

# **Durham Energy Steering Committee**

## **Minutes of 6/20/07 Meeting**

Attendees:

Toby Ball, Committee Chair

Vaso Partinoudi

Kevin Gardner

Don Brautigam

PT (Vasu) Vasudevan

Filson Glanz

Nat Balch, 6/20/07 Secretary

Diana Carroll, Town Council Representative

Dave Cedarholm, Durham DPW Representative

Also: Jerry Needell and Mark Morong, Durham Town Council

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 AM.

The minutes of the previous meeting approved as amended:

A reference to the Oyster River Carbon Challenge needed correcting.

Name spelling revisions.

Mission statements were circulated.

Dave noted that his position as DPW rep in this group can be to help implement the group's objectives, etc.

Kevin noted that the first sentence of Vasu's mission statement ("The primary purpose of the Energy Steering Committee shall be to promote the objectives of the Energy Committee as approved by the Durham Town Council.") is very appropriate.

Vaso mentioned that the mission statement should be broad in scope.

Don recommended that specific mention of carbon emission reductions and energy reduction should be included. He further mentioned that the mission statement should avoid lifestyle-related statements.

Dave noted that in our efforts as a committee, to remember that this is an advisory committee, and as such, should make recommendations to the Town Council, but not to dictate.

Kevin suggested that at least a portion of the Mission Statement should focus on residential efforts.

Diana mentioned that we need to include specific language in the Mission Statement. She also reiterated Dave's statement that we are advisory in nature. She further mentioned that with regard to OR schools, we may find that the distinction between town and ORCSD buildings will be vague.

Kevin stated that we need to be careful not to provide direction, but to provide support. Kevin outlined how energy conservation incentives are helpful and beneficial. The current policy of tax benefits regarding property energy improvements is helpful.

Jerry asked us to keep in mind that motions brought before the Town Council take time to put through, and for us to be patient with the process.

Don stated that if the energy committee can show that the town can save money in its energy use, this will encourage the Town Council's support.

Nat asked whether any of the working groups in the DEC would need any funding for their efforts.

Jerry stated that the annual budget process will be started next Monday, and the final budget will be presented 11/1.

Fil mentioned that there are groups available which provide grants, and perhaps intern support for energy conservation work.

Toby mentioned that limited grant opportunities in the state are available; some interns are available as well. In addition, there are other avenues for support worth exploring.

Jerry stated that the group needs to be mindful of how the town funding process works.

Diana mentioned that the Recycling committee receives \$500/year.

Nat asked if someone in the group would be interested in developing knowledge on town funding. Also, there may be some opportunities where UNH students could implement some projects helpful to the town as part of their studies.

Fil mentioned that measuring and monitoring CO2 use and energy consumption would be important to include in the mission statement.

Toby suggested that the mission statement should be a more global view than the specifics just discussed.

Don responded, however, in order to understand the mission on a macro scale, we need to know the specifics as well.

Diana stated the Mission Statement as follows: "The primary purpose of the Energy Committee shall be to advise the Town Council on energy use issues, and to consider use of alternative energy."

Dave suggested adding, "for the purpose of reducing emissions."

Kevin mentioned, "and to promote the economy."

Nat asked whether promoting the economy as part of the energy committee mission statement could hinder energy conservation efforts, since one prevalent opinion these days feels that reducing energy use is bad for the economy.

Dave added, "and to advise the Town Council on energy and resource conservation measures."

Nat asked whether the Energy Committee should be involved in education.

Diana replied that we could work with the ORCC on education, since that is their primary objective.

Nat mentioned that education could be a part of the new library.

The result of this discussion was a first sentence of the Mission Statement, as follows:

**"The primary purpose of the Energy Committee shall be to advise the TC on energy-related issues."**

Don asked whether we should keep working on the Mission Statement, or wait till the next meeting to continue. He also queried as to how broad the scope is to be.

Nat asked whether the Energy Committee would be responsible and/or involved in promoting conservation with the population at large.

An additional sentence of the Mission Statement, which needs additional development and refinement, is as follows:

**<To consider use of alternative energy measures the town could take to reduce energy use.>**

At this point, other business was addressed, as follows:

Next meeting will be 7/6/07, at 6:30 AM, in the Council chambers. Toby will not be able to attend.

Toby asked who should meet with Todd Selig regarding budgets and fundings.

Dave mentioned that he has good knowledge of the town budgeting process, and that he and Todd could meet to talk about this.

Diana discussed a recent meeting with school board. The meeting was the same day as the first Energy Committee meeting. Mark Morong suggested that the Durham Energy Committee could work with the town on energy issues. Blaine Cox supported this wholeheartedly. The ORCSD transmitted to Diana some documents. Diana mentioned that the Town Council would have to provide input on interactions with the ORCSD, since it's a different entity. She mentioned that perhaps a subcommittee should work on this. Currently there are energy waste issues, with lighting in particular, especially street lighting.

Nat mentioned that with regard to street lights, excess energy use is in part a community security issue.

Diana mentioned that reducing energy may be relatively low on the ORCSD priority list.

Fil said that this is one of numerous budgetary issues that the town needs to address, along with a shrinking student population.

Kevin suggested that working with the schools could be a very important function for the Energy Committee to be involved with.

Dave mentioned that some follow-up with PSNH had taken place. During this process, PSNH had mentioned possibly performing some energy audits.

Diana mentioned that of the things the Energy Committee could do is develop a list of what energy conservation measures the town has already implemented.

Dave stated that instituting changes in energy use by the town is an issue which will take time to implement.

As a parting thought, Jerry mentioned that we should remember that the advisory role of the Durham Energy Committee is a very significant and important role to play in the town.

Fil inquired how people felt about using email communication. Jerry mentioned that as long as certain guidelines were adhered to, such as limiting the discourse to sharing of information, and not getting into discussions of opinion, it's probably okay.

Toby moved to adjourn at 8:05 AM.