



CITY OF DOVER

ENERGY COMMISSION – MINUTES

Meeting Type: **Regular Meeting**
Meeting Location: **First Floor Conference Room, City Hall – 288 Central Ave.**
Meeting Date: **Wednesday, May 15, 2019**
Meeting Time: **5:30 PM**

1. Welcome

Present: Vice Chair Bill Baber, Mike Behrmann, Zak Koehler, Julie Fournier, Walter Milliken (alternate), Deborah Thibodeaux (Council Liaison)

Absent (Excused): Chair Walter King, Otis Perry, Lisa Dill (alternate)

Staff: Elena Piekut, Assistant City Planner

2. Citizen's Forum

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes of April 17, 2019

Zak Koehler moved to approve the minutes of April 17, 2019 as written. Walter Milliken seconded. Vote: U/A

4. Staff Updates

A. Energy Planner Position

Elena Piekut told the group that the City Council elected to defer the creation of the Energy Planner position and reconsider in next year. Councilor Thibodeaux explain that while no Councilor opposed the new position, there were many other needs in the budget this year. Bill Baber suggested being prepared for the next budget cycle and that while we have a well-qualified Project Manager on staff now, the City also needs someone with energy expertise.

B. NEMSN Biannual Meeting

Elena Piekut let the group know that the subcommittee working on energy efficiency in rental units is welcome to work with the New England Municipal Sustainability Network working group of the same purpose. She will invite them to a conference call on May 21st and the working group breakout session in Dover on May 31st.

C. Other

Elena Piekut let the Commission know that alternate member Lisa Dill had resigned with regret and praised the work of the Commission.

She also informed the group that minutes will now reflect excused and unexcused absences, and that four unexcused absences in one year would result in removal, per City Council's change to the City Code.

Becky Ohler joined the meeting. Vice Chair Bill Baber introduced her as a prospective new member being considered by the Appointments Committee. Becky introduced herself; she is the Climate and Energy Program Manager for the NH Department of Environmental Services.

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5. Old Business

A. Sustainability Sub-Committee Report

Zak Koehler said that while the sub-committee has not met again, they have a good draft proposal. The think a committee should have nine members (two alternate), including no more than three members from the Energy Commission itself along with representatives from the Solid Waste Advisory Commission and Open Lands Committee, and members from the general public.

Zak related a few key issues the group thinks the committee should review, such as best practices for sustainable businesses and cities, working with local and state officials on related legislation, and advising other boards and committees.

Bill Baber asked about looking at other towns' efforts. Zak Koehler said that Otis Perry attended meetings in Lee and Durham. Bill suggested contacting Portsmouth, and Mike Behrmann shared ideas for contacts there. Walter Milliken suggested having representation from Community Services on the committee, and Bill Baber asked that tracking sustainability-related legislature be added as a goal.

Discussion ensued regarding the Commission's relationship to the legislative process and the task of following bills through that process. The group felt that there needs to be some guidance as to how members or the Commission as a whole should approach testifying, or even working with a legislator to sponsor a bill. Bill Baber will develop some "decision paths" to guide the group's options. Members were encouraged to testify as individuals if they so desire.

Bill Baber asked Elena Piekut to send out a note to seen who would like to replace Lisa on the subcommittee.

B. 2019 Goals Update

Elena Piekut reported that she and the Assistant City Manager will be meeting with Gaia Energy to review their progress on proposing more municipal solar arrays. She and members also discussed renegotiation of the Dover High School power purchase agreement as well as restrictions on the City's ability to claim a carbon reduction under the agreement. Mike Behrmann suggested using the phrase "contribute to" carbon reduction.

Councilor Thibodeaux related that the City is beginning to see the substantial savings resulting from its smart LED streetlighting.

Bill Baber, Becky Ohler, and Mike Behrmann discussed Public Utilities Commission process and current rate cases/dockets before the PUC.

6. New Business

A. Eversource/Unitil Main Street Initiative – Eversource and Unitil Representatives

The initiative's representative(s) were not in attendance.



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Elena Piekut explained the nature of the initiative.

B. Ride the Robot, Dover Middle School – Vanessa Alander

Vanessa Alander, parent and leader for Ride the Robot, along with her children explained the program and what she hopes to learn from City representatives. The next season's challenge explores how cities work, and the City Manager has agreed to host a field trip on June 3rd. Elena Piekut will also participate. Councilor Thibodeaux suggested that later, the children could make a presentation to the City Council. Vanessa would like to encourage the kids to envision Dover in another 400 years.

Vice Chair Bill Baber thanked Vanessa Alander for the presentation and reaching out to the Energy Commission.

Mike Behrmann joined the meeting at 6:00 pm.

7. Other Business

Bill Baber and Becky Ohler led a discussion of the Destination Electric campaign which the Commission voted to support. The campaign has asked for help in reaching out to businesses they've identified. Bill asked Elena Piekut to forward the list to Commission members who could volunteer to contact those businesses. Becky noted that currently, 40 of the 100 features businesses in the Northeast are from New Hampshire.

8. Member Comments

Zak Koehler brought up the possibility of the City taking over the Cochecho River dam. Bill Baber suggested touring it, but that the equipment is ancient and in poor condition. Zak asked about its potential if modernized and discussion on engineering costs, funding sources, and efficiency compared to sources like solar ensued.

Walter Milliken reported that he is still planning on getting together with City staff regarding traffic signals.

Mike Berhmann said that he has been told the new net metering bill is on the Governor's desk for signature but is expected to be vetoed. The legislature may override it.

9. Call for Agenda Items

None.

10. Adjourn

Zak Koehler moved to adjourn at 7:10 pm. Mike Behrmann seconded. Vote: U/A