

# CORNISH ENERGY COMMITTEE MINUTES

MAY 9, 2022, 7 PM

Town Office, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor meeting room, in-person & via Zoom.

ATTENDING: Joanna Sharf, Nancy Wightman, Richard Thompson, Everett Cass, Fred Weld, Bill Cable. Via Zoom: Dan Poor, Zack Hallock, Richard Gendron, Colleen O'Neill, Cindy Heath.

1. APRIL 11, 2022 MINUTES: Minutes approved with a vote in the affirmative to approve.
2. SOLARIZE 2022 UPDATE: Joanna reported that among the four town, 20 households have signed contracts for solar installations. May 31 is the deadline in order to assure that they will be able to take advantage of the 26% tax rebate. Everett noted that homeowners should have energy and electrical audits before buying solar. The Energy Committee has offered several successful weatherize programs and solar installers check that homeowners are up to electrical code. Joanna encouraged members to tune into Vital Communities Virtual Event May 12 which will feature our Solarize Campaign.
3. CPCNH (Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire): This non-profit Coalition provides purchasing power for towns to lower electricity rates. The Select Board must sign a non-binding Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) in order to start the process for the Town to join. Everett said he is opposed to the town adopting Community Power Aggregation. Joanna had emailed Everett and Fred on April 14 with links to information explaining this concept, but Everett and Fred said they didn't remember what was in the email or the links. Joanna's email is attached to these Minutes. Joanna met with Select Board on April 25 about signing the JPA and other matters. See report in addendum to these Minutes.
4. RECYCLING CENTER SOLAR ARRAY UPDATE: David Lutz of Solaflect met with members of the committee on May 9 just before this meeting. He felt the site wasn't amenable for trackers, and recommended instead a rooftop solar array (which Solaflect doesn't do). He estimated that the roof could hold 20kw of solar panels. He suggested that a group of us in the town could install it on our own (DIY). He thought getting Liberty to install a utility pole to bring grid power to the site would be affordable if it was for single phase power instead of 3-phase. **Richard Thompson** will call Liberty Utilities about pole costs. A previous site visit from SameSun estimated 25kw of solar on the roof and 34kw on the ground. **Richard** will get in touch with Norwich Technologies to pursue community solar. Summaries from Scott Stahler of Same Sun and David Lutz of Solaflect are attached to these Minutes in the addendum.  
FIRE STATION SOLAR ARRAY UPDATE: A tracker would be possible north of the Fire Station but boundary needs to be determined. Roof has good solar orientation.  
LIBRARY SOLAR ARRAY: This is the first site visit for the Library. It would not work for a tracker as the .09 acre addition is not large enough to install trackers given the boundary setback requirements.
5. HEAT PUMP ROUNDTABLE UPDATE: **Nancy** will remind installers of the June 23 Event and confirm that they are still on board. She will contact the Plainfield Committee on possible use of gym in case of larger unexpected interest and attendance.
6. E-BIKE AUGUST EVENT: Bill reported that 4 Plainfield & Cornish residents have offered to host a bike. They are: Jen Lenz, Meriden (DIY Bianchi Ebike); Ralph Patalano, Plainfield (Turbo Como Ebike); Nick Cohen, Stage Road (RadWagon Ebike); and Ruth Bassette, Cornish Flat (RadMini Folding Ebike).
7. POWERX SENSOR. Bill reported that he heard from PowerX. He signed a contract for himself and thinks he will have it within a couple of weeks. It will be tested in Dan Poor's home to compare it with Dan's existing Sense energy monitoring system.. After evaluating the system it will be placed in one of Cornish's municipal buildings.
8. WEATHERIZE CAMPAIGN –State and Federal incentives: Richard reported that there is \$3.16 billion in fed funds for the country. What NH's portion will be is unknown. Nancy reported that there are good incentives for weatherizing homes through NHSAVES.com. The program will offer

to pay 75% of the cost, up to \$6000, for homes that qualify -- based on how leaky the home is, not on income. Audits are \$100 for qualifying homes, to be paid on day of audit. Funding comes from the System Benefits Charge on our utility bills and from RGGI. 20% of those funds is allocated for low income households. To qualify for low income assistance in our area, owners must contact Southwestern Community Service, Main St. in Claremont (603-542-9528).

Nancy emailed NHSaves representatives from Liberty Utilities, Eversource and NHEC reps. who all reported basically the same thing. They are overbooked this year playing catchup on commitments from 2020 which were placed on hold; they think getting in early next year is best in order to have funding access; they continue to have a similar group of certified contractors to do the work but individuals cannot choose the contractor for the job – it is chosen for them by the utilities. As for appliances, people need to check the website for updates. Rebates for LEDs have been discontinued.

