

Minutes: Town of Watertown Environment & Energy Efficiency Committee
(WE3C),
June 17, 2019, 7 p.m., 3rd Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall

Minutes

The meeting was opened at 7:00 p.m., chaired by Meredith Fields. Introductions were made. Attending members and citizens: Ed Lewis (Town Energy Manager), Andrew Airasian, Lissa Gifford, Richard Kalish, Helen Soussou, Brian Hebeisen, Marina Hebeisen, Tony Palomba, Deborah Peterson, Jacqui Gross, Stephen Steadman, Kenji Takahashi, and Jeanne Trubek.

1. The committee approved the meeting minutes from May.

2. Announcements

- i. The Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) for electricity went through. Ed will report on this in more detail in Energy Manager report.
- ii. Watertown received a Municipal Vulnerability Planning (MVP) grant of \$73,000 for climate change preparedness. More detail in Energy Manager report.
- iii. Sean O'Hern has resigned from the school building committee for personal reasons. He plans not to renew his membership on this committee when his term expires in the fall.
- iv. The DOER (Dept of Energy Resources) is planning to roll back rules on Biomass in the Renewable Portfolio Standard to allow for wood- and trash-burning power plants. The public comment period is extended to July 26. Brian and Meredith will write a draft of a letter to send to the DOER and we will discuss it next meeting.
- v. The Economic Development and Planning Committee meeting Tues. 6/18, 6 p.m. in the Lower Hearing Room, to hear a report from the TMA (Transportation Management Assoc.) on progress on shuttles.
- vi. School Building Committee will meet Wed. 6/19, 6 p.m. in Council Chamber and will consider Sustainability Subcommittee recommendations.
- vii. MCAN (Mass. Climate Action Network) is offering a webinar on net zero buildings on 6/19, 7-8 p.m.

3. Energy Manager's Report

- i. Watertown Electricity Choice, the town CCA (Community Choice Aggregation), has been approved. The next step is to send an opt-up/opt-out letter to every residential, commercial, and industrial account. The letter has to be approved by the town manager and DPU (Dept of Public Utilities). Next is a press release and the kick-off. Approximate dates: letter goes out July 5, response required by August 8. We will have informational meetings with the consultants there to answer questions. There will be a public meeting at the library on July 27 from 12-2, and a meeting in August at the Senior Center. We will have an informational booth at the Farmers' Market on Wednesday, July 24 from 2:30-6:00. The program starts with the first billing cycle after Sept. 1. Information is currently available on the Masspowerchoice website.
- ii. The Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness grant will permit the town to hire a consultant. This study requires a lot of participation from stakeholders. There will be two 4-hour listening sessions to determine vulnerabilities. The report will become the part of the Climate and Energy Master plan. Town Transportation Planner Laura Weiner is overseeing this project, Ed will be contributing. Most of the study will be completed by next spring; the project will be completed a year from its onset.

4. Working Group updates

- i. Transportation: Jeanne and Lissa gave a report on the Georgetown Climate Center Technical Workshop they attended on April 30. It was very technical. The workshop gave little attention to public transportation and equity. It mainly focused on private automobiles and suburban transportation which was a disappointment. They also encouraged people to attend the Economic Development and Planning meeting 6/18 where the update on the TMA (Transportation Management Assoc.) would be presented.
- ii. Composting: Councilor Tony Palomba discussed what he and Councilor Caroline Bays are considering. They are thinking about holding a public forum on composting in the fall and would like to partner with us and

WFCC (Watertown Faces Climate Change) on this. The Composting working group will follow up.

iii. PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy): Ed reported PACE has finally gotten funded. He spoke with the town manager about the possibility of Watertown adopting the program and will meet with the treasurer and assessor. He suggested that Jeanne and Carolyn Day also talk with them.

iv. School Building Committee: The sustainability subcommittee of the School Building Committee will soon make a statement on sustainability goals. People were urged to attend the next School Building Committee meeting on Wednesday, June 19, where sustainability goals would be discussed.

v. Review/update of current working-group list will continue at next meeting.

Next meeting July 15.

8:30 Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
J. Trubek