

St. Johnsbury Town Energy Committee
May 6, 2024

Members Present: Steve Isham, Donley Johnson, Pam Parker (Chair), Susan Parker,
Guests: Robert Michael, Catherine Kidder, and Jason Kaiser

1. Introductions

Members and guests introduced themselves.

Jason Kaiser recently moved to St. Johnsbury part of climate consensus at Lyndon
Catherine Kidder from Newbury wanting to start an energy committee there.

2. Green Up Day recap

Pam noted it was hugely successful Green Up day. We ran out of bags. Ben Roy had people do
all the roads in and out of Industrial Road. And then roads around New Boston road. Will see
Ben about getting his involved in WindowDressers. Mike Huntington at St. J Subaru was
wonderfully communicative. Kate A. spent a day with us at Maple Festival on April 20.

The fact that 75,000 bag were distributed statewide made it a success, Pam said.

Steve noted that it is not part of our mission and maybe the beautification could take it on next
year. The committee decided we would explore how to transition leadership of Green Up day to
the beautification committee. Kate wants an estimate of how many people were involved and
how many bags were filled. Donley suggested we check with St J. Subaru.

3. Geothermal networking workshop report

Steve said the workshop attracted about 30 people. It was an overview of how it would work.

Geothermal is where they have the wells to go into the ground where the temperature is
constant and exchanged for heat or cooling. No carbon is used and it is cheaper. It reduces the
strain on the electrical grid. The Town of St. Johnsbury and RuralEdge and are working together
to pursue a geothermal network at the armory and Packard Court. There may be federal funding
available. Other churches and office could join the network where buildings are sharing heat.
Another promising spot is the sewer plant.

Pam noted that it was an invitational meeting and several town leaders and political officials
attended and showed a lot of interest in the idea.

There is a meeting Thursday, May 9at 3pm to further develop geothermal networks including
better understanding the costs. Steve and Pam said it's important to get one project going and
show proof of concept.

4. Tree-planting opportunities

Gwen Kozlowski of Vermont urban and community forestry program, which is part of the UVM
Extension service that reaches into communities for programs said she would make 185 trees to
people who sign up for them (two each) at the St. Johnsbury School. They are climate hardy.
They are all spoken for in the spring. She is proposing to do this again in the fall and wants to do
know if we would coordinate it. Pam and Steve said it seems like it is being handled fine. Steve
also said that it fits better with the mission of the beautification committee.

Another program is available that will fund tree planting projects in high priority areas across VT
to increase urban tree canopy, improve water quality and improve public health. Steve said he
forwarded the email about it to Chad to decide whether to apply.

5. Efficiency VT

Pam noted that Efficiency Vermont is offering rebates up to \$9500 for weatherization/foam/electrical updates and \$2250 to pay contractors up front. Jason said they released a new calculator to choose what you can do like heat pump etc. and they tell you all the incentives. He said it would be helpful to promote it. Pam said Efficiency Vermont offers a \$100 rebate for three or more WindowDressers inserts.

6. Rental Housing improvement grants

Four or five grant applications are already in and several more in process. Steve said we could use the leftover MERP funds to pay for food for WindowDressers. Steve also noted that landlords said they want to do this again next year.

Donley asked if we could look at the goals and actions to see if we use the MERP money to address any of those priorities.

7. Window Dressers Community Build -Oct 17-24,2024

We are the first in the area to be scheduled for this. Darlene, Pam, and Ben Roy, the safety officer at Momentum Manufacturing, will meet to see if Ben can provide volunteers and some people may want to order inserts. About 50 orders left or 250 orders.

Steve asked how we are having so many orders with little publicity. Pam said it's word of mouth and people who couldn't get them last year. She said the bulk of people with orders still need to get their windows measured. Robert said he and Ben are waiting to hear back from some people to set up times for measurements. We have four measuring teams. Pam talked to the town clerk in Lyndonville we have all the agreements and insurance in place.

We are looking for volunteers and shift supervisors.

Donley asked if we could increase the number if we get more orders. Pam noted that we don't want to exceed our capacity to the detriment of quality. Pam said we would like to raise \$1,000 for special rates, which are not income-dependent. The Third Congregational Church will be the fiscal agent. Pam asked for ideas for funding. We will ask Energize Vermont to give another \$500. Maybe Lyndonville Congregational Church—Jason will ask.

Donley said we could ask sponsors of Catamount Arts for money. Steve Isham said we could ask sponsors of Green Up bag, such as Darn Tough. Pam noted that there are 10 WindowDressers in the area may be we could do joint fundraising. Susan will ask Angela Payeur at Passumpsic Savings Bank about contributing.

Pam noted that last year a landlord ordered 20 inserts. This year he is ordering 30.

8. MERP funds for committee priority goals

Pam noted that our priorities were mostly educational and that we are achieving a lot of those goals. She suggested we prioritize the next set of goals for the June meeting.

Next mtg June 3, 2024 from 5:30 to 7pm at the Welcome Center.