The Energy Committee discussed planning a Weatherize Launch event for November or December, so that people can get an early start in 2023 to sign up for the NHSaves program.

9. DR. YE TAO'S MIRROR TECHNOLOGY UPDATE: Joanna emailed Dr. Ye Tao to invite him to speak in our area, but has not received a response yet. From a recent webinar presented by Dr. Tao and his colleagues, she learned about a Plymouth State University professor, Lisa Doner, who might be a better person than Dr. Tao to speak to us, since Dr. Tao is very technical. Prof. Doner said in the webinar that they are developing DIY mirror kits for school children.
10. BYLAWS: When Joanna met with the Select Board on April 25, they agreed that the name of the Energy Committee does not have to include "and Electric Aggregation Committee" as that is a limited purpose. They agreed that the Electric Aggregation Committee could be made a sub-committee. They also agreed that their Directives on handling projects could be an addendum to the Bylaws and didn't have to be contained in the body of the Bylaws. Joanna's notes on the April 25 meeting with the Select Board are attached as an Addendum to these Minutes.

Joanna had submitted suggested revisions to the draft of the Bylaws presented by Dan Poor. The Committee discussed changes to Article I & II. Article I, Section 4, paragraph B and C were eliminated, E moved to last, and the phrase "annual review of Bylaws" in paragraph I was deleted. Joanna made a motion to adjust, Nancy seconded, 3 in favor, Fred abstained and Everett opposed. Article II, Section 1. Membership: remove "Select Board member be appointed to the Committee" and take out "a letter of interest" as a qualification of a new member. In Section 4, the language was changed to allow alternates to speak at public hearings. In Section 7, language was added to require members to share equally in the tasks of the Committee. Section 8, Orientation and Training, was eliminated. A discussion ensued on sharing in the tasks of the Committee. Joanna made the motion, Fred seconded and all in favor. Section 7, Duties.

11. NEXT MEETING, JUNE 13, 2022, 7-8:30

#### ADDENDUM:

##### Joanna's email to Everett and Fred dated April 14, 2022:

Hi Everett and Fred,

I provide below a couple links to resources that explain what Community Power Aggregation is.

Just to follow up on our discussion at Monday's meeting -- there are currently 14 NH towns that have joined the coalition, including Lebanon, Hanover, Nashua and the entire county of Cheshire. These towns have significant resources and professional people who have studied this program and found it beneficial to their

municipalities. I can assure you that their residents would not have voted for joining the program if it meant paying for projects from other towns.

I believe it is well worth our time to fully explore this program and see how it can benefit Cornish. The fact that all these other towns see this as a very positive program is a very strong reason for Cornish to seriously consider it.

Here is an explanatory article about CPA:

<https://www.cpcnh.org/restructuring-community-power-and-c>

This is an excellent video that explains very clearly how Community Power Aggregation works -- if you watch just 11 minutes of it, you'll get a good idea of what it all means -- start at 4:45 minutes & watch until 15:20 minutes.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4yTgzxUAQi8>

I'd be happy to answer any questions you might have, and welcome your comments.

Sincerely,  
Joanna

### Joanna's Report on Meeting with the Select Board on April 25, 2022:

I met with the Selectboard yesterday, Monday, April 25. The following is what we discussed:

1. Name of Committee: They are fine with making the Electric Aggregation Committee a subcommittee, so that the name of our Committee can simply be Energy Committee.
2. Bylaws: They are ok with making their Directives an addendum to the Bylaws, so that we do not need to include them in the body of the Bylaws.
3. Community Power Aggregation: They have not yet contacted the Plainfield Selectboard member to get more information about signing the Joint Powers Agreement (JPA). I asked them if they thought they would get to it in the next month, and they thought they might. I explained that we need them to sign the JPA before we can move forward with the next steps (gathering data on number of customers, drafting aggregation plan, holding public hearings).
4. E-bikes: They asked if we are protected against liability claims. I said I thought we had everyone sign a waiver, but Bill, could you please confirm this?

### Bill Cable's notes on e-bikes liability insurance:

Vital Communities purchases a specific insurance policy just to cover the program and the waiver is part of the process. The cost of the insurance is one of the main budget items of the program. There are 9 other towns that are part of the program and are fine with the way the insurance is set up. The Selectboard can contact our program coordinator, Anna Guenther ([anna@vitalcommunities.org](mailto:anna@vitalcommunities.org)), if they have any questions. A copy of the insurance policy and waiver were forwarded by email to the Select Board by Joanna on April 29.