**Bethlehem Energy Commission**

**MINUTES from Tuesday, February 7, 2023**

*Attending:* Chuck Phillips, Dan Crosby, Scott Caisse, Mary Lou Krambeer, David Van Houten, Bruce Caplain, and Melissa Elander and Gabe Chilius of Clean Energy NH

**Agenda**

*Mission: The Bethlehem Energy Commission encourages and supports economically and environmentally sensible energy practices in Bethlehem, NH.*

**Minutes** from January meeting Chuck Phillips made motion to accept, Scott seconded motion. 5-0 yes.

**Public input** – Energy Committee members from Franconia and Sugar Hill in attendance.

**Town solar project** – Highway department all wired up waiting for Eversource and BES array being in-school wiring to solar array this week. Next wait for Eversource connection to bring array on-line. David would like to have the solar presentation screen at BES and on the Town and Library websites. We’ll ask contractors, Jack and Ted, to design a screen that is simple and straightforward. We’ll focus on kWh as opposed to dollars saved (as the utility charges change every 6 months). We will need to have someone on this committee keep an eye on the web panel.

**Profile High School** – Dan had meeting with solar provider Jack Bingham, school board member Kim Koprowski, and the new Director of Facilities. Solar array new part has arrived and been installed. Solar is up and running. Solar downtime due to repair resulted in lost revenue to the school. Solar company will reconcile this matter with Profile. *Please note – we’ve added the Profile High School Solar Generation – LIVE tracker to the end of the minutes*

**Village District** – Grant application has been completed by Suzie at the Water District and David VH. The two of them will now work on a loan project.

February 17 and March 17 Village District meeting and election. Please come out to vote yes on solar.

Bethlehem Main Street Solar project: Bruce has reached out to 24 businesses from Adair to Mountain Roots to invite them to consider installing solar with the help of the Town of Bethlehem and Clean Energy NH (2 business have said no and 11 said yes so far). Gabe has explored two applicable grants so far. 1) Energy in rural areas grant and 2) TIF tax increment financing grant.

Next step is to gather electric bills from the businesses, then reach out to contractors. This project will probably need to go through the Town to get maximum funding.

To Do: Bruce and Gabe continue outreach and funding efforts.

To Do: David VH review Bethlehem solar tax exemption. Should we revise this for the Bethlehem 2024 Warrant Article?

Solar tax exemption, passed in 2011 (YES  334        NO  283   Article Passed)

Article 25:  To see if the Town will vote to adopt the provisions of NH RSA 72.61 through RSA 72:72 inclusively, which provide for an optional property tax exemption from the assessed value, for property tax purposes for persons owning real property, which is equipped with solar energy systems, wind-powered energy systems or central wood heating energy systems intended for use art the immediate site.  Such property tax exemption shall be in the amount equal to 100% of the assessed value of qualifying equipment under these statutes up to a maximum of $25,000 for each solar system, wind-powered energy system or central wood heating energy system.

**EV Chargers** – We need to reach out to Revision Energy to look at potential Main Street sites. We’ll walk around town with them. School, library, Town Hall, Irving…

To Do: David will reach out to Revision (and keep Fitz and Bruce involved)

There is a **senate bill** for utilities put aside money to make EV sites. Senator Carrie Gendreau is on committee and we need to reach out to her.

To Do: Bruce will look for a contact at the Littleton Industrial park.

**Bus Demonstration Drive** Littleton/Bethlehem/Franconia – electric bus test rides. Melissa is thinking of a March event.

To Do: Dan will talk to owners of the new bus company out of Lisbon, NH.

Melissa will let us know next steps and possible timing for such an event. Perhaps hold it at WMCC in Littleton?

**Rambling Woods** – Did not have a chance to apply for this year’s solar grant. Will continue their process for a 2024 grant application.

**Button Up** – PAREI offered to set-up a NH Saves Button Up Workshop in Bethlehem. We decided we will promote such workshops around the area at our meetings and on our website, but we don’t have the capacity to host one at this time. Mary Lou will follow up with Robbi Adams the program coordinator (and suggest they offer Zoom connectivity if possible)

**Grafton County Commissioner meeting** – Chuck, Mary Lou and David are attending the Feb 14 11AM meeting to discuss the possibility of using County ARPA dollars for towns interested in advancing energy efficiency and renewable projects.

**BEC Annual report** – submitted to Town.

**Town Sustainability Initiative** – Bruce is working on the idea of establishing a Town of Bethlehem Sustainability Plan. This plan would set sustainability goals and pull together our various Town committees (Conservation, transfer station, energy commission…). This will be modeled after the Hanover sustainablility plan. Angela McShane runs Profile H.S. Sustainability Club and might help with the Bethlehem Sustainability effort.

**Outreach** Several town residents have shown interest in energy projects. We’ll invite them to attend our next meeting.

To Do: Dan will reach out to Gabe Boisseau. Mary Lou to talk to Rachelle Lyons, PSU professor.

David investigated **heat pumps** for Town Building. Will require about $70,000.

To Do: David VH to call Scott Maslanski from CDFA for possible funding assistance.

**February 23: Community Power Coalition of NH webinar**. Sign up.

**What:**Community Power Forum with Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire

**When:**February 23rd, 5:30pm - 7pm

**Registration:** Free Event. Registration required. https://www.eventbrite.com/e/community-power-forum-with-cpcnh-tickets-510670939527

**Next meeting:** March 7 at 6:00 at Bethlehem Library. Dan Crosby to Chair.

or Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87296575768>

Adjourn at 7:20 pm

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**BEC ADMINISTRATIVE Information**

Bethlehem Energy Commission (BEC) is appointed by the Select Board. All meetings are open to the public. Clerical Assistant Nicole McGrath ensures that BEC meeting notices, agendas, and minutes are posted as they become available.

To find BEC info go to: www.bethlehemnh.org

-go to government tab

-our committee is listed under the: boards and committees tab

-our meetings are posted through Nicole on: agendas and minutes tab

**LIVE solar tracking**

**Profile High School Solar Generation**

<https://solarlog-web.net/32960/>

**Bethlehem Elementary School Solar Generation**

*Coming soon*

**Bethlehem Library Solar Generation**

*Coming soon*

**Bethlehem Highway Garage Solar Generation**

*Coming soon*