**Bethlehem Energy Commission**

 **Minutes**

 **January 19, 6:00pm**

Attending: David Van Houten, Melissa Elander, Mary Lou Krambeer, Mark Koprowski and Dan Crosby

Absent: Bruce Caplain

**Agenda** (action items in yellow)

Mission: The Bethlehem Energy Commission was established for the study and planning of energy resources for the town. The commission will evaluate existing energy usage in the town and suggest possible improvements in energy efficiency and conservation, as well as potential clean renewable energy solutions in order to reduce expenses and increase self-reliance.

**Review minutes from last meeting**

Approve Nov. minutes. Mary Lou made a motion, Mark seconded. Passed unanimously.

**Profile**

Work that is underway: reviewing the process of combining parcels, hired Horizon Engineers to look for pipes in the ground, Site Plan review will proceed afterwards, then Eversource will look at existing systems to accommodate new power (e.g. need new transformer). Trees will be cut down and site cleared in early Spring. Town of Bethlehem gave a $1030 PILOT agreement to the Power Purchase Agreement developer New England Commercial Solar Services (NECSS).

David – do we need to do communication updates? Let’s outline steps and keep public aware of what’s going on? Who would do this, Dan will inquire about student updates on solar projects. Check in with ARET – Feb 11 meeting – David, Melissa and Mark

**Town solar project**

See warrant article presented (below) at 1/18/2021 Selectboard meeting.

We are now waiting on USDA RD grant announcement.

?What about roof of maintenance building? Has that been settled? David please ask Bruce if repairs are in the Town maintenance plan.

**BES 2/9** – BES will benefit the most from a reduction in electric funds from the array as the panels will be in their backyard. David will go to meeting; others welcome to accompany him. We need to figure out how BES may contribute to the full amount of the project.

Library 2/8

**Community information strategy**

Sugar Hill also has a municipal solar project on their warrant. They are planning press releases, post cards, and a webinar to educate the public. Melissa’s work with them can help inform our process.

Melissa and Mary Lou will start putting together a plan. Send notes home to BES students. Mark Will develop succinct and compelling talking points, a fact sheet, for all to use. kWh now and future; annual savings; grant to cover 35%. Town website, facebook, etc.

Mary Lou will inquire about possible NEGEF grant for town mailing

Who will be our spokesperson? David Van Houten

**Town hall**

Margaret Dillion is scheduling an energy audit day in the company of an engineer. Will Zoom into a Selectboard meeting. CDFA paying for ¾ of the $4000 energy audit and ¾ of an engineering plan up to $4000.

**Anything else?**

BEC report for Town Meeting Report. David will work on numbers; Mary Lou will go through meeting minutes for project narrative ideas.

Melissa is working on putting Profile into Portfolio Manager. Kind of tough as large accounts don’t fit into Portfolio Manager automatically.

We need to find out how a Town contribution is possible?

David will talk to Bruce go to DRA about school contributing to lower cost of project.

Mary Lou connect with NHCF about possible solar grants?

Melissa will check-in on the Town water project.

**Public input**

Next meeting of Bethlehem Energy Commission on Feb 2 at 6:00 (if we have heard from USDA RD)

Join Zoom Meeting
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84357581225

Meeting ID: 843 5758 1225
One tap mobile
+13126266799,,84357581225# US (Chicago)
+16465588656,,84357581225# US (New York)

Adjourn by 7:00

To see if the **Town will** **VOTE TO RAISE AND APPROPRIATE** the sum of up to $472,000 over a three (3) year period to install a clean energy solar array system on town-owned property; this sum will be reduced by the amount of grant funding received which is expected to be up to $165,000. This project will not move forward until the Selectmen have received and approved a detailed plan from the Energy Commission that is economically beneficial to the Town.

In an effort to make Bethlehem a "greener" Town, the solar array is expected to provide approximately 50% of electricity used by the Town for Town Hall, Highway Department Maintenance Garage, Elementary School, Library, and street lights.

**PROJECT SUMMARY**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|   | Without Grant | With Full $165,000 Grant |
| Cost of Project | $472,000 | $307,000 |
| General Funds To Be Applied | $150,000 | $150,000 |
| Cost to Town for three years net of Electricity Savings | $90,833 | $30,376 |
| Total Savings over Life of Project\* | $493,508 | $658,708 |
| Net Electricity Costs Saved Per Year | $16,450 | $21,957 |