

TOWN OF BECKET
ENERGY COMMITTEE MEETING
February 22, 2022, 4 PM
Minutes

In attendance (via Zoom): Garth Klimchuk, Al Blake, Cathy DeFoe, Bob Gross, Katherine Hoak, Susan Purser, Bill Caldwell (Town Administrator). Dan Parnel (Exofficio, Town Finance Committee)

1. Call meeting to order at 4:00pm.
2. Approved meeting minutes of January 18, 2022 meeting.
3. Review wind turbine proposal

Garth asked Dan what the Finance Committee's thoughts were on the proposed wind turbine project. Dan responded that the committee needs to see the budget first before giving an opinion. Initially, he said there are questions around the issue of net metering and aggregating all the town bills. The Finance Committee thought that the turbine would supply 100% of the municipal power but Garth stated that it would probably cover 50% of the Town Hall's needs. We may need more solar or turbines to cover the entire Town's needs.

The idea of applying for a Green Community grant was brought up again and Al reiterated that the program is targeted at reducing energy use and conservation only. It will not fund solar or wind projects. Garth spoke with Mark Rabinsky (DOER) who said that there are no funds for renewables.

Dan inquired about the payback period for the wind turbine project. Garth said approximately 10 years and asked if the Town could support the project. Dan felt that the Town's budget was going to be pretty tight this year but a 10 year payback was not bad. What does the timeline look like? Garth is targeting a late-summer timeline to begin. The price for the project may be about \$175,000. Bill stated that the interconnection with Eversource may take time. We would need Town Meeting (May 14th) to approve the project then it could start.

The Finance Committee will have to see what capital requests come in. Al asked about the status of the ARPA funds. Bill said it is mainly for roads, bridges, etc. Garth asked when do the capital requests get put in the budget? The school budget drives our budget. Roads will be a costly item this year.

Dan said the Finance Committee meets the first week of March. Garth should send over the budget and payback time for the wind turbine project before the next meeting. Susan and Cathy will look into Eversource's interconnection application next week to see what is involved.

4. Revisit Town solar option to supplement wind – would revisit this at a later date.

5. Becket Arts Center follow up

The group discussed next steps in the effort to include the Becket Arts Center (BAC) in the Green Community's designation for Becket. Inclusion as a Town Building would allow it to apply for grants for insulation and other energy conservation benefits. The following are possible steps:

1. Upload last three years of BAC energy bills to the Becket MEI.
2. Find the original Energy Reduction report that says how much energy needed to be reduced. Ask Mark Rabinsky (DOER) if he has it. Bill will hunt for the Green Community's file and ERP report. (Bill's login is under Al's name. Cathy will look for login information.)
3. Rewrite the ERP to add the new building. It may or may not be given funding. DOER would like schools to be a priority.

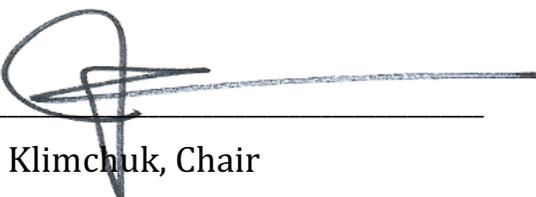
Hopefully, the BAC staff can help with some of the tasks.

The group discussed whether to pursue talks with the local schools regarding inclusion in the Green Community designation. Some of the committee members felt this was too time consuming while working on the wind turbine project. Another question was, if the schools were included, who would manage the data? Cathy will do some inquiries with the schools.

6. Fall Green Community grant application – No action will be taken at the current time.

7. Next meeting March 15, 2022, 4 PM hybrid In-person and Zoom meeting.

Adjourn



Garth Klimchuk, Chair