

Minutes -- Clean Energy Ad Hoc Committee Meeting 1/24/22

Present: Committee members G. Ames, B. Babcock, M. Cohen, B. Horne, S. Huttner, S. McCarthy, E. Mahler, J Prins, D. Rabin

Presenters A. Corey, S. Hartmann

Members of the public Donna Laich, Jim Stepanek

Chair McCarthy opened the meeting at 4:05 pm and noted that there were two guest presenters on the agenda. The minutes of the 11/22/21 meeting were approved; moved by B. Babcock, seconded by D. Rabin. The minutes of the 12/13/21 meeting were approved; moved by J. Prins, seconded by S. Huttner.

While A. Corey finished setting up for his presentation, D. Rabin reported the committee has received an EnergizeCT grant from Eversource to support the initiative to promote Branford businesses' participation in the Small Business Energy Advantage program. There are specific activities that individual committee members will be asked to do, including marketing activities, organizing tables at public events (e.g., anticipated farmers market, Branford Energy Fair), and organizing public presentations.

A. Corey, an industrial designer who lives in Short Beach, made a presentation about the environmental impacts of two-cycle gasoline-powered leaf blowers (greenhouse gas emissions, noise, air quality) and invited the committee to work with him on reducing the use of leaf blowers and their environmental impacts. Commission discussion followed. It was reported that the First Selectman has discussed with the Public Works Supervisor to acquire electric leaf blowers to lessen noise in populated areas.

S. Hartmann, a Branford resident and National Sales Manager for EarthLight, a provider of commercial solar and storage energy solutions, presented information about how a commercial/institutional building's electric charge are calculated based on total consumption and time of use/demand. There was an active discussion that had to be terminated due to limited time. A special meeting will be scheduled to continue the discussion.

There was a brief presentation and discussion of the draft proposed Net Zero Energy Policy for Branford's Town Buildings, led by G.Ames. This will be an ongoing discussion.

New Business: J. Prins reported that he will be asking the Board of Education to include a regular report of the activities of the Clean Energy Ad Hoc Committee's activities in the Board's meeting agendas. He also reported discussing what would be involved in getting electric school buses for Branford Schools with the School Department Finance Officer. S. Huttner suggested discussing this matter with staff in Hamden, which we have been told has reached an agreement to start using electric buses with the First Student bus company (which also has the school bus contract with Branford schools).

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 pm.