

TOWN OF DURHAM  
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**DRAFT**

**DURHAM ENERGY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**December 5, 2023**

**7:00 – 8:30 PM**

**Committee Member Attendees:**

**Matthias Dean-Carpentier --Chairperson**

**Wayne Burton**

**Ti Crossman**

**Emily Friedrichs**

**Steve Holmgren**

**Mike Klein**

**John Lannamann**

**Mike Lehrman**

**Guest and Other Attendees**

**Todd Selig**

**Members Absent**

**Nat Balch**

**Matt Davis**

**I. Presentation by Clean Capital RE Town Solar Array and Buy Out Considerations**

Zoe Berkery the COO of Clean Capital (CC) joined via video. Clean Capital has owned the town solar array since April 2021. The company owns, develops and operates sites around the country and is ranked in the top 10 of commercial solar asset owners in the country. Ms. Berkery and Administrator Selig reviewed current arrangements.

The site is about 7.5 years old, produces approx. 651 Kw, the useful life is estimated to be 35-40 years. It is possible the site could be expanded by adding more panels but there has been no specific investigation of the potential. It was pointed out the site land is owned by the town of Lee and has multiple uses including use by Public Works for material storage. It would need to be investigated if expanding capacity on the site would be allowable under the current agreement with Lee and if there would be any tax or PILOT implications. Battery storage is another potential option for consideration. A question was asked of Ms. Berkery if her firm had any concerns regarding current N.H. rules around Net Metering. She indicated it was not a concern at this time.

It was asked if CC would have an interest in potentially developing other sites in town. She indicated they would be interested and have the capacity to develop build and operate a site.

With respect to the town pursuing a buyout option Ms. Berkery indicated it would be her company's preference to maintain ownership which is their business model. Asked how they calculate the current fair market value she indicated they look at the rate of return and the future cash flow as part of determining its value. If the Town disagrees, they can offer to negotiate. It was then noted that Clean Capitals valuation would be key to considering any buyout. Todd explained the history of the Power Purchase Agreement rates the town pays.

It was noted that the town would also need to look at the "opportunity cost" of using debt capacity for a buyout vs. potentially building more solar array capacity.

Administrator Selig requested that Ms. Berkery provide the town with a spread sheet pro-forma showing the calculated fair market value and buyout cost.

It was the consensus of committee to look at this again in January or February. It was noted that councilor Joe Friedman should be involved when we get info back from CC. Some of the challenge is also for the town to estimate the real remaining life of the array.

## **II. Prior Minutes Review/ Approval**

The Minutes from November 14 were reviewed, motion made to accept, all were in favor to accept.

## **III. Energy Committee Report to Town Council**

There was discussion of the report that Matthias is to deliver to Town Council on last year's activity and 2024 goals. Matthias reported that Karen Edwards had composed the report for the council. It was noted that Steve and Jack had sent Matthias reports on EV charging and the Community Power Coalition but it was unclear if they was included. Matthias will send the report to committee members for review.

It was then noted that the scheduled presentation to the Town Council was actually postponed until January 8<sup>th</sup>. Todd suggested the oral report to the council should be 5-10 minutes then they might ask questions. After some discussion it was suggested that the goals and objectives document could just be presented as written.

## **IV. Energy Committee 2024 Goals**

The goals that had been previously drafted and distributed were reviewed. Note was made that the correction from Steve regarding Community Power was included. A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to adopt the goals as distributed.

Members were asked to express their interest in which goals they would like to work on as part of a small work group and send those preferences to Mike Klein. Mike will compile them and have them for the next meeting. Steve and Nat were interested on working on Community Power.

## **V. Member Round Table**

Net Metering- Emily reported that net metering is an ongoing discussion at the PUC. The 3 utilities are agreeable to accept the current rule but the PUC seems to have reservations. Clean Energy NH follows the net metering issue and we should continue to follow also.

NH Electric Education Project (NHEEP) -Emily reported the organization provides education and hands on learning at schools. They have a variety of education topics including Heat Transfer, Transportation and Power Generation. It was discussed this might be a resource to make available for Earth Day.

Grant opportunity Walking Softer- Emily reported on a grant program offered by Walking Softer that is offered by invitation only. Emily has been personally invited to apply for a grant/prize. The program has requirements for minimum 20 hours/ week engagement by recipients. A grant if awarded might be applied to help develop a program similar to that previously described as Building UP. Emily will discuss this further with Todd as it is really a personal decision to apply for the grant. The committee agreed it didn't have any concerns about how Emily decides to proceed. (Learn more about the WalkingSofter organization here- <https://www.walkingsofter.org/young-leaders-award> )

Announcement Electrification Coaching- Emily announced completing a program on Electrification Coaching. The program is designed to better enable people to give advice to people interested in electrifying their homes. ( Link to Rewiring America course is here -[signup for the wait-list for the next cohort](#) )

Committee Attendance and Quorums- Mike reported that in creating an attendance spread sheet he reviewed and compiled the last 2 years of committee attendance. He found only one occasion, July 2023, when a quorum was not attained at a meeting. This might ease previous concerns and discussion about the committee size and structure. A copy of the attendance record was distributed. He also noted if anyone was not aware, that Townsend Zwart had resigned from the committee effective the end of September.

N.H. Climate Action Plan- Emily reported NH is looking at a Climate Action plan again. Emily will share a link to the state web site. Public comments are being accepted through February 1. (State web site link is here [input session](#) or email your ideas directly to [cprg@des.nh.gov](mailto:cprg@des.nh.gov). )

## **Motion to Adjourn**

Motion was made, seconded and approved to adjourn at 9:12pm.