

TOWN OF DURHAM  
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## **DURHAM ENERGY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**January 2, 2024**

**7:00 – 8:30 PM**

### **Committee Member Attendees:**

**Matthias Dean-Carpentier --Chairperson**

**Nat Balch**

**Ti Crossman**

**Matt Davis**

**Emily Friedrichs (via video)**

**Steve Holmgren**

**Mike Klein**

**John Lannamann**

**Mike Lehrman**

### **Guest and Other Attendees**

### **Absent**

**Wayne Burton**

## **I. Agenda Discussion and Approval**

Matthias began by asking about the agenda structure and order. It was agreed that the CPCNH update would be a priority this evening. He also proposed doing the Round Table discussion earlier in the meeting and not leaving it for last so not to short change items. Another member suggested the Round Table should have a time limit. It was clarified that the Round Table would be where members can bring up new items that could be briefly reviewed and considered for possible inclusion on a future agenda if they warrant discussion.

A question was asked about what should be the duration goal for the entire meeting. It was suggested the goal be 90 minutes but flex to 2 hours if needed. It was also suggested that each agenda item should have an estimated time listed so that the meeting can be planned to meet the duration goal.

A suggestion was made that we also need to apply “ELMO” Enough Let’s Move On, appropriately to keep the meeting on schedule.

It was discussed and recommended that our established goals be put on the agenda monthly so each goal item status is reviewed each meeting.

It was agreed that the Round Table portion should be targeted for 30 minutes.

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

Minutes of December 5, 2023 were reviewed and accepted.

### **III. Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire (CPCNH)**

Steve Holmgren started by reporting he had sent an email update to members earlier before the meeting and would refer to info in that email. It is intended that Community Power would start in Durham in March. The Durham specific web page should be available in a few days. It can be customized by CPCNH at our request. It was suggested we may want to include information about goals of the Global Covenant of Mayors on the Durham web page.

The email update includes the rate structure which CPCNH tries to keep uniform across communities. The basic default rate would be 8.1 cents/ Kilowatt Hr. This compares to the new February Eversource rate of 8.285 cents. It was explained that while CPCNH has been able to typically offer a more competitive advantage over the Eversource rates the new rates from Eversource include a rebate of 1.3 cents as a correction for overcharging in the last rate period. While utilities typically make rebate adjustments in rate setting this periods Eversource adjustment is larger than normal thus reducing the Community Power cost advantage.

Two upcoming items in the rollout process will be an enrollment letter being sent to Durham Eversource customers January 22<sup>nd</sup> and a public information session to be held January 30 at 7pm.

A question was asked about what are the CPCNH sources for renewable power. It was noted that the CPCNH FAQ #23 partially addresses this question but they don't supply a list of specific sources. The Granite Basic rate complies with the PUC regulations in sourcing 24.3% of power from renewable sources by purchasing Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) on the market. There was discussion about the differences between "renewable" energy and "carbon free" energy that may include nuclear and hydro power. It was agreed to continue the discussion at the February meeting and specifically address the opt-up options.

### **IV. Goals Updates**

**Goal 1 Achieving Climate Action Plan goal of implementing Community Power** This was essentially discussed as Community Power.

**Goal 2 Exploring other sources of renewable and green electric power.** Mike K pointed out there had not been any volunteers to lead a work group for this. Matthias agreed to temporarily take this.

**Goal 3 Improving energy efficiency and reducing the carbon foot print of buildings** Emily had agreed to lead this goal. The Walking Softer grant that Emily previously described will need to be submitted later in January and would contribute to this goal. Emily has discussed it with Todd and plans to discuss it further with the Town Council on January 8 specifically regarding avoiding any conflicts of interest. If the grant is pursued the prize winners would be announced in April.

A reminder was made that the Electrification Coaching course through Rewiring America is free and actually goes into good detail on heat pumps. (The link to it is attached here again. [signup for the wait-list for the next cohort](#))

**Goal 4 Support EV ownership and Infrastructure** Steve H. will be lead along with John L. Nat B. and Mike L. will assist.

Emily described several parts of the proposed EV ordinance and will email the draft EV ordinance to everyone. All were asked to review for a focused discussion in February. A question was raised about E scooters and if they were part of the consideration. It was indicated that only registered vehicles were intended to be covered and EV vehicles would be defined in the ordinance.

A question was raised about the administrative process to approve an ordinance. Emily described that any proposal from the committee would need to go to the Planning Board next. They would require at least 2 meetings because a public hearing would be needed. Following a Planning Board approval, it would go to the Town Council. Town Council would also require at least 2 meetings, also including a public hearing.

It was suggested that a draft ordinance should be well vetted by our committee before going further. It was also suggested that we might want to consider a separate additional meeting after February 6 just dedicated to this topic.

**Goal 5 Community Outreach and Education** Mike L will lead and Matt D, John L and Steve H will assist on this goal. Steve suggested that we start considering Earth Day and particularly consider how to reduce the impact of weather on the event that postponed the event twice last year and caused havoc on the event day. He suggested we look for indoor options. It was suggested to put Earth Day on the agenda for the February meeting.

A question was raised and discussion took place regarding the potential to have future Sustainability Fellows assist with communications. It was discussed if a criteria in the future selection process for Fellows could include some skills in communications.

Alternatively, perhaps some other link with UNH might provide access to students with stronger communication skills. It was suggested that having such skills on the committee would be valuable. Matt offered to provide some linkage to UNH on this. John L. as former Communications professor also offered to help.

## **V. Member Round Table / New Business**

It was reported that the state DOE is looking for input on a new state Climate Action plan. They are particularly interested in potential projects that are near ready to implement. There is opportunity for public input as well as from involved organizations.

(State web link is here [input session](#) or email your ideas directly to [cprg@des.nh.gov](mailto:cprg@des.nh.gov).)

Matthias reported he is prepared for his presentation to the Town Council on January 8.

Mike K reported he has created a LinkedIn Group for the Durham Energy Committee. He also suggested we might want to consider a Facebook page but was not sure if the town is Ok, but can check with Todd. It was noted that Craig Stevens the Tech Coordinator can also assist with these type things and also help put things on the Energy Committee page of town web site.

A question was raised on status of the PV array buy out. Matthias reported Todd is still waiting for a proposal from Clean Capital. He will ask Todd about sending a reminder note to Clean Capital.

Matthias reported he received an email from a resident asking about 2 issues. One was a concern about public transit and the lack of bus shelters for Wildcat riders waiting on the side of the road. That could be an impediment to ridership as well as a safety concern.

The second issue was about lights being on all night at the Transfer Station and Public Works depot. After reading the email there was discussion if these questions were appropriate for the Energy Committee to be involved with or refer them to the Public

Works Dept. and/or Todd. The energy side of the lighting concern was agreed to be an energy issue and suggestion was made that possibly they could be on photocell or motion detectors.

Matthias will email the PW lighting issue to Todd and Richard Reine. He will email Michael Behrendt, Town Planner, regarding the bus shelter concern.

**Motion to Adjourn was made, seconded and passed at 8:45pm**