

## Town of Exeter NH Energy Committee

### MINUTES

March 12th; 3:30 PM

Wheelwright Room, Town Offices

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1. Call to Order – Present- Julie Gilman, Kristen Murphy, Amy Farnham, Abby Manning, Danica Caron, Mike Drunsic, at 3:31 PM
2. Public Comment; Introduction of Guests - Alec O’Meara, Director of External Affairs at Unitil, and Stephen Jones, resident Dave Sharples, Town Planner. Mr. O’Meara said he attend the legislative hearing on HB760 where Sinnott testified and wanted to offer Unitil’s perspective on the PUC’s intent in the proposed rule in question, which is to ensure the viability of the default service market.
3. Approval of Minutes - Minutes of February 12, 2025 meeting MOTION to approve. (*Attachment - Minutes*) Amy moved to approve minutes as presented, Stephanie seconded – *unanimous approval*
4. Committee Organization for 2025: Election of Committee officers for 2025: Chair-Amy Farnham, Vice Chair- Cliff Sinnott, Clerk- Mike Drunsic, effective April 25-Mar26. Stephanie moved to adopt this slate, Mike seconded. Unanimous approval.
5. WindowDressers Program – Exeter Build for 2025-26 - *Stephanie*
  - Summary of discussion for continuing program- Made a decision to continue with the program with 3 Energy committee members having roles in the Leadership Team and need to recruit for Outreach and Food Coordinator.
  - Fundraising for 2025-26 – Grow Grant (NEGEF) deadline March 18 – Cliff has started working on the grant and will have it completed for March 18. Stephanie will send him photos
  - Subcommittee creation or ad hoc committee
6. Energy Committee Calendar and Project Planning for 2025 – Preliminary discussion *Attachment: Draft Workplan and Calendar template*) – All Prioritized activities for the year.
7. EHS member liaison updates (Abigail and Danica).. First priority for High School is EV chargers and looking at getting a grant for that. Other priority is solar project for trimming trees etc. Amy has been trying to find out who at Unitil will do that. April is possible for speakers at the Environmental Club – They meet every Thursday at 2:30 -3:00 PM. Topic can be broad. For Environmental Science class unit is later in the year – Amy could come in to talk about solar. Mike can do Offshore Wind. Solar and heat pumps from Amy. Cliff- Community Power. Dave Sharples could talk about several different issues. Kristen could go out to vernal pools, the dam removal or do a bioblitz They will get back to Cliff about interest.
8. Local Project Updates. Dave Sharples provided the committee updates on several projects:
  - Landfill solar update– Dave Sharples– is 99.9% done. Once Unitil gets a required meter, that can be installed in about an hour. Estimated date for going live is October. Alec O’Meara will look into what is the status and talk to the Unitil contactor and let Dave know. The project relies on the Federal renewable energy 30% tax credit with direct pay for municipalities. The status of these credits under the Trump administration decisions is unknown at this time. The project is cash flow positive at year 11 with the ITC, but without it, we could lose up to the \$1.2 million. Either way, the project is completed and will be online this year.

- Fire Station update- Spoke to sustainability designs: VAB – 20 year life cycle. VRF systems are proprietary. Life span is a bit less (15 year life span). There is room on the roof for solar and also a carport design for solar on the roof. Has just finished schematic design. Then will do design development and then construction design. Sustainability committee is meeting with Dave to get updates.
  - The new Rec Building – has to have a gas furnace as supplemental to heat pumps for when the temperature gets too cold CDFA funding. All ready in a contract with design build. Construction is supposed to be completed in August and opened in September. Future solar installation is on Greg's radar to pursue.
9. EECBG project (Jack Frost) Update – *Kristen* - Had an initial program with representative from 9 ROC's- including all 5 from Exeter. Kristen heard from DOE fellow that the program funding is intact. Not ready to commit to personnel time until get some guarantee of funding. Could start with the initial effort from Unital's program. All the partners are interested in doing something. Can talk about possible WindowDressers program involvement.
10. Community Power Update - *Cliff*
- Testimony to House Science Technology and Energy Committee on HB760 – Energy Committee represented by Cliff gave testimony in support. (*Attachment*). Bill would prevent PUC from permitting utilities to spread its losses from their default energy service to community power customers. The bill was retained in Committee to see what PUC will do. Alec O'Meara provided his input from Unital's point of view, and stated that Unital did not take a position on the bill, but stated the PUC's intent in the rule is to ensure viability of the default service market.
  - Report to SelectBoard on CPCNH rate changes- (*Attachment*)
11. Planning for Joint Energy Committee/Sustainability Committee meeting.  
Kristen said the SAC was unable to meet in March where the joint meeting was to be discussed. She will speak with Chair Short to see if the joint April meeting should proceed
12. Other Business / Follow up/
- EV Charger CIP Project Update – Town Meeting results; funding status
  - SolSmart NH Project status; Kickoff meeting (on Zoom), 12 noon, March 27
  - Other
13. Next meeting agenda items
- WindowDressers Coordinator Team & Subcommittee formation
  - Joint EC/SC meeting
14. Adjourn. Meeting was adjourned at 4:50.