer Station and make it modern. It didn't make sense to bottle up reserve money for that long, so they did the re-routing and those improvements with the money on reserve; they haven't been reserving money since. If you're going to spend millions of dollars, that's not the highest priority for a long time. Mr. Foote thought the goal also included compactors and the 3-phase sourcing to improve the hauling costs. Councilor Bandazian stated that there were some benefits besides PV, which includes the Public Works Highway Garage. They were using backyard mechanic power right now to work on 10-wheeled dump trucks. It was clear that those other benefits were not going to drive the project. They have to hear if Eversource was going to cap things at the level that they quoted or close to that and if their grant money was still available. He was hopeful that on the Town end the ability to advance money or spend money would be pretty clear around October.

Mr. Lu wanted to know if bringing the 3-phase in was the only issue that they had on this project. Councilor Bandazian stated that it was a major stumbling block. They were going to look at what they could do without 3-phase power. He wasn't sure if it was going to be economically viable, but they at ought to look at it. Mr. Lu wanted to know if they were able to push the power back to single phase. Councilor Bandazian stated that it might be negligible what they could push back. Mr. Lu stated that they might be able to put an electric system that can convert single phase to 3-phase and use the solar as a DC box for whatever they need 3-phase for. Councilor Bandazian stated that it be would be less than 700 kilowatts. They would need to use the grid, because they wouldn't be running compactors or things consuming a lot of electricity steadily. There would need to be some storage and would need to do that on the grid. It's not clear if it's economically viable, but thought it ought to be looked at. Mr. Lu thought if you put a battery buffer, because the solar wouldn't push power back in the night, so you can push 700 kilowatts in the daytime. Councilor Bandazian stated that it could only do 700 kilowatts if there was 3-phase power; it would be substantially less. ReVision Energy modeled a 1.2 megawatts DC converted to around 750 AC, which isn't the full capacity of the 3-phase. The 3-phase would support more development. Single phase was going to be less than 750 or they wouldn't be advocating for 3-phase.

Chairman Russell wanted to know Mr. Lu's feeling about 3-phase going down Chubbuck Road and if he felt strongly that it was a good idea or they could get away with single phase. Mr. Lu thought it was all about how much single phase power they could handle. If they could push enough power through a single phase then they still have a chance, but it was going to be complicated. Councilor Bandazian stated that there was some cost that was spread over less electricity generation, which would be fencing, site work, and interconnect that would not be useful once there was 3-phase. He intends to ask the people who know how to answer those questions and find out. Mr. Lu stated that if he needed any support from the technical side, he should be able to ask the right questions. Chairman Russell thought that would be good, because there was a questionnaire that Councilor Bandazian thought they needed some help with.

## **2. Town Pool PV Shade/Shelter**

Councilor Bandazian stated this wouldn't be until probably next year. Mr. Foote wanted to know if it was something they were going to see during the budget cycle. Councilor Bandazian stated that they would discuss it. With energy prices going crazy, they have to look at projections again. It's not a money maker, it's a little bit cost avoidance, but mostly it's for show. There just weren't enough panels there to make a dent in what the pool consumes. Ms. Mahoney wanted to know how much it costs. Councilor Bandazian stated that they hadn't gotten that far, but they would be looking for zero outlay. That might be some small savings under a power purchase agreement.

### **c. Clean Energy NH Legislative & PUC Update**

#### **1. Clean Energy NH – No update**

#### **2. PUC Update**

Councilor Bandazian stated that he looked at the PUC docket and Eversources' rates were approved in July. Six months from July they have to explain to customers what that's going to entail. It was a settlement agreement that says that on non-holiday weekdays during the year from 1:00 PM – 7:00 PM would be the peak rate. The other 18 hours of the day would be the cheaper rate, and they get a fixed payment from the customers of \$16.50/month. He looked to see if the case could be made for buying a battery and financing it to see if there would be some kind of balance. He used some conservative estimates. He took those six peak hours and said that's going to be the same as an average homeowner uses in the other 18 hours, which includes some normally peak activity and sleeping hours. Using the 930 kilowatt hour per month average for a household, 11 holiday weeks per year, it came out with a cost savings, if you could shift 100% of your power use, of about \$13.50/month at a cost of \$16.50/month. The homeowner, if they do a wonderful job, doesn't get any money. How advocates at the PUC could agree to that was beyond him.

