

# Rye Energy Committee

## Meeting Minutes

Tuesday October 6, 2020  
3:00-4:30 PM, Virtual Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86894250380?pwd=Zlk1R2FpbzFTMWhqUjA4NHhSVllyZz09>

Meeting ID: 868 9425 0380

Password: 258963

Call-in Number: 646-558-8656

### **Attestation read by Tom Pfau**

Howard Kalet: Present and alone in room

Tom Pfau: Present and alone in room

Lisa Sweet: Present and alone in room

Carl Nicolino: joined meeting at 3:39 PM

### **1) September Meeting Minutes:**

The group approved the September meeting minutes:

Howard Kalet: Approved

Tom Pfau: Approved

Lisa Sweet: Approved

### **2) Solar Proposal/Re-issue RFP Update**

Tom and Howard have continued with a number of discussions. They will be meeting with Scott Marion and Kevin Brandon on 10/12 to discuss the school PPA and will also be meeting with Revision to review recent changes to the proposal that take into account recent changes in energy pricing. The main focus is the school PPA as the tax incentives will be declining in 2021. Revision is also working on a proposal for the town garage. Federal financing for that project could be as low as 1% and there are many USDA programs that incentivize electric infrastructure so we can explore that. We should have more information after 10/12. Tom and Howard will share the school PPA update and the garage proposal with the committee in preparation for next month's meeting and discussion.

### **3) Community Power/Letter to PUC Update**

The committee is in favor of signing the letter from Community Power Coalition to the PUC. The PUC is writing the rules and regulations for Community Power programs and some of those proposed rules could limit or undermine the ability for communities to launch community power programs. The REC will seek approval from the Board of Selectmen before signing on to the letter.

The REC will try to get on the agenda for BOS for the 10/26/20 meeting. The topics that REC hopes to cover in that meeting are:

- Approval to sign on to letter to PUC
- An overview of Community Power
- Garage Proposal from Revision

If the BOS agrees that Community Power might be beneficial to our town, a committee would need to be formed to develop a plan, rules, regulations and by-laws would need to be approved, and the town would need to approve that plan with a warrant article. Residents who use the default energy supply, would be automatically enrolled. Those who have chosen a different energy supplier would need to opt-in. Any resident who did not want to participate in Community Power could opt-out.

### **4. School Site Visit**

Tom and Howard participated in a 3-hour tour of the schools. An GDS associate (paid by Eversource) attended to help find ways to reduce demand charges. Demand charges represent 30% of electricity bills and upgrading the control systems is to reduce these charges could be substantial cost reductions.

The schools are running ventilation 24/7 to promote air exchange due to Covid and we can expect bills to be higher. Ionizers were added to air handlers to improve air quality.

## **5. Sense Energy Monitor**

Tom and Howard tested the Sense energy monitor and found it to be useful for homeowners and systems up to 220 volts (2-phase). However, for municipal use, the bigger appliances are larger (3-phase) and beyond the capacity of this device. A unanimous roll call vote was taken to return the device and to keep it in mind for future applications.

## **6. Lighting Upgrade Update**

Lighting upgrade for the town buildings will begin shortly as agreements have been finalized. The schools report that occupancy sensors are working well and there has been a drop in energy use.

## **7. Eversource Distribution Charge Increase**

Eversource put a request in to the PUC to increase the distribution charge for residential distribution by 24%. This was before Covid. This has not gone into effect at this time. Carl will continue to monitor this.

## **8. Potential New Committee Members**

Frank Melanson and Jen Tische attended last month's meeting. Frank may be interested in joining the committee in a few months. Nancy Siopes is interested in joining the committee and would bring a wealth of knowledge as she works for Solar Endeavors. The question of whether this could create conflict of interest issues came up. The BOS would have final approval.

## **9. Clean Energy Conference**

This is a virtual conference to be held on 10/29 and 10/30. Lisa and Howard will claim the 2 tickets we get from membership. REC will use remaining budget funds (\$75) to purchase a third ticket so that everyone can attend different sessions.

## **10. Budget**

We were granted \$500 last year. Membership in Clean Energy NH is \$250 and the other \$250 is intended for community engagement. We will request \$500 for next year and this was approved by unanimous vote.

## **11. Town Updates**

Continue to be very mindful of anything that might impact town budget

## **12. New Business**

Carl pointed out that 5 years ago, large scale solar cost \$4/kwH and now that cost is down to \$1/kwH.

Tesla is now pushing the Powerwall battery as both a car charger and as a replacement for a generator. The approximate cost of a Powerwall is now \$10k while the approximate cost of a whole house generator is \$7k. Not clear what the installed cost for these systems is.

In Massachusetts, residents can get paid for stored energy in a battery. This incentive may come to NH.

Next virtual meeting is on Tuesday, November 10 from 3:00-4:30 PM.

**Meeting adjourned at 4:36 PM**