

Center Harbor Energy Committee Meeting Minutes – September 18th, 2023

Attendees: Carol Sullivan, Bernie Volz, Michael Rich and Selectmen Representative Richard Drenkhahn. Chris Williams was absent with notice.

Carol called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

On-Going Business

Review and approval of August minutes

Bernie moved to accept the minutes of the August meeting. Richard seconded. The minutes were accepted unanimously.

Potential Solar Project for behind Municipal Building

Proposals for the Solar Project behind the Municipal Building were received from two solar contractors. The majority of the remaining time was spent discussing the proposals. Sunergy Solution's proposal was for a much larger array (and hence significantly more expensive) than Barrington Power's. Bernie will contact Chris Sheldon from Sunergy to ask if he would like to send us a proposal that was more conforming to the requirements specified in the RFP. There were questions about both proposals. We decided that Bernie will contact Ted Vansant to ask for a Committee meeting with him to pose questions, followed by a visit to two previous solar sites that Barrington has completed - Holderness School in Fall of 2020 and Bethlehem Elementary School in Spring of 2023. If Sunergy responds with a new proposal, we may also schedule a meeting with Chris and a visit to two of their completed projects.

The committee discussed two potential rebates for our solar project. One is a rebate of up to 30% of the cost through the US Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). The amount of this rebate could amount to roughly \$100,000. The other would be a rebate through the New Hampshire Department of

Energy's Commercial & Industrial (C & I) Solar Incentive Program. Since the C & I Rebate would be limited to \$10,000, the total rebates from these two projects would be \$110,000. Since both of these sources are rebates, they would not be received by the town until after completion of the project. In order to pay for this project, a Warrant Article would need to be developed no later than December and presented at a likely public hearing and definitely at Town Meeting. A clear presentation with visuals will need to be made at the Town Meeting showing initial and ongoing costs, rebates and savings to the town over time through the use of solar. Carol will continue to look for other grants and rebates. Richard will look at the Energy Conservation and Trust Fund. One area of interest regarding this fund is whether it can be used to pay for any repairs that might be needed in the future to a finished solar array.

New Business

Chris Williams had contacted Carol before the meeting to say he was not able to attend this meeting. He will be resigning from the Committee due to health issues but would be willing to be consulted occasionally if there is a need for his expertise and input. Carol thanked him for his long service to the Committee and to the Town. We will issue a letter to more formally thank Chris for his many years of service to the Energy Committee - starting with professional advice dating back to 2007 and committee membership a few years later and extending to 2023.

Carol suggested that the Town of Center Harbor become a Municipal Member of the Plymouth Area Renewable Energy Initiative (PAREI) at a cost of \$75 annually. The Town is already a Municipal Member of Clean Energy NH. Both organizations provide very useful energy-related information and educational opportunities.. PAREI recently put in a great deal of time developing a grant that would have supported most of the costs of our solar project, along with solar projects of four other Central NH towns. Although we have never been a municipal member of PAREI, they have consistently treated our town like members. Bernie made a

motion to join by increasing our budget request by \$75. Richard seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Other Business

PAREI Update

PAREI informed us that their move to their new headquarters is imminent and that they are looking forward to having us visit.

CleanEnergyNH Updates

CleanEnergyNH's annual Local Energy Solutions will have their annual conference in Manchester soon. Carol will send an update.

DOE Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

Carol will continue forwarding information from the NH DOE to CHEC members.

Environment Energy and Climate Network

Carol did not report about activities of the NH Network at this meeting.

Richard moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 pm. Michael seconded. Meeting was adjourned at that time.

Respectfully submitted, Carol Sullivan