

Rye Energy Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 5, 2020
3:00 – 4:30 PM

The Rye Energy Committee held a remote Zoom virtual due to the COVID-19 State of Emergency. All votes taken during the meeting were done by roll call vote.

A roll call of meeting attendees found those attending were: Howard Kalet, Tom Pfau, Michael Joyce, Carl Nicolino, and Lisa Sweet.

In compliance with the town's virtual meeting protocol, Tom Pfau (co-chair of the Rye Energy Committee read the required attestation at the start of the meeting:

As co-chair of the Rye Energy Committee, I find that due the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are:

Utilizing Zoom for this electronic meeting. All members of the Committee have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this or by clicking on the following website address: www.zoom.com

Meeting ID: 867-1140-8429 Password: 649873

We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting, including how to access the meeting using Zoom or telephonically. Instructions have also been provided on the website at town.rye.nh.us on the Energy Committee page and click on agenda for this meeting.

In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled.

Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.

The meeting minutes for both the regularly scheduled March REC meeting and a special session were approved (no April meeting). The following REC members voted in favor of the meeting minutes approval:

- Tom Pfau
- Carl Nicolino
- Howard Kalet
- Lisa Sweet
- Michael Joyce

General Update:

Howard gave an update on the town's financial outlook as it addresses impact due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The town is concerned about budget funds due to reductions in car registrations, permits etc, and are uncertain what impact this will have on receivables of property taxes due in July. Some operational cost reduction measures have been implemented, and all new expenditures would be looked at more critically moving forward.

ReVision Energy Solar Proposal:

Whilst discussing the ongoing solar proposal from ReVision Energy, the committee raised concern about short and longer term projected electric generation costs given the low-cost oil and natural gas environment as of May 2020. The economic impact and effect(s) that this might have on the solar proposal would be discussed with ReVision in the coming weeks. Additionally, a review of the proposal (as well as any subsequent updated versions) would be reviewed by the town's finance committee. Assuming a revised proposal is deemed favorable, educational next steps would be taken with stakeholders and the general public.

ReVision Energy is looking for a commitment, in the form of a letter of intent, from The Town of Rye so it may safe harbor the 2020 federal tax savings rate of 26%.

Lighting Upgrades:

The lighting upgrades have been completed for schools, but not for Rye Town Hall or the Rye Public Library due to additional project scope needing clarification and planning. The Rye Board of Selectmen is asking to shelve this project until further information and clear project scope is identified and understood.

The REC has learned that the Eversource Smart Start program is charging the town. Since the lighting project upgrade, those locations which received upgrades have shown a decrease in monthly usage (kWh), however the monthly net cost does not appear to have been reduced. At current \$737.00 has been added to each bill for the month of April 2020.

Electric Demand Charges:

The committee discussed the costs 'demand charges' being paid by the town each month.

When reviewing the bills over the last several months, the demand charges account for between 20 -30% of the total electric bill for municipal locations. At current, the Town of Rye is paying over \$30,000 in demand charges per annum. The largest demand charges occur at The Public Safety Building and The Water District.

Q: How can we reduce or eliminate this?

Technology and monitoring software exists which can address some portion of the demand charges by a sort of 'load balancing'.

Howard and Tom have asked Eversource to review The Public Safety building to identify solutions. It may be possible to reduce \$122k but would qualify only because of the age of equipment, and therefore likely require equipment replacement(s).

A representative from Eversource would be willing to evaluate the schools to review control systems as another possible measure for lowering

demand charges.

School electric usage and some bills are down and have shown to be since November 2019.

*** REC member Lisa Sweet exited the call at 4:05pm*

Planned Controls Upgrade at Rye Elementary School:

The control systems and HVAC at the Rye Elementary School is aging and there is not one at the Rye Jr. High School. These are essentially 'master' systems that remote monitor sub-systems, and can be highly effective in using data and predictive analytics as tools to understand energy consumption (peak, offpeak, demand etc). In turn, these systems and help reduce energy consumption and costs.

The Elementary School system should be reviewed and potentially adjusted to achieve some savings. The Jr High School System has not been specified, nor rebate credits reviewed. Key areas of interest are circulation systems for both air (heating and cooling), and hot water used for heating. Recent bills at the Elementary Schools were showing peak demand was lower than in the same period last year, but still much higher than other municipal buildings.

New Business:

With the help of The NH Clean Energy Organization, several NH towns and town Energy Committees are signing a petition to be sent to NH State legislature to extend state tax credits for energy saving programs. A vote was taken as to whether the Rye Energy Committee would like to participate.

Roll Call Vote

Howard Kalet: yes

Carl Nicolino: yes

Michael Joyce: yes

Tom Pfau: yes

Next Meeting:

The next Rye Energy Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 2, at 3pm. This meeting will be held as a virtual meeting using the town's approved Zoom platform. Meeting details and access codes will be sent out prior.

Meeting adjourned at 4:33pm