

# Buckland Energy Committee

**Meeting Minutes: 26 May 2021, 7:00 p.m. (held via Buckland Zoom account)**

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

**Facilitator:** Ellen Kaufmann

**Scribe:** Margaret Olin

---

1. *Open the meeting.*
2. *Review and approve minutes from 27 January 2021 meeting. (No meetings in February, March, or April)*
  - Approved unanimously as written.
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 (still in Phase 1).*
  - Ellen: update on Direct Energy Solar (the provider for Buckland’s Solarize Mass program) DES (residential solar) now operating under name Astrum Solar <https://www.astrum-solar.com/> and apparently has partnered with Omnidian for customer support , and to manage SRECs and maintenance <https://www.omnidian.com/astrum-solar-customer-care/> Note new contact information for Buckland residents who participated in the program.
  - We’ve been getting a number of mailings from alternative solar providers: urge recipients to carefully read “fine print” regarding fees and contracts, particularly in Clean Choice Energy’s mailings.
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
  - Continuing to follow articles in local media regarding Springfield biomass plant, Woodlands Partnership. Noted current “My Turns” WP discussion in Recorder among landowners, foresters, and environmentalists. Buckland is not currently a member of the Woodlands Partnership. (The deadline for towns to decide whether or not to join the Partnership was 09 August 2020; the next opportunity for towns to decide whether or not to opt in is 3 years from that date.)

- Streetlights:
  - Noted continuing discussion among some residents about the Buckland Streetlight Project: some seem unaware of the available process for requesting shields, or of accurate information on fixture lumens (brightness) and/or "temperature" (color).
  - Noted recent (local and in media) references to the MA House and Senate Bills in current legislative session regarding "Dark Skies": <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/192/H3306> and <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H2858>
  - Reaffirmed EC support for the work completed under the Buckland Streetlight Project and the resources in place to assist residents with any concerns.
  - For more information, urge residents to watch video of the 11 August 2020 public Selectboard meeting during which the streetlight project was discussed in depth: <http://fallscable.com/portfolio/buckland-select-board-august-11-2020/>
- No news on plastic bag situation

*5. Update on past Green Communities Grant applications; planning for 2021-22*

- 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 winsets workshop? Public forum on energy issues?
- Summer/Fall 2021 film series and/or discussion groups;
- budget for events
- Not discussed.

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

- Buckland submitted its first MVP (Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness) Action Grant application: *Watershed-Based Assessment and Climate Resiliency Plan for the Clesson Brook Watershed*. On 10 May, Heather sent an email (including participants in the MVP process) with information about the application plus a PDF copy.

*8. Discussion of meeting format after state lifts emergency*

- All in favor of continuing Zoom format for meetings, if allowable under local and state regulations.

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

- None

*10. Other items not reasonably anticipated*

- DEP is offering free testing of private well water because of proliferation of PFAS. Harvey will contact BOH about that program. (Explore possibility of sharing testing info at town meeting?)
- Recent mailing from Eversource to residents regarding upcoming Eversource meter replacement: the new meters will not be “smart meters” (Mass has OPT OUT program for customers of utilities using those.) Eversource will be putting in newer AMR meters (which do not have 2-way communication).

*11. Choose facilitator and scribe for next meeting.*

- Planning for 16 June meeting – back to third-Wednesday schedule.

*11. Adjourn meeting*