

# **Rye Energy Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday, October 3, 2023**

**3:00 PM**

**Rye Public Library**

## **1. Attendance**

Carl Nicolino, Tom Pfau, Howard Kalet, Lisa Sweet

## **2. September meeting minutes**

Approved unanimously

## **3. Community Power update**

We will update the Select Board at October 23 meeting. Lisa will send information for the packet to Matt Scruton and will include rates and contact information to reiterate the information people may want.

Howard is on the Regulatory and Legislative Affairs Committee for Community Power Coalition (CPCNH) and reports that there is progress in being able to serve net metering customers, but it will take time to implement. The issue is that the utilities need to provide the data on both electricity purchases from the grid and sales to the grid to other suppliers like CPCNH and brokers before they can be properly credited. However, if you installed solar *before 2017* and you use more kWh than you generate, you may be able to enroll in Rye Community Power. Customers can call 1-866-603-POWR (7697). The Energy Committee will work with CPCNH to improve messaging.

## **4. School solar update**

The school contract with the broker expires in 2024, not 2023 as previously thought. The rate for the existing contract is better than Rye Community Power, so schools should stay with that contract.

Revision prepared an updated proposal for both a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) and a turnkey (town finances and builds) for the Rye Elementary School. The PPA proposal was already approved at Town Meeting while the turnkey would require waiting for another Town Meeting, and getting financing in place. Rob did analysis of both options to evaluate the best recommendation. The Rye Energy Committee discussed and recommend that the School Board proceed with the PPA proposal as this is the most cost effective option that is already approved by voters. This will facilitate quicker installation so that Rye can realize the savings sooner.

***The Energy Committee voted unanimously to recommend the School Board approve the PPA proposal for solar on the Rye Elementary School.***

The School Board should plan for the buyout of the Junior High School PPA array in 5-6 years based on the estimated buyout cost in the PPA.

## **5. Breakfast Hill solar project update**

The owners of the land on Breakfast Hill Road will likely want to sell for more of a market price than previously anticipated. The Town is not likely to be interested.

## **6. Housing survey, building code**

Tom is actively working to make sure the new Master Plan addresses the environmental impact of building codes. Building codes are updated every 3 years. The updated building codes require more energy efficiency measures that will result in less waste and more long term savings. The Rye Energy Committee would like the Master Plan to include that the Town of Rye will keep up with the building code updates to minimize the environmental impact of construction and to save home and business owners money over the long term.

Enforcing the building codes requires staff. If we use the Energy Star certification, the utility (Eversource) will support the enforcement of the building codes.

Also when planning a building project, accessing NHSaves can help to improve efficiency and take some of the work off the local inspector.

We will discuss further whether to place a warrant article on the ballot for this.

## **7. Offshore Wind update**

Mark Sanborn, Tom Sherman and Richie White met with the town to discuss offshore wind. Mark Sanborn made a presentation to the group, bringing them up to date on the topic.

New Hampshire wants to bring jobs and chips to the state through grid connections and ship arrivals. Carl explains that experimental wind turbines will be installed at the end of a sea lane in Portland, Maine, with the goal of testing their performance in storms.

Carl and Lisa discuss potential fishing areas in New England, including Stellwagen Basin and caches.

New Hampshire aims to expand port operations to accommodate larger ships, while Massachusetts and Maine prioritize renewable energy goals. Portsmouth, NH's waterfront expansion may limit ship sizes due to narrow passage. Seabrook may be a good place to bring offshore wind power to the grid as there were plans for 2 nuclear reactors, but only one was built so there is existing infrastructure to connect to the grid.

## **8. New Business**

Tom and Howard discuss the Clean Energy Conference on November 2.

***The Rye Energy Committee voted unanimously that any energy committee member who wants to purchase a ticket to attend the conference (beyond the 2 free tickets that we already receive) can be reimbursed by money in the Rye Energy Committee budget.***

## **9. Adjourn at 4:45 pm**