

St. Johnsbury Town Energy Committee

April 4, 2022

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

Guests: Joe Kasprzak: Assistant Town Manager, Patricia Janssen: Chair of the Rental Housing Grant Review Committee, Bevin Barber-Campbell, Todd Campbell, Robert Michael, Scott Campbell, Don Smith

1. Introduction

The Committee and Guests introduced themselves.

2. Minutes

The minutes for March meeting were reviewed and accepted.

3. Rental Housing Improvement Grant

Assistant Town Manager Joe Kasprzak and Chair of the Rental Housing Grant Review Committee Patricia Janssen gave a presentation on St. Johnsbury's Rental Housing Grant program that is provided to landlords that complete capital improvements projects that bring the rental properties that result in more livable, sustainable, and marketable rental units for everyone. The program is managed by the town of St. Johnsbury.

Grant funds must be used for capital improvements to real properties that currently exist. It requires a 1:1 cash match up to \$3,000 per rental unit. Property owner can receive up to three grants annually. Each application is scored using a scoring system that is used to make final recommendations to the Select Board for approval.

Joe thanked the committee for its work and looks forward to our continued collaboration on various issues.

4. Regional Energy Committee March 31 Meeting

Pam reported that there was a great turnout with 37 folks attending, representing 11 towns and 12 energy partners. Efficiency Vermont, NETO, NEKCA, and Heat Squad for sharing resources and programs for alleviating energy burden and strengthening Vermont communities.

11 Towns were represented: Barnet, Brighton, Danville, Glover, Hardwick, Morgan, Newark, Peacham, Ryegate, St. Jay, Sutton

12 Energy Partners were represented: NVDA, NETO, Heat Squad, Efficiency Vermont, NEKCA, Capstone, USDA Rural Development, VECAN, Local Motion, Resource VT, BurnRight, All Earth Renewables

All materials, including the recording the meeting are available [On-line](#)

5. Upcoming Events

- E-bike events in May

Bevin reported on St. Johnsbury Bike Month events.

- The committee is co-hosting a five-week Local Motion's Traveling E-bike Lending Library with Link from April 14 to May 18.
 - E-bike demo at the Farmers' Market on April 16 and another after school (May 5)
 - St J School, Walk & Roll to School Day, May 5, 3pm
 - Bike Fair, May 14
 - Family Bike Ride - ST J to Danville, May 15
- Bevin will contact Jennifer Gray and Paul Weaver about this event.

Steve will contact Ben Deede for more information on these event to publicize on social media and the committee's e-mail list.

- Green Up Day publicity

Chad Whitehead asked the committee to publicize Green Up Day that will be held on May 7. Pam has contacted St. Jay Subaru to see if they will be hosting Green Up Day again this year. They have to contact their regional office first. Once that is done, we can obtain the necessary information about the logistics, we will publicize it. Pam has found some Green Up Day posters on line that we might be able to utilize

- Composting workshops

Chad Whitehead asked the committee to hold a composting demo and informational session. The town has several home composter that could be sold at cost. The committee thought that holding it at the Farmers' Market would be better than one of the Get Downtown events this summer as the latter is more of an entertainment venue. Pam will check on hosting it at the Farmers' Market. We also need to obtain more information about the event from Chad.

6. Possible Energy Committee Structure

Pam introduced the idea of having working groups within the town energy committee that would contain both members of the committee and others. Some possible working groups include:

- Transportation
- Weatherization, Housing, and Public Buildings
- Public awareness, education
- Tree Resource

Lynn presented information and action steps for Tree Resource Subcommittee (see information below). She is recruiting people to join the subcommittee. Scott noted that trees in the town forest and along streets could be labeled with information about their species.

7. Other Business

Bevin and Lynn reported that one advisory group from St. Johnsbury Academy are using the EV Parking Spot idea that they proposed for the Sophomore Stewardship Day. It is a multi-national group of students who will be comparing transportation in various nations. It will be held from 9 to noon on April 29.

The impact of 2021 Button Up Vermont reached 31 Button Up towns including St. Johnsbury, 4 Weatherization Wednesday with 112 virtual attendees, 18,000+ visits to ButtonUpVermont.org, 118,000+ Facebook impressions, 177 YouTube views, and 1.5M Media impressions.

Next Meeting is Monday May 2 from 5:30 to 7:00 pm

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St. Johnsbury Town Energy Committee - Tree Resource Subcommittee

3/22

Goal- the subcommittee will use the Climate Change Tree Atlas published by the Northern Institute of Applied Climate science (NIAC)- of the USDA, as well as other resources, to improve the climate resilience of the tree resources in the town of St. Johnsbury and the NEK.

Actions:

- 1) develop a list/guide for St. J./NEK of recommended climate resilient (CR) tree species for the future; publicize information in numerous ways.
- 2) coordinate with other Energy committees to disseminate information about CR species
- 3) locate and plant an arboretum of resilient species in the town for residents to visit and learn from- in preparation for planting their own CR trees
- 4) plant CR shade trees in town to provide increased summer cooling and lower energy bills
- 5) create town nursery of CR trees for residents to access

6) identify local forester to participate in NIAC online training - to act as NEK professional resource

Training: Forest-carbon focused Adaptation Planning and Practices online workshop- to provide training in carbon objectives addressing vulnerabilities and resilience, adaptation actions and carbon management