

WALLINGFORD ENERGY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the March 6, 2019 Meeting

Ken Welch called the meeting to order at 6:31. Present: John Armstrong, Katherine MacLauchlan, Ralph Nimtz, Ken Welch and Jay White.

Officers and Schedule. Ken recalled a conversation he had recently had with Sandi Switzer about our responsibility to officially let the town know who was leading the community. John moved that the current chairs be re-elected. Ken asked Jay whether the two of them should continue to serve. Jay responded that he thought it would be a good idea to give others a chance to lead. Ken replied that he would like to serve for one more year. Jay asked Katherine whether she would be willing to serve as vice chair. "What's involved?" she asked. "Would I have to prepare agendas?"

"Only if I'm not available," Ken replied.

Jay moved and Ralph seconded Katherine's designation as vice chair. There was unanimous consent.

Ken explained that we also need to formalize our meeting schedule as the first Tuesday after the first Monday at 6:30 at Town Hall. Jay moved (and Ralph seconded) maintaining this schedule. There were no objections.

Minutes. Jay moved (and Ralph once more seconded) the adoption of the February minutes. All voted Aye.

Energy Plan. John reported that he was gratified by the generally positive response residents at town meeting gave our announcement of the impending energy plan. "The next step is to find 175 to 100 acres for solar to our generation targets without creating eyesores." John also reported talking on town meeting night to a resident on Ice Bed Road who promised to show him some recently logged land. Ralph wondered whether developing such a parcel wouldn't mean putting a solar installation in the middle of the view from White Rocks. Katherine wondered why looking at solar panels was worse than looking down on roofs. Ken pointed out that we would need to get signed statements from affected property owners indicating that they would consider proposals to develop generation facilities on their land. Ralph opined that Wallingford is "blessed with gravel pits" and Jay commented that these and other despoiled land should be easy to identify on Google Earth. Ralph mentioned the flat roofs in the village and Ken asked him to discuss this opportunity with the True Temper leadership.

Thomas Hand's Electricity Proposal. There was a lengthy discussion of what questions we should provide to the selectboard when Thomas Hand will explain his company's proposal to offer the Town electricity from solar projects in the western part of the county. [This meeting was scheduled for the 18th but has been postponed.] The attachment to these minutes is the result of this discussion.

Plastic Bags. Should Wallingford pass an ordinance prohibiting merchants from offering single use plastic shopping bags? John wondered whether such an ordinance would have much effect considering our limited retail sector. Jay added that this issue was probably better addressed on the state level. Ken thought that it would nevertheless be useful to convene all the local players and see what we could work out. "This is the right thing to do," he explained. "We don't have to be confrontational." Katherine pointed out that major chains have switched to selling reusable bags. They're not stupid." Ralph promised to mention this effort to the Conservation Commission.

"Is that it?" Ken asked. Ralph mentioned something about pork chops. The meeting was adjourned at 7:51. The next meeting will be Tuesday, April 2 at 6:30.

— Submitted by John Armstrong