

# Rye Energy Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday December 1, 2020  
3:00-4:30 PM, Via Zoom

Meeting ID: 882 8960 6649 Password: 321478 Call-in Number: 646-558-8656

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88289606649?pwd=YzhkVzAyOX-UvejNxVnJl-OU01R0JJUT09>

## **1) Attestation and Roll Call:**

Attestation read by: Howard Kalet

Howard Kalet: Present and alone in room

Tom Pfau: Present and alone in room

Lisa Sweet: Present and alone in room

Carl Nicolino: Present alone in room

Joan Zofnass was in attendance as a visitor.

## **2) November Meeting Minutes Approval**

The group approved the November meeting minutes.

Howard Kalet: Approved

Tom Pfau: Approved

Lisa Sweet: Approved

Carl Nicolino: Approved

## **3) Energy Committee Member Update**

The Energy Committee officially welcomes Nancy Siopes as its newest member. Matt Marra has resigned due to personal and professional commitments. We thank him for his service to the committee.

## **4) School/Solar Update**

School Board has confirmed that the solar installation will need to be approved by warrant article. The School Board will take the lead on that process and the energy committee can provide support to help educate the town on the PPA agreement. It was suggested that a Question and Answer session via Zoom with Revision might be helpful and that it might be a good idea for Revision to be present at Town Meeting to help answer any questions before the vote.

The next step in the process will be for the School Board to sign the contract with Revision. This step needs to be completed in December so that the project receives the 26% federal investment tax credit. The investment tax credit drops to 22% for 2021 for both residential and commercial installations. After 2021, commercial entities can receive a

10% investment tax credit but there will no longer be a tax credit for residential installations. Nancy has reviewed the contract and Tom and Howard will take her feedback to the School Board for consideration. The contract will be contingent on warrant article approval.

It is anticipated that there will be questions about installing panels on the Rye Junior High School as it is in the Historic District. Town buildings are not subject to the same restrictions as residential properties are. The panels that may be visible will be solid black panels which will soften the appearance.

## **5) Demand Charges**

No updates this month.

## **6) Community Power**

The Energy Committee is corresponding with other towns via the Seacoast Energy Hub Google Group. The Seacoast Energy Hub Google Group was created last year as a forum to ask questions and share information about energy related issues. Community Power is an ideal topic for this group. The group provides a place to find previously shared information, offer news and distribute reference materials.

We are also following Community Power progress of the town of Harrisville. Their website is an excellent resource and clearly articulates what community power aggregation is and how it can benefit communities by reducing energy costs and increasing the use of renewable energy. <https://harrisvillenh.org/eac-community-power/>

The Exeter Energy Committee may have Andrea Hodson of Harrisville present to them and if so, we can listen in. Andrea presented recently at the Local Energy Solutions conference at the end of October.

## **7) Lighting Upgrade Update**

The library has signed the agreement. Equipment is on order and will be installed soon. The Town has also signed the agreement and is in process. Eversource pays half of the cost of the lighting upgrades and allows the balance to be paid in installments. This is an investment in technology that will save energy and reduce costs.

We also discussed outside lighting on private locations that is provided by Eversource. Presently LED lighting is not available from Eversource. Howard called the PUC for clarification. Eversource claims the NH tariffs do not allow them to offer for private or town/city locations.

## 8) New Business

- Carl discussed an article about Sprague Power's investment in Biofine. They are partnering to produce a **zero emission heating fuel from waste material**.

Biofine and Sprague work together to market next generation of biofuels

<https://www.spragueenergy.com/newsroom/press-release/biofine-partners-with-sprague-to-market-next-gener>

- Tom recommended a newly released PBS/Independent Lens documentary: **Jonathan Scott's Power Trip** <https://www.pbs.org/independentlens/films/jonathan-scotts-power-trip/>

PROPERTY BROTHERS co-host and home-renovation expert **Jonathan Scott** is on a mission to flip the switch on how Americans access power. On the surface, solar energy seems like a resource that is widely available, however as Scott begins his journey across the country, he quickly finds how little choice the public has in how they source their energy.

- Lisa mentioned that an article by Henry Herndon (CleanEnergy NH) clearly explained the different components of supply and delivery energy costs.

### **Breaking Down Electricity Cost Drivers in NH, Henry Herndon**

<https://harrisvillenh.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Electric-Cost-Explainer.pdf>

"New Hampshire has some of the highest electricity rates in the country!" We've all heard some version of this battle cry, and it is a true statement. New Hampshire is the sixth most expensive state for electricity, with average retail rates coming in at \$0.17 per kilowatt- hour (kWh)...

However, Granite Stater's are actually about average in terms of overall electricity cost. The average New Hampshire household spends \$120/month on their electric bills, while the national average is \$115/month.

This article breaks down and explains electricity cost drivers in New Hampshire. It is meant as an educational document so that as a state, we can make informed decisions towards better managing electric costs.

**Next virtual meeting is on Tuesday, January 5, 2021 from 3:00-4:30 PM.**

**Meeting adjourned at 4:16 PM**

## A Checklist To Ensure Meetings Are Compliant With The Right-to-Know Law During The State Of Emergency

As Co-Chair of the Energy Committee, I find that due to 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:

*a) Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means:*

We are utilizing Zoom for this electronic meeting.<sup>1</sup> All members of the Energy 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 meeting through dialing the following phone # 646-558-8656, with meeting ID # 869-6680-9930 and password 321456, or by participating via Zoom with meeting ID # 869-6680-9930 and password 321456.

*b) Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting:*

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 Town of Rye website at [www.town.rye.nh.us](http://www.town.rye.nh.us)

*c) Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access:*

If anybody has a problem, please call 603-964-5523 or email Janice Ireland at: [jireland2@ryenh.us](mailto:jireland2@ryenh.us)

*d) Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the 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**.

Let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. When each member states their presence, please also state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know law.

---

<sup>1</sup> Many public bodies are utilizing video teleconferencing technology, such as Zoom, to ensure the electronic meeting comply with the Right-to-Know law and any applicable due process requirements. In certain circumstances, a regular business meeting of a public body may be conducted utilizing audio-only technology. If you have any questions about the appropriateness of the technology utilized to conduct your meeting, please consult your agency counsel or the Attorney General's Office.