

**Watertown Environment and Energy Efficiency Committee
Meeting Minutes June 19, 2017**

OPENING:

The June 19, 2017 meeting of *Watertown's Environment and Energy Efficiency Committee* (WE3C) was opened by Chair Meredith Fields at 7:05pm in Town Hall's third floor conference room.

ATTENDANCE:

Committee Members & Guests (in alphabetical order)
Andrew Airasian
Emma Clement
Meredith Fields - Chair
Brian Hebeisen
Lauri Murphy
Pat Rathbone
Matt Riegert
Varun Saluja
Helen Soussou
Watertown Staff Liaison
Edward Lewis – Energy Manager
Guest Speakers

AGENDA:

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Update from Community Choice Aggregation Working Group
3. Follow-up on potential working groups discussed at 5/15 meeting:
 - Renewable energy resources inventory
 - Transportation
 - Legislative initiatives/processes
 - Gas leaks
 - Additional Committee suggested projects / focus areas including public education, design standards/microclimate mitigation, infrastructure hardening for climate change, recycling/refuse/composting, outreach to schools
4. Energy Manager Report
5. New Business

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1) Welcome and introductions:

In attendance were several long term WE3C members, along with residents who have expressed an interest in the Committee and/or Sustainability issues.

2) Update from Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) Working Group:

At the May 15th meeting the Committee unanimously voted to support and recommend Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) for the Town and a CCA working group was formed.

The working group reported they had started a spreadsheet to capture information from other MA Towns and Cities who have embarked on a Community Choice Aggregation program. Information to be collected includes who the Municipality used as an aggregation consultant, who the chosen electricity supplier was along with details on the plans offered by each Town. The plan details include the pricing, the duration and what percentages, and types, of Green (renewable generation) power are included in the default and optional plans under the aggregation. This information will allow the WE3C to evaluate multiple successful CCA programs, to understand best practices and to help in determining goals and objectives of the Watertown program.

The comprehensive CCA strategy will evolve over time, but one main goal will be to increase the amount of renewable power in Watertown's electrical supply. Inclusion of more green power will decrease Watertown's carbon footprint.

One method to do this is to increase the amount of Class 1 MA RECs (these are from local renewable generators and they help drive the implementation of new renewable generation in our area). Other options include MA SREC's (these are from solar power only) along with widely available REC's (Renewable Energy Credits) from renewable generation facilities from anywhere in the country.

One of the initial steps in the Aggregation process is to request authorization from Town Council to go forward with offering an aggregated electrical supply to the Town residents.

It was noted that Somerville has recently enacted a CCA program that appears well thought out and constructed. The following link is to an informative article from the Somerville Times describing this program.

<http://www.thesomervilletimes.com/archives/76204>

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ACTIONS:

- Ed L. - draft a CCA overview presentation for Town Management.
- CCA Working Group – continue to collect data on recent aggregations to develop discussion points for the WE3C to determine goals and objectives of the program, should we given authorization to proceed.
- Brian H. – attend a meeting of Watertown’s Climate Change Group to provide an overview of CCA and to answer questions

3) Follow-up on potential working groups discussed at 5/15 meeting:

Public education: Include educational efforts regarding environment and energy efficiency through public events and presentations, schools, Senior Center, etc., as well as getting word out about what the town has accomplished in energy efficiency savings (\$\$\$) and reduction of CO2 emissions (14% since 2010 in town buildings and operations, more goals to meet ahead). Encourage information sharing regarding private initiatives such as Neighborhood Solar.

It was discussed that many of the Town’s successful efforts in sustainability (i.e. Green Community status, solar arrays, highly efficient police station, design standards and guidelines, etc.) may not be widely known.

Ideas to further disseminate information to residents were discussed. Outreach such as the WE3C / Energy Manager Booth at Faire on the Square are considered effective, the team will keep an eye out for other opportunities.

The Committee drafting a Watertown Tab / Wicked Local article on this subject was discussed, and / or perhaps include with upcoming articles on CCA.

Additionally, other potential public programs including holding a public education meeting on managing Watertown's microclimate (strategies to reduce heat-island effects, support local ecology in the face of climate change, etc.) was discussed.

ACTION:

- Ed L. to investigate an Energy / Sustainability outreach booth at the Farmer’s Market.

