

Minutes
The Durham Energy Committee Steering Committee
June 5, 2007
4:00 p.m. Durham Town Hall Council Chambers

Members Present: Nat Balch, Toby Ball, Don Brautigam, Diana Carroll—Council Representative, David Cedarholm – DPW Representative, Kevin Gardner, Filson Glanz, Vasiliki Partinoudi, Paligarnal Vasudevan

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Mark Morong – Town Councilor

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Diana Carroll at 4:07 PM.

II. Diana Carroll welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Energy Committee Steering Committee. Everyone introduced themselves speaking of their background and interest in this committee.

III. Toby Ball explained the background of the NH Climate Change Resolution comparing it to the acid rain resolution that was brought before many NH municipalities years ago. It was also noted that the NH Climate Change Resolution was one way to get politicians to face the issue of global warming.

Diana and Mark gave background on how they and Jerry Needel wrote the Resolution that created the Energy Committee Steering Committee that was unanimously accepted by the Town Council. The Right to Know section was discussed, focusing on the point that conversations, including emails, should not be used to make decisions – decision making should take place in public committee meetings.

There was a discussion on what time the committee could meet in the future as this Tuesday time did not work for Don. We could not find a time during regular work hours so it was decided to meet Wednesday, June 20 at 6:30 a.m. for our next meeting and members would email Diana Carroll with times they are available during the week so we could have an alternate time if the 6:30 a.m. time does not work out. It was also decided that our meetings would last 1 ½ hours.

IV. The next discussion was on what the best structure would be to advance the committee's mission.

Nat said that it is the committee's mission to establish a vision of energy conservation and, through education help the town reduce energy. This could be done through energy audits that would make it easier for Durham residents to

conserve energy. He suggested that an energy conservation Master Plan could be developed.

Vasu suggested that we could look at what other communities have done in the area of energy conservation, especially towns in Europe.

Don said that we will need to make a decision if the committee is to be fluid or fixed.

Toby suggested that the committee identify areas in town that are using energy, i.e., schools. The committee can identify areas where we want to bring about change.

Vasu said that education could include giving information about insulation to residents and telling them about the rebate that is available.

Kevin said that several core groups could be formed: public buildings, zoning/planning, voluntary actions that residents can take, look at economic models that offer disincentives/incentives, transportation.

Fil said that we need to consider the short term and the long term. Buildings fall into the long term and will have a continued effect on energy use after they are built.

Vasu said that Durham and UNH could possibly integrate energy use, i.e., UNH will have surplus power from methane from the new project with Turnkey in Rochester.

Diana listed three categories – schools, municipalities and residences. Schools, she said, seem to be somewhat out of our mandate since the Town Council does not have direct control over schools, i.e., energy use, energy conservation measures that could be taken, etc. And our mission is to advise the town.

Nat asked what works best in Durham for energy conservation or alternative energy—insulation, heat pumps, wind, photovoltaics? He said a data base could be developed.

Kevin said that people want to do the right thing but they don't know what they can do.

Toby responded to Kevin saying that the Oyster River Carbon Challenge is trying to educate people/ residents in what they can do to save energy in their homes.

Vasu suggested that we as a committee might decide the top three things the committee should be doing. Maybe each member could bring to the next meeting their top three.

Don said that we need a baseline energy audit. He asked if the town had records that go back 5 years.

Kevin agreed that an energy audit would give us a baseline. Kevin also noted that with a beginning committee such as the Steering Committee it is hard to take the next step. Others corroborated it is even difficult to know what the next step is.

Diana said she would look into working with the Oyster River Schools.

Fil suggested we look into street lights.

Dave said that the town uses so much energy. For example, the wastewater treatment plant uses \$150,000. of electricity a year. Changes could be made here, i.e., a windmill could provide electricity as this seems to be a very windy spot on the river though studies would have to be done.

Kevin, Toby and Nat all noted that the committee needs a mission statement. It was decided that each member would bring their ideas for a mission statement to the next meeting.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:40.