

Minutes of Monthly Meeting
Sustainable Hanover - Energy Initiative
Tuesday, July 11, 2023
In Town Hall and Via Zoom

Participating: Yolanda Baumgartner, Barb Callaway Judi Colla, Andrew Hatch, Robin Kaiser, Peter Kulbacki, Tad Montgomery, Dennis Robison, Marjorie Rogalski, April Salas, Ben Steele

Announcements:

- Window Inserts. Yolanda reported that there is still some room left for people to order inserts (you must order in advance). This year's community build begins on Sept 28 at the Norwich Congregational Church. Hanover residents will not be the only ones benefiting -- other local communities are also participating.
- CENH/Irving Institute joint events. April reported that the Irving Institute at Dartmouth is working with Clean Energy NH (CENH) to sponsor some clean energy innovation projects in the state. An effort is being made to advocate for stronger collaboration with CENH and educational institutions throughout the state; Dartmouth is the inaugural institution. The goal is to support clean energy research and innovation.

In this connection, Andrew reported that \$400,000 has been dedicated to education in HB549. The Department of Energy has been allocated this money to see if NHSaves is working as it should be. The big state utilities pushed back on this bill.

- Retreat. Judi reported that a Sustainable Hanover retreat, including folks on the Energy Initiative, is being planned. Some discussion ensued regarding the timing and scope of the retreat. The September/October time frame was discussed as a possibility. This would be good timing vis-a-vis CPCNH, which will be in full swing. Discussions involving future projects for Hanover Community Power will be better informed after CPCNH has a few more months of activity.

Some ideas for discussion at the retreat included:

Collaborating with CPCNH
Heating/Transportation goals

Recycling
Sustainable Landscaping
Local energy issues
Developing a better interaction/cooperation with Dartmouth

Judi, Yolanda, Robin, and Chris Kennedy have volunteered to help organize.

Equity, Inclusion and Justice (EIJ)

Sarah was absent; nothing to report.

Hanover Community Power (HCP)

Pete Kulbacki reported that the new fall/winter rates have been released for HCP, and they are lower than Liberty and Eversource, as well as the NH Electric Coop. We are doing well on building reserves. The organization is running better with a new CEO on board, and volunteers are having to meet less often.

CPCNH has officially hired Henry Herndon, is hiring some consultants, and is drafting additional job descriptions.

12 communities launched with CPCNH in the first wave this spring/summer. The second wave of communities is set to launch next spring.

A remaining glitch is that new residents are automatically enrolled in Liberty's default supplier, not HCP. In addition, new residents cannot opt into HCP, because Liberty is not sharing the data. CPCNH is working to change this. There is ongoing discussion as to when Liberty will share the necessary data with CPCNH.

EV Charging

Pete reports that he has had no bandwidth to focus on this. Ben reports that Sherry Boschert called a group together to brainstorm something called "EV-Friendly Employers". The goal is to promote EVs through the workplace.

There was a suggestion that we could use the Sustainable Hanover website to post advice for employers who want to put in chargers for their employees and/or patrons. (Majorie commented that we shouldn't duplicate what's on other websites.) Ben suggested that we provide information on why it's important to have EV chargers at peoples' places of employment, as well as "how to" info. We could supply basic information and then refer people to other websites.

Denis commented that Kendal residents would welcome this. Tad recommended providing cost breakdowns for employers. Judi recommended that Ben draft something that would work with what is already on the website.

Ben also reminded everyone that Drive Electric week in NH is Sept 22 - Oct 1. There will be an EV expo in the Upper Valley (e-bikes, e-motorcycles, electric lawn equipment, etc.). Ben asked for thoughts from the Energy Committee regarding location. Someone mentioned that the Dothan Brook School on route 5 has been used in the past. Hanover will participate but not lead.

Utilities

Andrew Hatch reported on a NH DOE survey to capture attitudes and knowledge regarding energy efficiency. There is much skepticism regarding how the collected information will be used. This will be an independent study.

With regard to NHSaves, utilities will have to fit their programs into a fixed budget, rather than create aspirational programs. There has been a specific reference to the fact that incentives for lighting will not be part of the program, because they are federally mandated.

HB549 (referenced earlier) has been set into law.

E-bikes

Yolanda reported that the e-bike rental program was rained out on both Saturdays. By contrast, the demonstration day on the Dartmouth campus, which allowed people to “drop in”, was successful. A more community integrated program, as opposed to signing up ahead of time, might be a better way to go next time.

Next Meeting will be on Tues, Aug 8 from 1:30 to 3:00 pm. Judi will be on vacation. Yolanda will chair.