Town design standards and guidelines / Microclimate mitigation: Monitor how implementation is going, suggest and advocate for improvements re buildings and green space design regarding environmental considerations and energy efficiency. Make recommendations for decreasing city heat-island effects through shade trees, white or light-colored roofs and green roofs, light-color parking lots, attention to park and garden design, tree selection for withstanding climate change.

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It was noted the Town has done significant work on Sustainable Design thru the Design Standards and Guidelines, in addition to utilizing the Stretch Energy Code required under our Green Communities designation. It was also noted that additional outreach efforts are required on Design Standards & Guidelines.

Renewable energy resources: *Inventory local and regional resources, practicalities in developing anaerobic digester capacity, geothermal, large-scale regional solar (Community Shared Solar) and wind installations.*

Andrew A. and Varun S. have expressed interest in working on this topic, Andy volunteered to lead the working group.

Infrastructure hardening: *Make recommendations for anticipation/management of increased intensity of storms, droughts, heat waves, cold snaps, flooding, runoff and erosion, eventual sea level rise impact moving inland from Boston. Explore local weather-related disaster preparation, public buildings as refuges.*

It was suggested that to better understand this topic some guidance from professionals in various fields would be very beneficial.

Transportation: *Co-ordinate with current traffic planning to decrease emissions including advocate for increased public transportation accessibility and efficiency (including local public transportation using electric vans), increased safety and accessibility of bike routes/paths, increased use of roundabouts for increased efficiency of traffic flow, encourage use of electric vehicles, increase availability of charging stations.*

At the last meeting Jeanne Trubek indicated she has a strong interest in working on the transportation area. Andy A. & Varun S. have interest in this also, they will discuss forming a working group with Jeanne.

Recycling, refuse, composting: *Inventory current status and efforts, consider options to use yard waste and food waste for energy generation, compost availability for parks and gardens to decrease use of fertilizer.*

Helen S. has interest in forming a working group to investigate this – to be discussed at our next meeting.

Legislative initiatives/processes: *Watch legislative news, advocate for environmental and energy efficiency initiatives that impact Watertown and surround.*

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Lauri M. and Emma C. are enthusiastic about working on legislative issues. It was suggested that having a 'jump-up' brief overview of relevant sustainability bills would be very helpful to keep the committee informed and effective.

Outreach to schools: Educational opportunities, ideas for involving schools and kids in projects, encouraging environmental impact awareness in school budgeting and choices (e.g. Styrofoam lunch trays), energy efficiency of current and future school facilities.

Could be a target for compostable evaluation.

Other suggestions:

Natural Gas leaks – the committee discussed addressing natural gas leaks potentially from both a legislative and a town centric focus. Andrew A. and Jeanne T. have interest in this area.

4) Energy Manager Report:

- I) Watertown's Performance Contract goes into the Measurement & Verification phase starting July 1st. This involves building by building data analysis to confirm Watertown is actually getting the energy and maintenance savings that are guaranteed in the contract. If guaranteed savings not met Johnson Controls must make up the difference.
- II) Lighting Audits are being conducted at the John A. Ryan Arena, the Commander's Mansion & the Watertown Free Public Library – determining project feasibility to improve lighting and reduce energy and maintenance costs.
- III) Bring your own bag ordinance
 - Starts July 1st – no more single use plastic shopping bags
 - Recycled paper bags ok – must be 100% recyclable and contain 40% post-consumer recycled content
 - Plastic re-usable bags can be provided free or sold, however they must have handles and be a minimum of 4 mm thick

For more information on the Bring you own bag ordinance:

<http://www.ci.watertown.ma.us/DocumentCenter/View/22350>

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IV) Farmer's Market - Thursday's 2:00pm – 6:00pm by Athena Health
Fresh local produce & products

For more information on the Farmer's Market:

<http://watertownmarket.com/>

5) New Business:

Approval of Meeting Minutes

- Minutes from the May 15th, 2017 WE3C meeting were approved.

6) Scheduled WE3C Meetings:

Unless otherwise noted meetings are held 7:00PM the third Monday of the month in the Town Hall 3rd floor conference room.

July 24th – 7:00PM

September 18th – 7:00PM

October 16th – 7:00PM

The public is welcome at all meetings.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:20pm.

Minutes submitted by: Edward Lewis, June 29, 2017