**Minutes of Bethlehem Energy Commission – October 8, 2024**

**Present:**  Dan Crosby, David Van Houten, Scott Caisse, Mary Lou Krambeer, Chuck Phillips

**Excused:** Josh Lieberman, Bruce Caplain (Select Board Liaison)

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

**Public Input:** no

**AGENDA**

-Solar exemption: Town residents must now fill out a “solar exemption” form (PA-29) and submit it to the town. We assume that form will only have to be done once unless there is a change in the number of solar panels.

-May-August, 2024 BES electric generation fees have been zero thanks to the solar installation. Transmission fees are now about $6,000 a year, supply fees are covered by the solar array. This is saving the school $20k-$30k a year (depending on Eversource ever-changing rate). Additionally, the excess production of the array, often referred to as “grid tie kickback”, will be sent to the SAU in March, 2025 and then forwarded to the Town, as the Town is the owner of the system, and will result in offsetting other expenses. In addition, another $5,000 is received for RECS twice a year. Additionally, we are awaiting the direct pay check from the federal government (this municipal tax credit equivalent applied for in early 2024 will be $29,000).

- BES solar panels are in need of a **mowing maintenance plan** to assure the mowing is done consistently and well to maximize solar generation. The scrub brush must also be taken down by the fence each year. To Do: Dan Crosby will connect with Mary Moritz

-Meeting Minutes from August, 2024 approved.

David made a motion to accept minutes. Second by Chuck. Passed unanimously. (September meeting did not have a quorum so no meeting minutes.)

-USDA REAP Main Street business solarization business is underway, very slow as it’s the first time recruiting participants, filling out paperwork and allowing participants to apply for funding. The first installation is expected late this fall.

-Community Power Coalition of NH (CPCNH): Here is information sent to our representatives, Mary Lou and Dan Crosby, from the October, 2024 CPCNH board book.

* CPCNH programs have consistently delivered savings for customers. Since the

launch of community power in April 2023, a typical household served by CPCNH will

have saved between $230 to $470 by February 2025 (end of the current rate period).

* In October, CPCNH is servicing the launch of Community Power in 20 more communities in nine of New Hampshire’s ten counties. Welcome our neighbors in Franconia and Randolph to CPCNH!
* With this launch, Community Power service expands to a total of 63 communities statewide and approximately 170,000 customers in total.
* Under multiple future scenarios, it is reasonable to expect CPCNH could become the default electricity supplier in municipalities representing more than 50% of New Hampshire’s population in 2026.

BEC should become a member of Clean Energy New Hampshire -- $300 a year. CENH has given us thousands of dollars of free advice and grant writing assistance each year since our founding in 2019.

To Do: Mary Lou talk to CENH and ask Bruce to talk to Selectboard.

-CENH annual Local Energy Solutions conference is scheduled for Friday, November 1.

-Village District – waste water treatment facility solar array all set-up and ready to go, however, Eversource has not hooked-up the system yet, very slow with all commercial hook-ups these days.

-Village District – water audit underway to replace propane with heat pumps and solar array. We hope to see report by the end of the year. We will then need to start looking for grants to cover the expenses.

-Other/future projects

* Research what it will take to buy out the Purchase Power Agreement at Profile
* Encourage more residential weatherization activities.

Meeting adjourned at 7:05.

**Next Meetings:**

Nov 12 at Library; Scott to facilitate.

Dec 3

January 7