

## Sharon Energy Committee Meeting

Monday, February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022 @ 04:45 PM

Sharon Town Office

15 School Street, Sharon VT 05065

2022-02-28 16:45

*This meeting was held in-person and through teleconference in compliance with the Vermont Open Meeting Law with electronic participation.*

Present at the Town Office: Ryan Haac (EC), Zach Stremlau, Jill Wilcox (EC)

On the phone: Dee Gish (EC), Judi Lowell, and Craig Meier

Ryan called the meeting together at 16:51 (4:51 PM).

### 1. **Public Comment Period**

Zach introduced himself and communicated his interest in community and desire to engage in issues related to climate change.

Judi and Craig introduced themselves and noted their interests in efficient technologies and solar energy.

Ryan strongly condemned Russia for their invasion of Ukraine, acknowledged the ongoing human tragedy, and lauded the resolve and bravery of Ukrainians.

### 2. **Approve previous meeting minutes**

Minutes from Monday, January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022 (2022-01-24 16:45) were approved by Jill. The approval was seconded by Dee.

### 3. **Intermunicipal Regional Energy Coordinator updates**

Ryan provided some background on the IREC position and summarized the scope, work, and accomplishments to date. He reported that the Baxter Mountain heating system RFP bid is currently active and bids are due back in early March. Additionally, comments were briefly discussed and solicited for the draft Regional Climate Action Plan.

Ryan also mentioned that he met with representatives of [Power-D.city](#) regarding IREC towns participating in a pilot project with them. They seek to quantify and track carbon emissions, putting them in the context of targets the Town/State has in place. The pilot program would last for 6 months and there are no fees for participating. At the end of the program, Power-D.city would present the Town(s) with a proposal to continue the program (when the service would then be fee-based). Interest in participating will be discussed at the upcoming Steering Committee meeting; Ryan will collect more details and report back at the next EC meeting.

4. **Upper Valley E-bike Loaning Library (UVELL) Update**

Ryan reported that Sharon will have four e-bikes from April 27<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup> for lending to the community. He is confirming use of the shed at Sharon Elementary with the Principal. We discussed the basic lending schedule that Ryan will prepare in March and the need for volunteers to help distribute the bikes and that a full orientation session will be provided when the bikes are dropped off in Sharon in late April. Due to the evolving organizational structure of the program, it's not clear if we need to contribute monetarily by the program. Ryan had previously offered to contribute from the EC's annual budget but mentioned that the program may potentially be funded from other sources now.

5. **2022 Energy Burden Program with Vital Communities**

Ryan described the program and why he felt it was important to continue Sharon's involvement. The first direct mailings to Mobile Homes will be sent the first week of March. Vital Communities recently finished updating the resource lists for 2022 and Ryan will be receiving a printed stack of informative brochures that detail financial support services available (by income). Ryan will send Dee a \*.pdf version to post on the Sharon Facebook page.

6. **Window Dressers 2022**

We discussed the program and expressed a desire to bring the program to Sharon and outlined the commitments required from volunteers to facilitate the program. Dee shared her positive experience participating in previous community builds in other towns and supported bringing the program to Sharon. We discussed potential partner towns (e.g., Royalton, Barnard, Pomfret, Bethel, Tunbridge) and build locations (e.g., Sharon Elementary gymnasium or Seven Stars). No decisions were made.

Ryan mentioned that at the IREC Steering Committee meeting later in the week, representatives from other towns will be considering utilizing the IREC for some of the associated tasks or roles. Ryan stated that he would only be comfortable with this option if we hosted the program on our own or if the partner town was in the IREC group.

7. **Actions on climate change and Real carbon solutions**

Jill described a project she is taking on with members of the Bradford and Hartland Energy Committees: to create and maintain a reliable online resource that "boils down" complex issues surrounding energy, society, and climate change. She shared that it will potentially be called Critical Mass Climate and is intended for residents (including legislators).

Zach mentioned that he was interested in exploring opportunities for "mutual aid" in Town, that is, the community engaged in helping itself. He presented his initial idea of having a central hub to exchange the goods for consolidating shopping trips. He mentioned Coburn's "community shelf" as an example of a similar system. A cubby system based at the Lighthouse was discussed and so was the involvement of the Town

Nurse. Jill offered to organize a meeting with the Town Nurse, the Minister at the Sharon Church, the Lighthouse, and the Food Shelf to discuss the idea.

Dee brought up the idea of putting together welcome baskets for the Town Clerk to distribute to new residents. The baskets would contain information about Town/community contacts and organizations, local products, and potentially a community directory (i.e., with all businesses in Sharon represented). Ryan agreed to follow up on the directory and we agreed to consider other items to populate the baskets.

8. **Other business**

Dee mentioned that an Electric Vehicle Day gathering was taking place in Norwich on April 23 from 10 AM to 1 PM. She offered to post announcements to the listserv and the Sharon Facebook page.

Ryan asked Zach if he wanted to join the EC; he agreed to join the group.

9. Next meeting is scheduled for March 28, 2022 @ 4:45 PM (2022-03-28 16:45)

Ryan adjourned the meeting at 6:03 PM.