

WALLINGFORD ENERGY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the October 8, 2019 Meeting

Present: John Armstrong, Katherine MacLauchlan, Rob Stubbins, Carol Tashie, Ken Welch and Jay White.

“We’ll do this quick,” Ken declared as he called the meeting to order at 6:35.

Minutes. Jay moved adoption of the June minutes. Katherine seconded. There were no objections.

Shopping Bags. Ken noted that the committee had not spent its budget and wondered whether we should continue to pursue commissioning some reusable shopping bags. Carol thought we should. Others said it depended on how we would give them away and what message they would send.

Energy Plan. John brought the committee up to date on the plan. “It’s now at revision 20 and the punch list is getting short. RRPC’s review, however, got postponed until November. Meanwhile Sandi was in touch and says she has requests to see the plan. I don’t think it’s premature to start sharing it as a pdf. What do you think?”

The group discussed it. Carol wondered whether we could share it as a two to three page summary. Rob agreed. John was not convinced. “It’s not a two to three page story. I think we need to look for some money to print it. Yes, it can go out as a pdf link on the town site, but there still are reasons to read things as print. You can scan more easily. The text is designed to be easy to scan with frequent headings, graphics and call out quotes. I really don’t envision someone sitting down and reading all 76 pages at once. I think people will browse.”

Carol was concerned about using virgin paper and color ink. Ken proposed that we print out two nice copies and leave one of them at the town office and the other one at the library. Someone suggested that we see if RRPC could make some copies with their color copier. Katherine suggested checking with Express Copy in Manchester.

Jay said that we don’t have a mandate to promote the plan. “That’s the responsibility of the Planning Commission.” Ken suggested that all we have to do is present a copy to the

Planning Commission and leave it up to them. "Am I wrong?" John reminded the group that the Planning Commission asked us to do the energy plan. "We're the ones to explain it. Remember that after it is approved by the region and by the Selectboard, it still has to win a majority by secret ballot." Katherine commented that the outcome of votes of this kind is to a large degree determined by how the question is asked. John felt that there was really only one way to ask it: "Shall the Wallingford energy plan as passed by the Planning Commission and the Selectboard be approved by the town?"

Katherine reminded us that there would have to be two presentations to the public. "We could give the bags away at these events. Carol suggested that we use the bag as a carrot and John endorsed this idea. Carol asked about the cost of the bags. Rob promised to check with his printer.

John returned to the idea of putting the current draft up on the town website. [John spoke with Sandi about this and she was concerned that there might not be space on the site for the report. John recalled that his Dropbox site has room and that all Sandi needed was a link.] Katherine suggested we send the plan to key people. Rob suggested that this be followed up with personal visits.

Other Agenda Items. There was a discussion of various rebates from Efficiency Vermont and Green Mountain Power. These can come to \$900 for a smaller heat pump and \$400 for a heat pump clothes dryer.

Katherine suggested that we share this type of information rather than just putting it in the minutes. Carol asked whether the energy committee has its own web page. "If we learn things, we should share them." Carol suggested that perhaps Sandi could help us with this. Katherine spoke of using Gmail in her business. "What you do is set up a content calendar. You know ahead of time what message to send when. You can set up your 'Happy Earth Day' message months ahead of time. I just want to be sure that if we do this don't wind up getting emails from 100 strangers."

Ken reported about progress with contacts at Efficiency Vermont. "They have people who really understand water supplies and wastewater treatment and how to save energy. Jay, will you join me to make a presentation to the Fire District? Hopefully we can just hand things off to EV."

John said that he had seen signs that we are getting to an inflection point with electric vehicles. Tesla is really getting into volume sales with their Model 3. A Tesla sales rep showed me a picture of a huge field in Westchester County filled with new cars. And then there's the Chinese. If you want to register a conventional car in Beijing you have to enter a 20,000 person raffle that awards five plates. If you ask to register an electric, you get the plates immediately." Rob agreed with this momentum and described attending an electrical contractor meeting in Houston where all anyone could talk about was EVs and chargers.

Carol reminded us that it was dinner time. The meeting was adjourned at 7:35. The next meeting will be Tuesday, November 5 at 6:30 at Town Hall.

— Submitted by John Armstrong