

Rye Energy Committee

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, December 7, 2021

3:00 – 4:30 PM

Town Hall

1. Attendance

Tom Pfau
Howard Kalet
Carl Nicolino
Lisa Sweet

2. Consensus on Agenda

Add approval of Public Hearing 1 Minutes.

3. November Meeting Minutes Approval

The minutes from the first public hearing on November 16, 2021 and the minutes from the Rye Energy Committee meeting on November 2, 2021 were approved by unanimous vote.

4. PSB Lighting Upgrade Update

The work to update the lighting in the Public Safety Building is ongoing. Some fixtures have been installed. There is work to be done in adjusting the switching and controls.

The Fire Chief and Police Chief report that the upstairs of the building is cold and space heaters are needed to prevent pipes from freezing. After a building audit in 2015, there was a recommendation for additional insulation. An RFP was prepared but not acted on. Howard and Tom will review the RFP and check with Dennis about process going forward.

5. TD Bank Town Hall Annex Update

6. Budget Review

\$1500 was requested for the next year.

Tom had signs to promote the public hearing made and submitted a receipt for \$76.91.

7. Community Power/CPCNH Update

7.1. Review Public Hearing 1 (11/16)

Several questions were raised at the first public hearing. One regarded the opt-out provision for Rye Community Power. [if program is approved, then at the time of launch, Rye ratepayers would be informed and automatically enrolled in Rye Community Power. If they want to stay with Eversource for energy supply they would have to “opt-out” of the program. This would be facilitated by customer service.] The opt-out provision generally results in about a 90% participation rate. The higher participation rate is necessary for the program to work as designed and result in lower pricing for everyone. Opt-in programs generally result in a participation rate of 10%.

Another concern raised was the risk of an energy supplier failing. If Rye Community Power were to contract energy procurement through Community Power Coalition of NH, energy would be procured using a professionally managed energy portfolio. This approach diversifies the risk and enables the lowest possible costs. These risks would be defined in a risk management agreement and in the cost sharing agreement. If Rye Community Power were to procure energy through a broker, the risks would be defined in the contract. Any agreements or contracts would be reviewed by the Rye legal department and considered by the Select Board to ensure that the agreements were in the best interest of the citizens of Rye. The program will not launch unless the rates are competitive and the risk is acceptable.

7.2. Plan for Public Hearing 2 (12/9)

We will follow the same plan as the we used for the first presentation. The slide deck has been modified to make the slides more clear.

7.3. Review and approve version 2 of Energy Aggregation Plan (EAP) and Warrant Article (WA) (please read ahead of meeting)

DRAFT

The draft of the Energy Aggregation plan was discussed in detail and edits were made.

7.4. Next steps with Select Board

We will hand the final version off to the Select Board on 12/10. We will ask to be on the agenda for their 12/13 meeting so that we can answer any questions they may have.

7.5. Communication with community

We published information in the town newsletter, an article has been written for the March Rye Magazine, the Rye Civic League has information on Rye Community Power and is directing people to learn more at the Rye Energy Committee webpage on the town website, and the Portsmouth Herald wrote an article about the upcoming public hearing.

7.6. Additional meetings?

We plan to have an informational meeting on January 20 in advance of the Deliberative Session on 2/5/22.

8. New Business

Clean Energy NH is hoping communities will help to advocate for energy efficiency programs (NHSaves) that are being reduced but eh Public Utilities Commission. These programs have saved Rye ratepayers money through the lighting upgrade program. This saves the town money by making our lighting more efficient. There may also be some rebates for energy efficient equipment for improvements to the TD Bank building. This saves money in the form of the rebate, but even more so in operating expenses going forward.

We will draft an email to Representative Jaci Grote explaining how the program has benefitted Rye citizens.

The next visioning session for the Master Plan will be on January 12, 2023.

9. Adjourned at 4:55

Next meetings January 4, 2022 and February 1, 2022.