

Minutes: Public Meeting on behalf of Town of Watertown Environment & Energy
Efficiency Committee,
June 18, 2018, 7 p.m. Town Hall Lower Hearing Room

Minutes

The meeting was opened by Meredith Fields at 7:03 p.m. Introductions were made. Attending members and citizens: Ed Lewis (Town Energy Manager), Emma Clement, Meredith Fields, Pat Rathbone, Alex Gentile, Marie Gentile, Diana Borlow, Ron Webber, Lauri Murphy, Charlie Bering, Jeanne Trubek, Helen Soussou, Hubert Ho, and Andrew Airasian. Peregrine Power was represented by Paul Gromer and Marlana Patton.

7:03 Introductory comment by Meredith Fields, describing Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) planning process.

7:06 Remarks by Ed Lewis to introduce Peregrine representatives and describe regulatory oversight of the CCA process.

7:10 Paul Gromer introduced Marlana Patton, who presented information on the Watertown Electricity Choice (WEC) program.

7:40 Question and Answer period

Ed commented on similar commercial programs, and the differences/distinctions between them and WEC. Residents can expect these vendors to increase marketing efforts in Watertown concurrent with WEC initiation. Also commented that the Town had an option to collect additional funds through this program to support other initiatives, but opted not to. The advantage to this program is that it prioritizes New England renewables and encourages development of local generation.

- Question re: whether solar net metering would still be available under this program (yes it would)

- Ed gave an overview of the process for WEC going forward.

- Question re: how many levels/grades of choices for supply; have other towns presented more options? (most likely three, this number is not constrained, but three is somewhat simpler to understand)

- Question re: ramifications if state law on renewable portfolio changes (a change in the law mid-contract would drive prices up for all MA residents, including Watertown)
- Question re: duration of the contract (typically 12, 24, or 26 month contracts, scheduled to avoid seasonal price change premiums)

7:45 Ed concluded public informational meeting on WEC.

7:53 WE3C meeting convened, Meredith described work of Comprehensive Plan Working Group. Consensus for members to review draft proposal and vote on draft at next meeting. Members can submit comments before next meeting. Somerville has completed a similar vulnerability assessment, which members can review. Some discussion on the costs of this assessment, which information was not presently available. Discussion of inclusion of stormwater management in the comprehensive plan, and holding meetings with the Stormwater Committee.

- Brief updates from Resources and Gas Leaks Working Groups
- Ed briefed on a draft Town ordinance requiring solar on new construction (new commercial buildings over 10,000 sq. ft.). Discussion of incentivizing solar installations with property tax rebates. Draft ordinance to be presented to Committee on Economic Development at next meeting, 6 P.M. June 19th.

8:33 Meeting closed

Respectfully submitted,
A. Airasian