

Wallingford Energy Committee Minutes*

***These are unofficial Minutes subject to the approval at the next regular meeting.**

February 4, 2014

The meeting was called to order by Ken Welch at 6:35. Present: John Armstrong, Doug Blodgett, Ralph Nimtz, Anna Tally, Ken Welch and Jay White.

Jay moved that the minutes be approved with one minor change.

Anna announced that she has sold her house and be moving to Rutland in March with a move to Oregon in July. Doug asked whether “the only way to get off this committee is to move” but Ken pointed out that it wasn’t that easy. “I don’t see why you can’t live in Rutland and be on the committee.” We discussed who we might recruit to fill vacancies.

Wallingford Energy Fair. Ken proposed that the committee sponsor an energy awareness event for the spring. His an event an event with some “speakers of renown.” Others wanted a more hands on event. Ralph suggested a demonstration of pellet boilers; Anna thought we should focus on weatherization. Ken promised to check with Vermont Technical College about using their energy truck. Sites were proposed. Jay suggested the side yard of the Masonic Temple; others proposed the yard behind the library; Ralph’s house; Ken thought the front yard of the school would be best. Since School Street does not get a lot of traffic, John proposed putting a banner across Route 7, not just on the day of the event but for a week or more earlier. Ken commented that this could become a big event if we were to invite “people who want to show off technology such as Pellerly, SameSun and an experienced heat pump installer.”

Doug thought we had enough time to be ready to hold the Fair on Greenup Day, Saturday, May 3. Ken proposed that we devote the March meeting to a planning session.

WES. Ken began a discussion of the bond issue for repairs and upgrades to the school that will be put before the voters on Town Meeting Day. “You’re up, Jay.”

“Dana [RSSU Superintendent Dana Cole-Levesque] will be presenting his slide show to the School Board on Thursday and there will be a big presentation to the public on February 21 here at Town Hall. We will also be sending out a mailing.” Ken asked whether Jay will make a presentation. “That’s not my thing, Ken. But I will be there to answer questions.”

The presentation will also include posters and the architectural plans for the project, plans that will also be displayed in the library and the post office. “The problem with the plans,” Jay explained, “is that plans can’t show most of the project. The vents don’t show. Neither do the electronic controls, the replacement of electrical equipment in the kitchen or the upgrades to the roof. And the problems with the roof on the old part of the building are dramatic. There were recent leaks in two mechanical rooms that had streams of water the size of your finger. One of these streams just missed a rack of computer networking equipment.

“The other thing to worry about is that if the roof on the old building continues to deteriorate, a layer of gypsum-based decking will start to flake — and that would release asbestos. The asbestos is perfectly safe so long as the decking is intact but people need to understand that we have to act.”

Ken asked what would happen if the town does nothing.

“You’d need to replace the oil burners in five to ten years. You could replace the room ventilators as they fail, but if you did that, heated air would continue to be wasted in the exhaust. The kitchen appliances would continue to trigger usage fees from GMP. In short, the school would continue to spend \$75,000 a year on energy, a figure that is almost certain to increase over time. And again, there’s the problem with the roof.”

Jay went over the architectural plan to explain the projects to increase security and provide an elevator to give disabled students access to the lower floor and the stage of the gym. “The entire project is budgeted at \$1.1 million. Most of that is paid for by energy savings. What’s left is about \$25 per \$100,000 in assessed value. That’s about the cost of a tank of gas for most property

owners. But we're aware that the proposal could be voted down. If it is, the school board is likely to rewarn and hold an election in April. We also need to keep in mind is that none of the return on investment calculations include incentives. We're confident that EV will help out with lighting and Dana is working to get help from the state with the pellet boilers."

Street Lighting. John reported that the Fire District reports a surprisingly small reduction in street lighting electrical expense after the installation of he LED street lights.

Finally, Ken proposed that the committee give Anna a plaque to acknowledge her service — a chocolate plaque.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, March 4 at 6:30.

Submitted by John Armstrong.