

The Watertown Environment and Energy Efficiency Committee met remotely via Zoom at 7:00 PM on Monday, November 20, 2023.

The following members and staff were present:

Jeanne Trubek (Co-Chair), Silas Fyler (Energy Manager), Laurel Schwab (Environmental Planner), Brian Hebeisen, Pat Rathbone, Lauri Murphy

Absent: Ellen Menounos (Co-Chair), Carina Wallack, Shin Nagpal

Others present: Pam Phillips, Larry Raskin, Marcia Ciro, Steve Steadman, Mary Rose

The meeting started with a quorum at 7:00 with Jeanne Trubek presiding.

1. Announcements

- The next meeting of WE3C will be Monday, December 18, at 7 pm on Zoom.

2. Vote: Minutes from 10/16/23 were approved unanimously.

3. Energy Manager Report (Silas Fyler)

- The new Watertown Electricity Choice (WEC) rates are out and are lower than Eversource's. Postings are at the library, City Hall, and food pantry. See Working Group report.
- The Lowell School solar panels are on. Greenworks Remodeling pays for roof replacement for schools when adding panels. The Middle School may have solar panels on in a year or two. Work (destruction) has started on the High School. It is a very responsible program reusing the concrete for the school's foundation and recycling the metal.

4. Environmental Planner Report (Laurel Schwab)

- Suggested a DPW demo waste strategic plan 2030 to meet waste reduction goals, to be publicized soon.
- Narrowing down sites for initial micro forest project. Larry asked about budget and timeline to pull off the project in 2024.
- Energy Advocate Intern Ryan Hamilton's office hours are 4-6pm at the Senior Center for interactive study group sessions (proposed by Councilor Gardner). He meets with 5-10 individuals to meet for 15 minutes each to discuss Mass Save programs and help people get started. Work is continuing on electrification of vehicles. We want to determine: where to place which type of EV chargers, what strategies to use, and what is needed from outside help. This will come to WE3C for refinement before going to the Watertown City Council.

5. Working groups

- Climate Plan Outreach: Working on developing a website and a December newsletter. Email Laurel with items to include. We are considering a physical in-person event like Medford's Sustainability Fair or block parties where residents can share their energy-saving/-managing efforts and experiences with each other. We could start small and build year after year.
- Transportation: Our new Transportation Planner Zeke Mermell is very busy at this time. We voted to invite him to a meeting but we will wait until both he and we have space in our schedules. We submitted a request for ARPA funds for a citywide transit plan and received

approval from the subcommittee – it next goes to the entire council. City Manager George Proakis and Transportation Planner Zeke Mermell all have goals similar to WE3C's.

- Net Zero: Working group has been having weekly meetings (Brian, Pat, Silas and Jolly.) We want to give a presentation on BERDO (building emissions reduction and disclosure ordinance) to WE3C at our next meeting to help breakdown the ordinance before a formal City Council presentation. We are not sure if it will be ready for the December meeting. Silas says Watertown might be the first in the country to have LEED Platinum schools. Watertown's City buildings' greenhouse gas emissions are now 30% below our Green Communities' reporting in 2010. BERDO ordinance could be implemented in early 2025.
- Watertown Electricity Choice: Letters went out with the new rates, fixed for 36 months. Basic is 16.078¢ per kWh, 100% green is 15.90¢ per kWh, Eversource's is higher than Basic. Nonprofits need to resubmit their status to receive the WEC rates. DPW may or may not approve Eversource's rates.
- Public Pollinator gardens Pam Phillips is working with Hatch and the DPW on a project to have "gardens" of plantings of young pollinator plants on public property. She suggested this as a potential working group separate from private plantings.

Vote: Motion to adjourn at 8:20 approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Lauri Murphy