

Sharon Energy Committee Meeting

Monday, March 28th, 2022 @ 04:45 PM

Sharon Town Office

15 School Street, Sharon VT 05065

2022-03-28 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), Jill Wilcox¹ (EC)

On the phone: Dee Gish (EC), Zach Stremlau (EC)

Ryan called the meeting together at 16:50 (4:50 PM).

1. **Public Comment Period**

No comments.

2. **Approve previous meeting minutes**

Ryan noted an addition to the minutes that Jill had previously requested. With that addition, the minutes from Monday, February 28th, 2022 (2022-02-28 16:45) were approved by Dee, which was seconded by Zach.

3. **Intermunicipal Regional Energy Coordinator updates**

Ryan noted two possible dates for an inter-EC meeting regarding the Regional Climate Action Plan (RCAP) developed by the group: May 24 (5 to 7 PM) or May 26 (5 to 7 PM). Zach noted that May 24th was his birthday; Ryan suggested that we request the later date. Location for the meeting is yet undetermined. Ryan agreed to send the draft RCAP and comments received from ECs in other IREC towns around to the EC.

At the prior Selectboard meeting, Ryan and Geoff discussed the bids for a new heating system at the Baxter Library with the SB. The SB requested an estimate of the operating cost compared to the existing heating system. In response, Efficiency Vermont is performing an analysis that will be reported at the next SB meeting.

We discussed the mention of a potential expansion for the library and how that would affect the intention of a new heating system. We generally agreed that since such a project is not imminent but the heating system upgrade was a pressing matter (due to the existing heating system well beyond its expected lifetime), it made sense to go proceed with the heat pump project.

Ryan also provided an update on his ongoing discussions with the [Power-D.city](#) pilot program for quantifying carbon emissions among participant towns. The program

¹ Arrived at 5:10 PM, during Agenda Item #6

would likely be based around collecting the data we are most lacking, e.g., estimated emissions data from resident/commercial activities. He will check back in to the Steering Committee for further interest among towns and next steps.

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

Ryan reported that he completed the schedule for Sharon's time period with the bikes and will distribute it once he completes a shared document with the schedule/sign-up sheet. We should be receiving the bikes on the evening of Tuesday, April 26th (to be confirmed). Todd Chewning from Cowbell Bike Shop will be delivering them to the Elementary School and giving a tutorial/training session. The bikes will be located/stored in a locked shed at the Elementary School.

5. **2022 Energy Burden Program**

Ryan relayed the fact that mailings had begun and he had already received a call from a resident seeking more information. He recently received some printed informational flyers and will be dropping them by the food shelf soon.

6. **Mutual Aid Shelf**

Jill and Zach have sought a direct meeting with community partners but were unable to field a meeting this month. Zach will reach out to the working group to reschedule. Zach mentioned some issues that had been raised regarding hosting the shelf on the Lighthouse porch, such as security concerns and potential structural issues on the porch.

We discussed the potential organizational benefits and associated reliability of having the shelf operate during typical food shelf hours (Tu/Th 4:30 to 6:30 PM). Dee noted that the food shelf was quite busy during one of their two periods of operation the prior week. Zach noted the potential for utilizing services at the retailer/grocer of being able to receive the order, process payment, and collect items. We noted that having the retailer handle the payment and collection of requested items would significantly simplify the organizational process of the Mutual Aid Shelf.

Zach also mentioned some potential collaboration with Tri-Valley Transit (TVT) through a program they have that fosters shared grocery trips.

7. **Actions on Climate Change and Real Carbon Solutions**

We discussed the fact that consumer-based solutions are often framed with actions that require financial investments in products or services by individuals (e.g., solar panels, electric vehicles, heat pumps, weatherization). These kinds of solutions generally exclude marginalized communities and folks facing poverty conditions in their lives. In reality, "everyone needs to be brought along."

Jill attended a webinar regarding the upcoming Strafford Community Solar project. They are apparently seeking people to buy in from surrounding towns. She also noted her need for a new range and was actively pursuing an induction stove. She also mentioned the repair café idea. Dee said that BALE was considering doing a repair café at their annual community festival on the SoRo green (Thursday, June 9th), so there may be some collaboration possible there.

Ryan expressed the difficulty he has faced in attempting to consciously purchase hard goods that are not designed for planned obsolescence, i.e., they can be repaired (not just replaced when there is some trouble), i.e., consumer products that are not disposable. He wondered if we could begin collecting a list of quality companies and/or products with lower embodied energy. Zach suggested that a list of local repair technicians would be a necessary piece of this puzzle.

Ryan mentioned the promise of many of the ideas discussed at the 4-Town Coalition's Food and Farm Resilience meeting the week prior. Dee mentioned Cat Buxton's proposal for an educational workday at SES for rebuilding their compost bins and the impending birth of a community garden in Sharon on TSA property on Route 14.

8. **Other Business**

Dee reminded us about the Electric Vehicle Day event in Norwich on April 23 from 10 AM to 1 PM. She inquired about getting an announcement on the Sharon town website and Ryan offered to follow up.

9. Next meeting is scheduled for April 25, 2022 @ 4:45 PM (2022-04-25 16:45)

Ryan adjourned the meeting at 5:41 PM.