

Sharon Energy Committee Meeting

Monday, August 22nd, 2022 @ 04:45 PM

Sharon Town Office

15 School Street, Sharon VT 05065

2022-08-22 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 Wilcox (EC)

On the phone: Dee Gish (EC)

Ryan called the meeting together at 16:59 (4:59 PM).

1. **Public Comment Period**

No comments.

2. **Approve previous meeting minutes**

The minutes from the prior meeting (2022-07-25 16:45) were approved.

3. **Intermunicipal Regional Energy Coordinator updates**

Ryan reported that the heat pump installation at the Baxter Library is nearly complete and he is expecting to attend a training/commissioning session in the coming week(s).

He also mentioned that he has had some discussion and correspondence with the Selectboard about their priorities for the IREC. He is slated to report back to a SB meeting next month to receive their feedback. He still did receive some feedback at the last meeting, notably regarding the IREC's potential assistance with the capital investment plan and also with providing information and/or event opportunities for how residents can manage their properties using more ecologically friendly practices. Ryan mentioned that the latter is one of the IREC Steering Committee priorities that came out of the Regional Community Action Plan so far. He is on the sub-committee for those events and offered that other EC members (or anyone in the community, really) could join. Dee and Jill suggested that they may like to participate in that group.

4. **Mutual Aid Shelf**

Ryan will reach out to Zach to see if he is still interested in organizing and being involved. Jill agreed to arrange a meeting with the stake holders. She requested that other EC members send her their vision for the project for consideration.

5. **Share and Repair Fair**

Ryan lamented that the current date/time of the event significantly overlaps with the Sprouty (and he has committed to volunteering at both). He asked Jill to take the consideration of the overlapping events into account to the other event organizers and

suggest either having the event start later or continue into the afternoon. Jill stated that some “fixers” are still needed, as well as volunteers to help setup/take down the site. She also requested funding assistance for the event, and the EC agreed to provide \$50 from our budget.

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

Dee mentioned that the Sharon Community Garden will have increased activity once school starts again soon. She mentioned a need for cardboard for sheet mulching and Jill mentioned a couple good options: Joe’s Equipment in West Leb and Jonas (VT Bike and Brew) in Thetford.

Jill explained that the LISTEN Center Garden in WRJ was an untapped opportunity for community collaboration, beautification, and utility for that area. She is trying to connect Cat Buxton and a LISTEN employee to see what can be done.

We pondered the possibility of a [residential] electric mower lending library (similar to UVELL for e-bikes). Ryan mentioned that Geoff has contacts for commercial mower companies and they are willing to do demos, but this equipment is not applicable to homeowners. This discussion morphed into an idea for an event that features products, services, and lifestyle choices that are “better for the climate.” It was mentioned that Steve Gagliardone had organized a similar event several years ago and we should reach out to him about his means and methods and consider trying this again. We set a goal to target Earth Day next year and could potentially occur outdoors at the Library.

We also discussed ways of distributing seasonal excess produce. Dee noted that the Food Shelf previously had fresh food available on the picnic table in the past. Ryan noted that a “Free Food Pantry” is setup in South Royalton in front of BALE. If this program were to occur, he offered to check in on it several times a week once he starts bringing his kids to and from school in the next weeks. Dee agreed to reach out to Mary Stoddard to understand the potential possibilities.

7. **Other Business**

Ryan asked for feedback from other members on two potential policy initiatives for the Town that have grown out of the IREC collaboration:

- 1) A one-page “Intent to Build” form that provides the Town Listers with information about what is being built throughout the Town, as the current system of showing up unannounced when they “get wind” of something is just not satisfactory/reasonable.
- 2) Implementation of “Green Buying Guidelines” for the Town. He explained that he felt the policy would be meaningful in ensuring that the Town consider not only the direct cost of capital expenses but also the environmental impact and the potential volatility (in cost and supply) of the fuel consumed. He has a draft that has been partially pared down but, in his opinion, still contains far too much bureaucracy and paperwork. He continued that he felt that policy should not be a burden but, rather, should rather act as a tool to ensure that the Town consciously and meaningfully applies funds to its operation. The Baxter Library heat pump is a good example of this potential policy in action (i.e., procuring a modern heat pump system instead of replacing an old fuel oil boiler).

Members were generally supportive of implementing both initiatives. Ryan agreed to keep them

8. Next meeting is scheduled for September 26, 2022 @ 4:45 PM (2022-09-26 16:45)

Ryan adjourned the meeting at 5:59 PM.

DRAFT