

St. Johnsbury Town Energy Committee

January 3, 2024

Members Present: Ben Deede, Steve Isham, Donley Johnson, Pam Parker (Chair), Lynn Wurzburg

Guests: Debbie New, Coordinator Vermont Geothermal Alliance (via Zoom)

1. Minutes

The minutes from the December meeting were reviewed and accepted.

2. Geothermal Networks

Debbie New, Coordinator of Vermont Geothermal Alliance, gave an overview of what geothermal networks are and how they work. The presentation covered geothermal for individual homes and municipal/large buildings that utilize ground source heat pumps and thermal storage. The Fairbanks Museum and one dorm at the Academy already have geothermal systems.

Geothermal networks are closed loops that are shared between buildings. These networks can start small and be increased by adding buildings over time. The networks can be private agreements between building owner or a public utility. The heat is shared between buildings in the network by recycling heat that is already paid for. The networks save 80% of emissions and protect the electric grid because it uses less electricity.

The Armory is a good candidate for a geothermal system and could be networked with nearby buildings. Steve and Ben will follow up with Joe Kasperzak.

3. Window Dressers

Pam reported that orders are coming in for the 2024 build with over 120 inserts ordered so far. Pam has reserved Lyndon's municipal gym for this year's build in November. Pam will work with Laural Ruggles on a Front Porch Forum posting to encourage folks to order inserts now and recruit volunteers and coordinators. Ben volunteered to head up a measuring team. Steve volunteered to be food coordinator.

4. RHIGP Information and Mentoring Event

Steve reported that he will meet with Kresten Sterling to begin organizing the Information and mentoring session for the Rental Housing Improvement Grant Program (RHIGP). This event will give landlords information about the program and have mentors available to assist landlords in filling out the grant application. Local organizations that provide weatherization resources will be available at the event. Mentors will receive a stipend using the Municipal Energy Resilience Program grant that St. Johnsbury obtained.

5. Review Enhanced Energy Plan Goals and Action Items

Committee members will review the goals and action items from the St. Johnsbury Enhanced Energy Plan. The goals and action items will be prioritized for 2024 at the February meeting.

The next meeting of the St J energy committee is February 5 , 2024, at the Welcome Center starting at 5:30.