

Pelham Energy Committee Meeting  
September 06, 2018

Minutes:

Present: Stan Swiercz, Alisa Pearson, John Larsen

Notetaker: Alisa Pearson

**Minutes** of July 31, 2018 accepted as amended

**Members:** Energy Committee now at 5 after Caitlin and Peter removed by the Board of Selectmen. We need members who have time to perform tasks between meetings so that all members can contribute.

**Succession Planning:** Stan to step down as chair following the next Green Communities grant round Feb 2019. Members need to learn how to perform duties that he has been doing. This includes the Green Communities Annual report due in early Dec.

**Green Communities Grant (GCG) LED Relamp:** Walk-through on Friday, September 07. Contractor and installer inspecting buildings. Needs to be completed so that we will be eligible for the next grant round.

**Roof Structural Engineering:** Chris Vreeland did the second walkthrough on August 23. Now working on final report. This study is funded by the META grant and serves as matching funds for the MVP grant.

**Community Center HVAC Engineering:** R. W. Hall is proceeding with HVAC options study. This initial study will compare Variable Refrigerant Flow Air-Source Heat Pump with a Ground-Source Heat pump system. Once the best system is determined a second design study will provide the data needed to apply for a grant to install the system. This study is funded by the MVP grant.

**Elementary School Drawings:** We now have digital architectural drawings of the Elementary School. These have been uploaded to the Energy Committee Google Drive and the links shared with the Town Clerk, the Select Board Administrator, and the Amherst Pelham Regional Schools Facilities Director.

**Community Center Moisture:** Building Sciences Corporation (BSC) conducted a site visit and submitted a report identifying two issues related to the improved energy performance of the new roof. Because the building is better insulated, the cooling load is reduced, and the air conditioning system does not run enough to dehumidify the air. BSC recommends installing two dehumidifiers to solve the problem. R.W. Hall does not see this as a problem for the future HVAC system upgrade. The Superintendent is working on this project.

BSC also noted that the roof holds heat better in the winter making the attic hotter. In the near term, the unused duct between the attic and the basement should be sealed. The upgraded HVAC system will recirculate the heated attic air to provide occupant comfort.

**Community Center Sensors:** Tony has installed temperature and humidity sensors in the attic and basement. He has also received Select Board approval to use MVP grant money to arrange to install sensors on HVAC electrical loads so that we can learn more about how the systems are working.

**Elementary School Cooling:** Temperatures at the end and beginning of the school year are much hotter than the school building is designed for. This adds to the case to incorporate the school in the Resilient Campus with an upgraded HVAC system enabling it to serve as a heating/cooling center.

The Elementary School is not part of Pelham's Green Communities designation and is not eligible for GC grants. School upgrades might be funded through the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) program.

The Energy Committee decided to begin a dialogue with school staff and officials. **John Larsen** will contact Principal Lisa Desjarlais in response to her email about the heat and how to proceed to meet the school community's needs. John will apprise the Principal of the roof structure analysis begun during the summer break.

**Resilient Campus Consultant:** We have a conference call with MeisterGroup (MG) on 9/13 at 2 PM to evaluate their ability to help add depth and technical expertise to the Resilient Campus project. Topics to be discussed include:

- Which essential services can/should the town provide in the event of an emergency or prolonged power outage?
- How long should the town be able to provide these services?
- How much photo-voltaic and/or other power source will this require?
- How much electrical storage will be needed? What technologies should we consider?
- Which buildings should be included in the resilient campus.
- Will the design include a microgrid?
- How would EV charging stations work in this context?
- What is the estimated project cost?

John mentioned the possibility of using hydrogen fuel cells for longer term storage than available from batteries.

Funding sources for photovoltaics were discussed including Friends of Pelham Library funds, crowdsourcing, community solar, and soliciting donations.

**MVP Organization:** The Select Board decided that, now that we have the MVP grant, it needs oversight- The Select Board designated one group to oversee projects and is looking for someone to oversee the grant finances.

Monthly MVP Progress Reports submitted through the project oversight group.

**Floating Solar:** John Larsen says it works. There is a pilot in Plymouth, the Department of Environmental Protection has regulations in place, and the SMART program includes an incentive. Pelham does not own suitable water bodies, but the Amherst reservoirs or Quabbin are possibilities. A regional Community Choice Energy organization might be able to develop a project. Tony and John calculated that 6 acres is needed to power the Town. Initial results indicate that it improves reservoir water quality.

**SMART Program:** The SMART program is under review by the Department of Public Utilities. It is not clear when it will be approved and begin operations. There are a number of projects in the pipeline and once operations begin much of the allotted capacity will be spoken for, leaving less for smaller projects and reducing incentives will be available by the time Pelham is ready to install PV.

MA Clean Energy Center is offering Solarize Mass again. Pelham could participate but the Energy Committee does not have the resources.

**Community Choice Energy:** The inter-municipal Task Force met with three CCE consultants, Peregrine Energy Group, Joule Energy, and Local Power (Paul Fenn) discuss what to include in an RFP for a consultant to evaluate how to form a CCE. The Task Force has now drafted a statement of work for the RFP.

Task Force representatives met with DOER staff and MA CEC staff to explain the CCE Plus concept and how it is different from what other communities are doing and to request funding for a consultant to help us determine whether and/or how to go forward. DOER and MA CEC staff appeared very interested in our goals and plans and will look for possible funds.

Adjourn at 9:10 PM

Next meeting

Tues 9/25 at 7:30 PM