

Buckland Energy Committee

Meeting Minutes: 27 January 2021, 7:00 p.m. (held via Buckland Zoom account)

Present: Committee Members: Michael Novack, Penny Novack, Margaret Olin, Harvey Schaktman, Brian Summer

Facilitator: Brian Summer

Scribe: Margaret Olin

1. Open the meeting.

2. Review and approve minutes from 23 November 2020 meeting. (No meeting in December)

- Approved unanimously, with date correction.

3. Discussion of solarize programs – past, present, & future – including state/federal incentives for residents, businesses, and municipalities, community solar initiatives; moving forward with awarded META Grant for Community Shared Solar feasibility study and approved proposal from Northeast Solar (currently in Phase 1)

- Direct Energy Solar moved clerical work around SRECS to different company; questions about whether billing also affected (Ellen will find out the name of the company.)

4. Discussion of local and regional energy-related issues, including:

- MCAP
- Rail transport of fossil and other fuels; concerns about derailments, remaining railroad ties and debris along tracks
- State-proposed energy legislation, including proposed “woodlands partnership”; response to Northern Pass; PACE Program & Green Works
- Alternative electric power suppliers; regional municipal electricity aggregation plan reporting from December meeting with CPG
- MassSave program updates
- New Massachusetts programs: (through Mass CEC and DOER; Center for EcoTechnology --CET)
- Municipal lighting/streetlights
- Recycle-able/biodegradable plastic bags; single-use plastics
- Rail Transport: questions about whether or not sale of PanAm to CSX has gone through
- Woodlands Partnership
 - discussed the apparent practice of some European countries using wood pellets from N. America as a way to “lower” carbon production, using calculations that consider the pellets, but not the carbon from by pellet production or transportation.
 - discussed proposed Springfield biomass power plant: noted proposed location in economically disadvantaged community; likely to use biomass from the South (use from Mohawk Woodlands Partnership forests apparently also under discussion

<https://www.clf.org/blog/standing-with-springfield-against-biomass/>

<https://www.masslive.com/news/2020/12/sens-ed-markey-elizabeth-warren-oppose-springfield-biomass-project-by-palmer-renewable-energy.html>

- Municipal Electricity Aggregation Plan Updates
 - discussion of 07 December public forum with Colonial Power: (in attendance: Ellen, Brian, Margaret, Harvey (part); Heather; and 3 Buckland residents; 3 representatives from Colonial Power (Mark, Denise, Stuart): Forum regarding rate increase approved by state in spite of contract
 - discussion of 20 January 2021 email from Mark (Colonial Power) regarding Low-Income Community Solar and discount for residential use

<https://masmartsolar.com/>

5. Update on past Green Communities Grant applications; planning for 2021

- *continue discussion on potential projects to include in future applications, especially those that will bring us closer to the 20% reduction in energy use marker*
- *DOER updates?*

- Margaret will follow up with Heather for updates

6. Continue discussion of future public events, including:

- *Future winserts workshop? Public forum on energy issues?*
- *Fall/Winter 2020 film series and/or discussion groups;*
- *budget for events*

- Not discussed.

7. Update on MVP Grant current and future; Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

- Not discussed.

8. Report back about other meetings/ activities in which committee members participate.

Margaret: meeting on 17 January – organized by Northfield Area Progressives – with Jo Comerford and Paul Mark; shared meeting video link

9. Other items not reasonably anticipated

- None

10. Choose facilitator and scribe for next meeting.

- (Regular meetings discontinued while state of emergency in effect; during this time, meetings will be called & posted on an as-needed basis, and held via teleconference.)

11. Adjourn meeting