

Rye Energy Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 2, 2021
3:00-4:30 PM, Via Zoom

Meeting ID: 892 4198 3001 Passcode: 3245632

Call-in Number: 929436-2866

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89241983001?pwd=dnJQeE9rcXYzRnFwSDE1VDVNMUExZz09>

1) **Attestation and Roll Call:**

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

Nancy Siopes: Present and alone in room

2) **January Meeting Minutes Approval**

In the interest of our Guest's time, we did not approve the minutes from January.

3) **Conversation with NH State Representative Jaci Grote**

We had a productive and educational discussion with Representative Grote. We discussed upcoming energy related House bills. Representative Grote explained the process for advocating for or against a bill and said it is important to get as many municipalities involved as possible. It is important to relate advocacy to specific community issues or initiatives.

The bills the Energy Committee is following are:

- HB 213 - This bill would effectively *reduce* NH's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) from 25% in 2025 to just under 9% in 2035. This is significantly lower than all other New England states, particularly Maine, Vermont and Massachusetts. New Hampshire currently ranks 41st in the nation for solar use (this was a drop in national rank). Research shows that between 2014 and 2019, small scale solar saved NH residents and utilities \$83 million.
- HB 225 - This bill would reset net metering credit to wholesale prices. This is a significant reduction and will negatively impact small solar arrays the most. Small scale solar saves all NH residents money by reducing the amount of energy the utilities need to buy.

- HB 315 - This bill has the potential to derail RSA-53A, the “Community Power” law. Rye Energy Committee has been working with other communities to learn about Community Power and hopes to offer a warrant article in 2022 for residents to vote on. With Community Power, all Rye resident and business electric use would be aggregated to buy as one entity. Buying in bulk would help us to attain lower energy prices and choose more renewable options. Anyone could opt out of the plan and use the default (Eversource) supply. Eversource would remain the utility for the delivery of energy. However this bill, that was written by Eversource, would significantly reduce the benefits of RSA-53A..
- HB 549 - This bill would reduce the systems benefit charge and weaken the proposed Triennial Efficiency Plan. Residents, businesses and municipalities benefit from the NHSaves program to increase energy efficiency and in doing so, support local businesses. Lighting upgrades in Rye buildings will produce 20% energy savings.

Letters will be prepared regarding these House Bills. The letters will be presented to the Select Board and, with approval, be signed by the Energy Committee, Select Board, and Representative Grote.

It was noted that 66% of buildings in town use fuel oil, 24% use propane, 7% use electricity and 3% use something else.

The Energy Committee will get on the agenda for the Select Board meeting for 2/8 to present the letters and to talk more about Community Power.

4) School/Solar Update

The Solar PPA is still in process. Town/School deliberative meeting dates have been pushed out to June due to Covid. We are planning to have a webinar with the School Board, Revision Energy and the Energy Committee to present the project to the Rye community and answer any questions. Tentatively, it is scheduled for May 18 at 7 pm.

5) Community Power

- Should Rye join the Community Power Coalition of NH? We briefly discussed this. If we join, we would have access to great resources as we research and develop a plan for Rye. We will discuss this further at a later date as the proposed legislation (HB315) would significantly impact Community Power for the entire state.
- Letter Regarding HB315 - see above.

6) Letter to Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to support Triennial Efficiency Plan

This is letter will be very similar to above letter about HB549. The letter to the PUC will be in support of the Triennial Efficiency Plan.

7) Exeter Solar Project

This was tabled due to time.

8) Lighting Upgrade Update

The library equipment has been received and installation will be complete soon. There has been a delay in some of the equipment for the town garage prior to starting installation. We hope to renew the proposal Public Safety building.

9) New Business

We will submit an article for the Town newsletter by 2/16.

Next virtual meeting is on Tuesday, March 2, 2021 from 3:00-4:30 PM.

Meeting adjourned at 4:32 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.¹ 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

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

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.

¹ 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.