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DRAFT

DURHAM ENERGY COMMITTEE MINUTES

March 4, 2024

7:00 – 8:30 PM

Committee Member Attendees:

Matthias Dean-Carpentier --Chairperson

Ti Crossman

Matt Davis

Charles Forcey (by Video)

Emily Friedrichs

Steve Holmgren

Mike Lehrman

Eric Lund

Guest and Other Attendees

I. Agenda Discussion and Approval

Eric requested to speak about a Strafford Regional Planning Commission meeting recently attended. The agenda was acceptable to all.

II. Prior Minutes Review/ Approval

A motion was made and seconded to approve minutes as written. Roll call vote was taken, seven affirmed and one abstained due to absence at the meeting. Minutes were accepted.

III. Chair and Vice-Chair status

Matthias stated he agrees that a Vice-Chair would be helpful. He also stated that he was happy to have someone else assume the chairmanship if desired. There was discussion of when the committee should further discuss selecting leaders. Mike L observed that perhaps our April meeting might be appropriate as we are missing a couple of people tonight. Eric said this will likely be his last meeting as the Town Council will be rotating assignments to committees. He indicated Emily will likely assume the role of Town Council representative and remain with the Energy Committee and the Planning Board will appoint a new representative to the Energy Committee. It was reviewed that Ti and Jack would not be renewing their membership but Mike K will ask to be reappointed. (Emily joined the committee in person.)

Michael Konopko has not responded to Todd's letter so it is assumed he will not remain on the committee. Mike L is sending a recruitment notice to Karen Edwards for the Friday Update. Recruitment was discussed.

IV. EV Ordinance

Mike L discussed the email from Michael Behrendt that he shared with committee members. In anticipation of questions from the Planning Board when it discusses the proposal Mike reviewed the numerical calculations of how many chargers, prepared spots and ready spots would be needed based on the proposed ordinance and number of employees expected at both new and renovated commercial, retail and institutional sites falling under Planning Board review.

For new construction 17 employees on site would trigger 1 installed spot, 5 employees on site would trigger 1 ready spot and 4 employees would trigger 1 prepared spot. For renovation projects triggering Planning Board review 25 employees on site would require 1 installed spot, 10 employees would trigger 1 ready spot and 5 employees would trigger 1 prepared spot.

The calculated numbers were discussed and it was noted that if adopted the Planning Board would still be able to grant variances if an applicant had a compelling reason to alter the numbers.

It was also noted that the section on single and multi-family residences might need to be in the form of ordinance rather than a site plan requirement.

There was discussion regarding the fire chiefs' email and the concerns about locating charging stations a safe distance from building exits. It was suggested to ask the Fire Chief if he would want to specify a distance that he felt was safe and/or add language giving the Fire Department review approval for locating charging stations in or near structures.

V. Energy Code Appendices

Matthias asked if anyone had comments on the building code appendices that Audrey previously provided. She had indicated these might be adoptable based on comments from the chair of the state Building Code Review Board. It was agreed we should discuss these in more detail but not plan to make any recommendations until the EV ordinance has been acted upon by the Planning Board.

VI. CPCNH Updates

Steve reviewed the report he had sent earlier and explained more detail on the renewable power contract that fell through and impacted the cost of purchasing renewable power at CPCNH. New Community Power rates going into effect will be 9.7 cents for Granite Basic while Eversource will be 8.9 cents from February to July. He noted that all the utility rates are now lower than all the competitive suppliers. Discussion turned to the potential for utilities to

potentially undercharge their power purchasers in one period with the ability to make up the undercharge by adjusting rates for all delivery customers in the subsequent rate period.

Steve reviewed a chart showing the number of CPCNH customers in each town that opted up for more green renewable power and the resulting savings in carbon emissions. He also reported that the CEO of CPCNH has departed and a new interim General Manager has been appointed. Questions were raised regarding the status of CPCNH reserves. Steve reported that reserves were accessed to counter higher power utilization in the Fall due to rapid growth in the customer base and because CPCNH had not hedged energy costs early enough in the Fall. He stated that lessons have been learned and as a result procedures are being revised. As a result of the rapid growth and need to access reserves they are now lower than projected goals for the current volume. He also pointed out it has been decided not to take on any new towns for a year to allow operations and reserves to stabilize. There are still communities waiting to join.

VII. SRPC and Barrington Energy Committee Meeting

Eric reported on a meeting of the Strafford Regional Planning Commission (SRPC) that he and Mike L attended. The meeting was in Barrington and featured the Barrington Energy Committee making a presentation on their activities and achievements. That committee was initiated by the town selectman just three years ago to help save the town money on energy which has been their focus. The Barrington Energy Committee reported they have arranged energy audits for one or more mobile home parks in their town in conjunction with their local community action organization. They have also installed solar arrays on a couple of town buildings. Their goals are to get pay back periods of 10-14 years.

VIII. Energy Week May 5-9

Emily asked the committee to consider if we want to do anything for NH Energy week May 5-9. If we do, we would need to initiate something at the April meeting. It was observed that if we want to focus on the Durham Day event in June, we also need to start planning for that in April. Both should be on the April agenda.

IX. Town plan for Solar

The committee was reminded of Todd's report and suggestion at the last meeting that we should re-focus on developing a plan for future solar projects. It was noted that the transfer station site is still a potential project.

X. Roundtable

Eric reported the Town Council is considering a resolution protesting the federal pause in distributing IRA funds.

It was noted that CPCNH has a brief explanation of HB 760 that might be offered as an item to Friday Update and asks for support of the bill.

Motion to Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made, seconded and passed on a roll call vote at 8:48pm.