

St. Johnsbury Town Energy Committee

May 2, 2022

Members Present: Elmore Dickstein, Steve Isham, Pam Parker (Chair), John Ajamie, Lynn Wurzburg, David Zajko, Ben Deede

Guests: Robert Michael, Scott Campbell, Robert Swartz, Justin Crocker, Chad Whitehead: Town Manager, Don Smith

1. Introduction

The Committee and Guests introduced themselves.

2. Minutes

The minutes from the April meeting were reviewed and accepted.

3. Current and On-Going Events

● St Johnsbury Bike Month

May 5: St. Johnsbury School celebrates “Walk and Roll To School Day” by encouraging families to walk or bicycle all, or part of the way to school. Students who participate will receive free prizes. LinkVT will be on hand after school helping students and staff with bike repair while all enjoying tacos in celebration of Cinco de Mayo

May 14: The Town of St. Johnsbury will be hosting the annual Bike4Life Fair at Four Seasons Park on Main Street. Kids can register their bikes and get their own bike licenses. Free bike helmets will be distributed while they last, donated by NVRH. Riders can blend their own bike smoothie, or try out their bike skills on the protected bike loop. The Elks Club and the Kiwanians are providing free food from the grill and Median DJ services. Adults can demo an e-bike thanks to Lamoille Valley Bike Tours

May 15: NEK Prosper! and Danville Energy Committee are co-hosting a Family Bike Ride from St. Johnsbury starting at the Three Rivers Pavilion and going along the Lamoille Rail Trail to Danville. Breakfast will be served at the Pavilion at 9 am with the group ride departing at 10 am. There will be lunch and celebratory activities at noon where the ride ends at the Danville Train Depot.

Through May 18: The Traveling E-bike Lending Library from Local Motion. All times are booked.

● Green Up Day

Saturday May 7. Bags can be picked up at St. J Subaru on Memorial Drive between 8am and 4 PM. Refreshments and lunch will be served.

Committee members John, David, Pam, Ben, Steve will met at 9 am at St J Subaru to pick up bags and decide where to clean up. Lynn and Justin Crocker may join us if their schedules permit.

- Composter Education and Sale

The town has 26 Soil Saver box composters and a number of in-ground cones that the town has available to residents at cost: \$45 for above ground composters and \$60 for in-ground ones. The committee is taking on the sale of the composters for the town. Pam is trying to arrange for selling them at a Farmer's Market. We will also promote the sale through social media and be available for pick up by buyers.

Pam and Steve went to the Town Garage to physically see the composters. DPW staff said that they could make them accessible so we could distribute them ourselves.

Chad stated that the best form of payment would be by checks, made out to St Johnsbury Town Clerk.

- Report on Armory Project

Pam reported on an April 18 meeting on renewable energy for the Armory renovation project. Attending the meeting were Assistant Town Manager Joe Kasprzak, mechanical consultants for the Armory project, architects, Freeman Corey from Green Mountain Power, Scott Campbell, John Ajamie and Pam Parker.

The current first choice is to put in a geothermal system with redundant heat pumps.

Fossil fuel would be used only for the back-up generator.

Scott suggested that the building design include more insulation, and John Ajamie suggested the inclusion of EV chargers in the parking lot.

Pam Parker and Steve Isham will participate in a walk thru at the Armory that Joe Kasprzak is conducting with Freeman Corey of Green Mountain Power on Tuesday, May 3

5. Free energy audit of public buildings by Efficiency VT

Last one done in 2010. NVDA is interested in assisting the town to arrange with EfficiencyVT for the energy audits. Chad suggested that the Town Garage and the Mechanical building would be good candidates for audits. The Water Treatment may possibly be a candidate, but the Waste Water Facility may not because of upcoming upgrades to the plant.

Pam will follow up with Allie Webster at NVDA.

6. Report on Weatherization 101 training

Pam reported that 15 people submitted applications. Eight were accepted, which is a full class. ReSource Vermont with NETO are providing this training.

7. Community Planning for Increased Heat

Pam gave a summary of a Department of Health report on "Local Hot Weather Preparedness Guidance" that Allie Webster from NVDA forwarded to her and Chad.

Vermont is prepared for cold weather events, however, is not so prepared for hot weather events. Heat-related health risks are on the rise and will continue to be.

There are funds available to develop plans for heat-related events, but Pam was not sure how the funding worked. Pam will follow up with Allie.

Steve pointed out that the town has a thorough Local Emergency Management Plan, but it does not cover heat-related emergency. He stated that it could be added to the existing plan, but he has logistical concerns that would have to be addressed.

8. Tree Resource Subcommittee Report

Lynn reported that the Tree Resource Subcommittee is just getting starting. She posted on Front Porch Forum but did not receive any responses. Her next step is to reach out to the Northwoods Stewardship Center in East Charleston.

9. Upcoming Regional Events

Energy Fair in Sutton multipurpose room - May 14, 10-1 - free

Resiliency Conference in Northfield - May 20 -free

Window dressers - Fall 2022

10. Other Business

- Lynn reported on the Sophomore Stewardship Day at the Academy. An advisory group of students took over the EV parking spot with posters on EVs and comparing other countries' EV culture with that in the United States. It went well. Bevin Baker-Campbell and Lynn enjoyed spending time with the students.
- The committee talked about recycling plastics bags. They are not accepted at the transfer station or EZ Trash. NEKWMD does not accept them any longer as they could not find anyone who take them to recycle. Scott mentioned that TREX uses recycled plastic bags and related items to make their plastic wood products.
- In a related matter, the contract with Casella was mentioned. Chad stated that the town would need the assistance of a consultant to negotiate with Casella on a new contract as the town management does not have that particular skill set.

Next Meeting is Monday June 6 from 5:30 to 7:00 pm