

TOWN OF BECKET
ENERGY COMMITTEE MEETING
April 19, 2022, 4 PM
Minutes

In attendance (via Zoom): Al Blake, Cathy DeFoe, Bob Gross, Katherine Hoak, Susan Purser (Secretary)

Absent: Garth Klimchuk, Chairman

Guest (via Zoom): Mark Rabinsky, Regional Coordinator, Green Communities Program, DOER

1. Cathy called the meeting to order at 4:00pm.
2. Approved meeting minutes of March 15, 2022 meeting. Bob, Cathy and Katherine approved.
3. Green Community (GC) Grant Program / Becket Wind Turbine Project
Mark attended the meeting to discuss the committee's potential application in October for a wind turbine and other aspects of the GC program. He began by expressing his doubts about funding for the turbine project. Al stated that we had been told that the committee could apply for such a project. Mark's concerns included wind/energy production being overstated, the maintenance required over time, variable wind speed, shadow cast in winter on surrounding buildings and opposition by neighbors. Cathy asked if we should do an official wind survey using an anemometer in order to prove adequate wind speeds.

In response, Mark said that Becket still had other projects that needed to be done first to make the town's buildings fossil-free. How many buildings had heat pumps so far? Al said that some buildings had been done but we would need to check Town records to be sure. Cathy stated that insulation and lighting in the buildings had been completed. Mark suggested getting the town's buildings audited by Eversource, contact person: Matthew McTigue (matthew.mctigue@eversource.com). Street lighting was another area to look at. Al asked if UMass was still doing auditing for towns. Mark mentioned that he is talking with schools about that and that Lauren Mattison (laurenm@umass.edu) at U. Mass may be involved in the effort.

The committee had previously discussed getting involved in pursuing energy grants for local schools but felt it was too complicated.

Cathy checked in with Finance Committee (husband Ron) following the meeting about the town funding a portion of the cost of the wind turbine. This is a possibility and we can even take several years to use this “capital”. This is done routinely by the Athenaeum.

Susan mentioned that the GC program seemed to be focused on funding for hybrid or EV police vehicles. Is that a possibility? Al said that the town had just bought a new hybrid police vehicle last year. Mark stated that the Ford hybrid Interceptor was recommended and that the GC program was giving \$5,000 toward such vehicles for this year only. He reminded the committee that we could apply for more than one item as long as the total was not more than \$200,000. He said the committee could apply for smaller items also like an anti-idling device for an ambulance. Mark will send information about fleet studies.

Susan asked Mark the following questions regarding the wind turbine application:

1. How do you verify wind speed? – do a wind study with an anemometer, length of time unclear – a year was ideal. Mark was going to clarify with his boss.
2. How do we show community support? – Unclear. Mark was going to clarify with his boss.
3. How do you define “shovel ready” for this project – basic planning is completed
4. Will matching funds help our application? – always helps.
5. Is Becket’s paperwork for previous GC grants completed? – Yes, Becket is eligible to apply for future grants.

The group discussed other means of funding particularly for the wind study. Was there a PPA(?) grant for wind projects? We should ask Garth about that. Mark mentioned that the META grant that Bill Caldwell submitted last year was declined perhaps due to lack of information. Cathy inquired about

the dates for next META grant cycle. Mark said that it opens in June with applications due in August and awards made in late Fall.

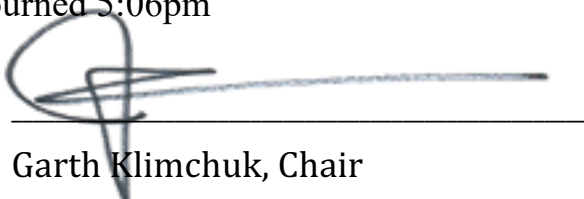
The committee thanked Mark for meeting with us.

The committee summarized their feelings about the meeting. Bob said he was disappointed that the A/C at Town Hall had not been connected to the new heat pumps.

Action items:

1. **The committee** will have a conference call with Garth within the next two weeks when he is available. Cathy will send out an email week of 4/24 to set this up.
 2. **Garth** - The committee will ask Garth to contact Hudson to ask: a.) cost of a wind study and who to contact for it; b.) request a “guarantee” of production for the 15kW wind turbine; c.) current price for the monopole turbine. Also, the committee asked whether there was a PPA for wind projects?
 3. **Bob** – Will ask Bev for a copy of the META grant to see why it may have been declined. Also, he will contact Bill Caldwell re where to find paperwork about the status of the town buildings (insulation, lighting, heat pumps, etc.)
 4. **General note** - Get the town’s buildings audited by Eversource, contact person: Matthew McTigue (matthew.mctigue@eversource.com).
 5. **Mark** - will send information about fleet studies.
4. Next meeting Tuesday, May 17, 2022, 4 PM hybrid In-person and Zoom meeting.

Adjourned 5:06pm



Garth Klimchuk, Chair