Mr. Elwood wanted to clarify that they were talking about \$16/month additional cost and if it was a flat rate. Councilor Bandazian explained that it was just an extra charge they get to add to the bill; it's not for anything. The lower rates were for distribution and transmission. Mr. Foote wanted to know if distribution would change. Councilor Bandazian responded yes. Distribution and transmission charges both go down in the off-peak hours. Mr. Foote didn't understand why distribution charges would change. He thought it should be a flat fixed rate depending on the kilowatt hours they move. Councilor Bandazian thought they may want to incentivize people to shift off-peak and those are the rates they have to manipulate. He'll look a little more, but it was disappointing. He thought it would be a good case for battery back-up in the household. Mr.

Elwood stated that Tesla made a battery back-up for when there was a power outage. He thought it had to be a lot cheaper than the \$20k he paid for a generator. Councilor Bandazian stated that to do your house normally you would probably need two of them and it would be about the same. Elsewhere you can rent your battery capacity and make a lot of money that would pay for the battery, but it hasn't come to NH yet. Mr. Foote stated that Mr. Gillis had been talking about that and they still hadn't figured out the tiered structure to pay for it. Councilor Bandazian stated that the time of day rates had been in the works for years. Every other utility had a much better program.

## **V. New Business:**

### **a. Possibilities offered by the Inflation Reduction Act**

Councilor Bandazian stated that it may put more pressure on the State to have EV fast-charging. It would also provide some funding for that. Chairman Russell stated that given the fast-charging was mostly on private property, he wanted to know if that was going to work well or would it presume public lands. Councilor Bandazian didn't know, but mentioned the State rest areas, which was public land. It would make sense on the major corridors to use those locations. Elsewhere filling in the gaps, he couldn't see that being done on public land. Chairman Russell thought it was going to come down to private guys doing it like the intersection of Route 101 and Wallace Road. Councilor Bandazian thought it made sense for a commercial area with an existing parking lot that wants to have people stay for at least an hour. Mr. Lu wanted to know if there was going to be government money available, would the private party apply for the funds. He wanted to know if they could distribute those funds out to the private parties through a type of grant. People could apply for a certain amount of money who were going to be putting in a charging station on their property. The government would provide the funding and whoever comes first gets the money until the fund drains. Councilor Bandazian thought the first major step was some funding, \$2.2m that Eversource got to make power available, because they have to do upgrades. Nothing was going to happen until there was power. He thought the next step was power would be made available. He didn't know how long that takes to engineer and build out; probably a year or two. The VW money could get used after that. He thought there were good opportunities in Bedford: Bedford Village Shoppes, South River Road near the Market & Main area, and at the intersection of 293 and the Everett Turnpike. Those businesses would want people to come and stay.

### **b. Discussion of energy cost saving programs available to residents.**

#### **1. NH Saves**

Councilor Bandazian stated funded through NH Saves, he thinks he's got a Button-Up NH program set up for them at their October 27<sup>th</sup> meeting. He's still working on how that would be done, but he thought it would be done there with a parallel 90 minute Powerpoint presentation. Mr. Foote stated that Button-Up was for housing improvements. Councilor Bandazian stated that it's building envelope. They explain money that's available to do a home energy audit and then money that's available to make the improvements that are recommended. He thought it was a good program. There were a lot of building envelopes in Town before Building energy code standards.

#### **2. HAREI – None in Mr. Gillis' absence**

#### **3. Other ideas**

Chairman Russell appealed to Commission members if they have any ideas to creatively help people with their energy costs, he would love to throw in bullet points and float ideas.

Councilor Bandazian thought they should reach out to HAREI whether it's Mr. Gillis or somebody else; they should have somebody do their program. Chairman Russell stated that they do barn raisers all the time. Councilor Bandazian thought that maybe for one of those they could even go on location with someone from BCTV, although they probably have some video already.

**VI. Reminders:**

- a. Next upcoming meeting September 22<sup>nd</sup> 2022**

**VII. Adjournment**

**MOTION by Mr. Foote to adjourn at 7:28 PM. Seconded by Councilor Bandazian. Vote taken – All in favor.**

Respectfully submitted by,

Dawn Boufford