

CORNISH & PLAINFIELD ENERGY COMMITTEE MEETING
December 12, 2022, 7 to 8:30 pm
Cornish Town Offices

PRESENT: in person: Joanna Sharf, Richard Thompson, Nancy Wightman, Fred Weld, Everett Cass. Dick Gendron, Doug Cohan, Bob Jordan. Via Zoom: Bill Cable, Evan Oxenham, Steve Ladd, Ron Eberhardt

APPROVAL OF NOV. 14 MINUTES: Richard moved, Fred seconded, all approved.

WEATHERIZE 2023: Gordon Tuttle, NHSaves representative for Eversource, stated that for qualifying homes, energy audits will cost just \$100, and 75% of weatherizing cost will be covered up to \$6,000. If a contract is signed, the audit is deducted. If not with NHSaves, the audit can cost up to \$600. He also stated that homeowner can get a free Visual Audit. This would involve a contractor visually inspecting a home, without the use of infra-red cameras or a blower door, and advising what can be done to tighten the house. CLEAResults is the only contractor who does visual audits.

Bob Jordan spoke of his experience with weatherization and praised the process and results. He will speak of his experiences for the Launch.

The Launch will be January 19, 6:30 to 8pm on Zoom. Evan will be host. Pre-registration will be required.

Publicity: Steve will create a draft blurb and Evan will design the poster. Steve will send out notices to the Upper Valley listserv and to his Energy email list. Evan will put a notice in the Valley News calendar, and post on Facebook & Next Door. Joanna will send blurb to Connect Cornish, Vital Communities climate action listserv and NH Environmental listserv. Steve will attempt to contact a Valley News reporter to see if we can get an article written about this. Nancy will contact and ask Liberty and NHEC to be a part of the Q&A.

COMMUNITY POWER AGGREGATION: Selectboard has decided not to sign on to the JPA. Joanna drafted a reply and asked for the Committee's approval to send it to the Selectboard. Everett requested that the vote tally be noted when the letter is sent to the Selectboard. Joanna made a motion to send the letter to the Selectboard, including the final vote tally. Richard seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 3-2. A copy of the letter is attached to these minutes.

EV CHARGER AT THE SCHOOL: Richard reported that we can use the meter and outlets installed in the school parking lot by the Fair Assoc. NHEC has a program that waives the monthly meter base charge for EV chargers, so there would only be the cost of the electricity used by the EV charger. The Selectboard is OK with the idea. The Cornish Energy Committee owns a charger that can be plugged in. The charger would only be for use by school staff. Richard will discuss this further with the Fair Directors and, at the suggestion of Doug Cohan, will research "demand charges" to make sure the amount of electricity used to charge EV's will not trigger demand charges which can be very costly. The plan would be that the Energy Committee would pay the electricity bills as long as they weren't too high; in future we might need to install a charger that can take credit cards.

WINDOW DRESSERS: Tabled till next meeting.

BUDGET: Joanna proposed that the Committee request a 2023 operating budget of \$1200. This would include \$150 for the E Bike program, \$150 for a Zoom subscription, \$600 for publicity, and \$300 for speaker fees & workshops. Joanna moved, Richard seconded, and the Committee approved the budget by a vote of 4-1. Richard as Treasurer will submit it to Selectboard. A copy of the budget is attached to these minutes.

WEBSITE: The Town website is undergoing a major overhaul. All the committee pages will be more consistent in format. From now on, all submissions must be sent to the website administrator, which will be Heidi Jaarsma. Jenny Lipfert is doing all the technical work for the overhaul. Dan Poor is working on providing all the Did You Know articles so that they can be available on the new website.

BYLAWS: The committee discussed Joanna's proposed changes to Article VII: Finance, paragraph 4: "The Town Treasurer shall have custody of the operating expense funds appropriated at the annual town meeting. The Committee shall submit requests to the **Town** Treasurer for ~~approval to pay out~~ **payment of moneys from** those funds. ([RSA 41:29](#))."

The Committee also discussed Joanna's proposal to add a new paragraph 7: "**The officers of the Committee have the authority to spend operating expense funds and funds from donations and grants with a majority vote of the Committee, as long as the funds expended comply with the rules and guidelines of the operating expenses, donations and grants.**"

Joanna moved, and Nancy seconded. The changes were approved unanimously.

Joanna will submit the completed bylaws to Selectboard. At next month's meeting, the Committee will review the Selectboard's directives on how to handle proposals for large renewable energy installations, which is currently included as an Addendum to the Bylaws.

OTHER: Reminder about the FUSES Webinar about Solar installations from beginning to decommissioning. Nancy will attend and send a report to all committee members.

NEXT MEETING: January 9, 7 pm at Town Offices and via Zoom.

Letter to Selectboard regarding CPA decision:

December 12, 2022

By a vote of 3-2, the Cornish Energy Committee approved the below letter to the Cornish Selectboard.

Dear Cornish Selectboard,

Thank you for your detailed explanation of your decision not to pursue Community Power Aggregation (CPA).

While we disagree with your decision, especially in light of the fact that NH electric rates have substantially increased, and will most probably become more volatile and unstable as extreme weather conditions worsen, we truly appreciate all the time you dedicated to considering this proposal, and your thoughtful and thorough listing of the reasons behind your decision.

We understand that your main concern is to protect the best interests of Cornish residents, and that you perceive the CPA plan to contain unknown risks.

We hope in the not so distant future, you will come to recognize that joining a coalition of NH towns to become purchasers of electricity for their communities will provide residents with greater stability in electric rates and greater resilience in the face of climate-driven crises.

The member towns of CPCNH have all written Aggregation Plans that stipulate no electric rates will exceed the utility rates. Any individual resident can opt out of the town plan. Power Purchase Agreements (PPA's) for large solar installations work really well, with no up-front cost, to save some money on monthly payments and then to enable purchase of the array at a much reduced rate with an astonishingly rapid return on investment. Even if a town had to complete payment on its own, large solar arrays bring long lasting benefits that outweigh short term debt. CPCNH members can incentivize energy efficiency and battery backup in ways that will benefit the town consistently.

In other words, utility rate hikes, dependence on unreliable fossil fuel supplies, and instability of the grid due to climate-driven crises, in our view pose greater risks to residents.

Finally, we see CPA as one of the best ways to achieve our town's commitment to transition to 100% renewably-powered electricity by 2030. Each year that we delay implementing steps toward that goal, solutions will become more costly.

We look forward to working with you and future Selectboards to demonstrate how much of a positive benefit CPA can provide to our town.

Again, thank you very much for all the time and consideration you have given to this proposal.

Sincerely,

The Cornish Energy Committee

Proposed 2023 Budget:

E-bike participation fee	\$150.00
Zoom subscription necessary for events & meetings	\$150.00
Publicity (flyers, direct mail, transaction ads, etc.)	\$600.00
Speaker and instructor fees, workshop & educational materials	\$300.00
Total:	<u>\$1,200.00</u>

Future Projects:

- School science challenges – build a cooling mirror based on Dr. Ye Tao’s design
- Build mini solar & battery kits
- Fund energy audits for those who can’t afford them
- PowerX energy monitoring devices - \$240 per year for 2 devices