

Clean Energy Ad Hoc Committee meeting minutes – 7/24/19

Present: Greg Ames, Bob Babcock, Marshall Cox, Sharon Huttner, Bill Horne, Chris Lenda, Shirley McCarthy

Absent: Elena Cahill, Rick Saltz

Guests: Laura Harmon, Marjorie and David Schneider

Chair Shirley McCarthy called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

1. Bob Babcock moved to approve the minutes of the July 10 meeting, Sharon Huttner seconded, minutes approved unanimously.
2. The Board of Selectmen's appointment of Sharon Huttner and Marshall Cox to the committee was announced.
3. Town Finance Director Jim Finch was introduced. Greg Ames started the discussion of the questions the committee provided to Jim Finch in advance, by asking how purchasing decisions are made and by whom. Jim explained how purchasing requests for specific items are initiated by department heads and/or oversight commissions; also, that the Board of Ed/School Department has control of the use of its budget once the total has been approved by the Board of Finance and the RTM. He recommended starting small and building on success.
 - Regarding electric vehicle purchases, he suggested starting with general purpose vehicles used by inspectors, etc rather than specialized vehicles (e.g., police cars, ambulances). A list of Town vehicles can be obtained from Human Resources.
 - He indicated that it will be important to demonstrate that the purchase of an EV, energy efficiency upgrades or installation of renewable energy infrastructure make sense financially and commented that the Town is generally favorable to making investments now that will put us in a better position in the future.
 - He said that while numbers are important, having a narrative about why adopting renewable energy makes sense in terms of improving the town's situation in the future is even more important.

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- We need to bring the rest of the town up to our level of understanding of the need to make the transition from fossil energy sources to renewable energy.
- He suggested that it would be useful to understand what credit rating agencies are saying about renewable energy; mentioned an ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) screen being increasingly used; noted that municipalities generally don't have a sustainability officer who can provide such information when asked.
- He mentioned a Sustainability Framework recently adopted by New Haven and some Council of Government (COG) programs to assist member municipalities with bidding and procurement of various types of items and projects.

After Jim left the meeting, the committee discussed his advice and how to proceed. No specific decisions were made.

4. The next meeting will be August 14.
5. Bob Babcock moved, Greg Ames seconded adjournment; passed unanimously.