

## Buckland Energy Committee

**Meeting Minutes: 29 July 2019, 7:00 p.m., Buckland Town Hall**

**Present:** Committee Members: Ellen Kaufmann, Michael Novack, Penny Novack, Margaret Olin, Harvey Schaktman, Brian Summer; Guest: Greg Garrison, President of Northeast Solar

**Facilitator:** Energy Committee Members

**Scribe:** Margaret Olin

---

*1. Open the meeting.*

*2. Discussion, Q&A about the possibility of Community Shared Solar (CSS) for Buckland*

*• invited guest: Greg Garrison, president of Northeast Solar, which is the Hatfield company that has been working with Wendell on their CSS project*

- Community Shared Solar (CSS) typically is a power plant that gives some benefit to the electric customer (a possible reduction in the supply charge, or the satisfaction of supporting solar production); however, investors buy it, and they get the financial benefits/incentives from the solar production.
- To keep benefits in community, an alternative is the Community Solar Cooperative model:
  - It's okay for communities to apply to create Community Solar Cooperatives under CSS
  - Same as CSS but smaller scale, easier to permit, site, get interconnections
  - Allows members of coop to own powerplant: Each member of coop buys number of panels they want (up to 120% of their average electricity usage). Customers receive directly the same benefits, credits, rebates, access to Mass Solar Loan program as homeowners installing solar – for roughly the same cost (the additional cost of the lease is offset by the reduced cost of installation)
  - With a coop, as little as 2-3 acres could supply enough electricity for approximately 50 households.
  - Although we don't know yet how large a Buckland site might be (no more than 3 acres) or how much electricity it would produce, a reference point is the Wendell Community Solar Cooperative model (2018) plan:
    - 1.33 acres
    - serving approx. 55 members
    - 1116 panels
    - System Size: 362.7kW DC 250kW AC (that would produce approximately 470,000kWh the first year).
- Possibility of coop leasing Buckland-owned land? Town would benefit from leasing land to coop (payment in lieu of taxes PILOT)

- Discussion of possible Coop logistics:

- When lease bill would be billed to the coop, and members would pay proportionally to their panel ownership
- Coop has the agreement with owner, utility provider, performs allocation of benefits to members
- Coop is the buyer/seller of panels ; Coop has a board: (Wendell model has Energy Committee for 1<sup>st</sup> year board, then elections); NE solar trained board with software, (stayed on board for 6 moths?); option to retain NE solar for the admin work; Typically 1 paid admin worker sufficient
- Coop bylaws spell out prorated share; credits flow through coop to individual owners
- Two transactions (Wendell model): individual buys panels from NE solar, 2<sup>nd</sup> transaction is joining coop (\$500 – seed money to get the coop started)
- If sell panels back to coop, coop members have first right of refusal; can't sell for more than value
- Northeast Solar: 10-yr warranty on what they build: for first 2 years, do free servicing on system. Coop owns the power plant

- Next steps if get grant:

- Locate possible sites to host solar installation
- Select solar consultant to work with town – Once selected they will work with the town to complete the following items
- Do site assessments on each location – identify if all or only some sites are viable
- Do a preliminary array design for each site
- Prioritize site location development – select first site for development
- Construct surveyed layout and planning board permitting packet for selected site
- Make wetlands delineation and produce permit package for Conservation Commission – If needed
- Finalize permitting for selected site
- Produce solar array electrical engineering one line for submission with interconnection
- Create and submit interconnection packet
- Create a community outreach program for future solar cooperative participants

### *3. Other items not reasonably anticipated*

none

### *4. Adjourn meeting.*