

**FINAL**

**LEBANON ENERGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
CITY HALL MEETING ROOM 2 OR  
REMOTE VIA VIRTUAL PLATFORM  
4:00PM, THURSDAY NOVEMBER 16, 2023**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jon Chaffee (Vice Chair), Woody Rothe, Clifton Below (City Council Rep.), Henry Bromberg, James Mashal

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Sherry Boschert, Devin Wilkie (Alt. Council Rep), Meghan Butts (alt)

**STAFF PRESENT:** Tad Montgomery (Energy & Facilities Manager)

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chair Chaffee called the meeting to order at 4:07pm.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 19, 2023**

***A MOTION was made by Woody Rothe to approve the October 19, 2023 Meeting Minutes. The Motion was seconded by James Mashal.***

***\* The Vote on the Motion was approved: (5-0).***

[Mr. Chaffee said he'd like to add an Agenda Item under **NEW BUSINESS: Possible EPA Funding Available for State Climate Pollution Reduction.**]

**3. OLD BUSINESS**

**A. Legislation/PUC Regulations/CPCNH Updates**

Mr. Below said the Ready Billing docket has been suspended with a focus instead on how load settlements should be done for CPAs. He said two meetings have been set up by EverSource-need utilities. He said this change is helping make headway on the load settlement issue in preparation for filing a petition with the Commission to determine the negative usage data for exports to the grid by net-metered customers.

He said the deadline testimony on new net-metering tariffs has been moved from December 1 to December 5 or 6, and the Liberty Utilities testimony deadline has been moved back from December 15 to December 21 or 22.

He said the Coalition's Regulatory and Legislative Affairs Director, Deana Dennis, is being onboarded and is getting up to speed. Mr. Below gave a brief overview of her background and experience. He said a new Director of Administration, Bobi-Jo Michael, has also been hired, and he discussed her experience at the National Education Association (NEA).

He said Representative Tom Cormen, state representative from Lebanon, is serving on the Science, Technology, and Energy Committee which is drafting a bill for legislation that will enable pilot projects for limited producers (generators under 5 megawatts).

Mr. Below said he has a meeting with the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Energy to discuss public policy and the work they're doing on the net-metering docket.

He said the Coalition is expecting to have seven new members join at the next meeting, which brings the total membership to 50 or 51. He said, at that point, the CPCNH would be serving almost 30% of the entire state population. He said another 20 communities will launch by the end of March 2024.

He said they are also preparing for the next rate setting, which may be approved by the end of December. Mr. Mashal asked if there is a default rate and an individual rate. Mr. Below said there are four rates: Granite Basic and Granite Plus (for the default service); and Clean 50 and Clean 100. Mr. Bromberg asked if there have been any major complaints about the rates or service, and Mr. Below said, overall, customers are very positive. Vice Chair Chaffee asked if the Coalition is concerned about beating Liberty Utility's rates in December and not just in July. Mr. Below said they feel confident they will be able to do it; he said the forward prices have been remarkably stable for them.

The group discussed a new bill that could give utilities the ability to lock suppliers in to 20-year contracts. Mr. Below said he did not know much about that bill.

**B. Landfill Gas to Energy Updates**

Mr. Montgomery said he spoke to Erica Douglas, the City's Solid Waste Manager, and she said Salbury Center has received its amended Air Permit on October 30.

**C. Municipal Solar Updates**

Mr. Montgomery said monitoring for Phase II Solar in Valley Cemetery and the Civic Memorial Field House has been active since the beginning of October.

**D. Rental Decarbonization/Utility Burden/Sustainability Fellow Update**

Vice Chair Chaffee said he and Mr. Rothe have been working on an energy burden survey that will be useful when applying for grants. He said the 49 responses they received to the survey are being processed by a Dartmouth Government professor who specializes in surveys. He said, over the winter, they are planning another major energy survey, which asks about how much respondents pay. Mr. Below discussed the idea of adding questions about electricity to questions about heating to conduct a more comprehensive energy survey at a later date.

**E. SHARC Energy Wastewater Heat Recovery**

Mr. Bromberg said he reached out to SHARC regarding the sketches for the fire station and plans for the DPW garage that he received last month, and he is awaiting a response.

He said he listened to the Clean Tech Alliance Symposium online, which was composed of professionals from Seattle, Vancouver, Denver, and Washington D.C. He said the projects they described are large and impressive.

**F. City Master Plan-Energy Chapter Update**

Vice Chair Chaffee said a new Associate Planner, Catheryn Hembree, will be starting the Master Plan update process. He said she plans to take a fresh look at Chapter 13, which is the Energy Chapter, and she may review Hanover's new Sustainability Master Plan and Lebanon's new Community Resiliency Workshop initiatives for additional input. He said she said the main need is not necessarily to be "up to date," but to align the body of the chapter to the LEAC edits to the Actions and Strategy section.

**4. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. EV Subcommittee Report**

- **Electric School Buses Proposal**

Mr. Montgomery said Ms. Boschert met with the new Lebanon School Superintendent, Amy Allen, to discuss a grant to buy electric buses. He said next, she needs to meet with the SAU88 CFO and the fleet manager to discuss logistics and financing.

- **Proposal to the Zoning Board of Adjustments Re: The request for a variance at the Element Hotel**

Mr. Montgomery said Ms. Boschert attended a meeting of the Zoning Board of Adjustments to remind them that, if the ZBA grants a variance for the former Element Hotel to be converted into residential homes, Lebanon zoning regulations would require the installation of EV charging. The ZBA postponed discussion until the December meeting. Mr. Montgomery also said Ms. Boschert met with the Durham Town Council member regarding Lebanon zoning ordinance.

- **EV Street Sweepers**

Mr. Montgomery said he and Ms. Boschert discussed Lebanon DPW's Fleet Electrification efforts with Durham's DPW Director, who is very happy with its two EV garbage trucks. He said Durham's DPW Director seemed to feel EV Street Sweepers aren't yet ready to be utilized full-time.

- **EV Subcommittee in the Media**

Mr. Montgomery said Ms. Boschert has some media exposure with an interview on WMUR's New Hampshire Chronicles, which will air next month.

- **Recruitment of New EV Subcommittee Members**

Mr. Montgomery said it would be great to have a new Alt member for LEAC (which is an open seat) with EV experience. Mr. Montgomery said Mr. Tim Corwin has been asking whether any Planning Board members would be interested in joining LEAC.

**B. Review Fleet Electrification Plan and EV Subcommittee comments**

Mr. Montgomery referenced a draft of the policy recommendations for the Fleet Electrification Plan (included in the meeting Agenda materials) that LEAC members worked on at last month's meeting. He said it has transformed into an "Electric Vehicle Policy" as opposed to a plan. He asked LEAC members to review the draft and give him any feedback and comments.

**C. Discussion of Future Role of LEAC**

Vice Chair Chaffee asked the group if there are any new projects that LEAC should be taking on. Mr. Below mentioned that there may be opportunity for more engagement with Lebanon Community Power going forward. Vice Chair Chaffee said people could probably use help accessing federal and state rebates for things like energy-efficient appliances. The group discussed how the themes **Outreach** (perhaps through a Lebanon Community power local office) and **Education** (for energy efficiency programs) keep coming up in conversation.

**D. Discussion of Committee Chair Role**

The group suggested that Mr. Bromberg could be the new Chair of the LEAC. They discussed the duties of the Chair and noted that the other members and Mr. Montgomery provide support. Mr. Bromberg said he would consider it and let the committee members know.

**E. Possible EPA Funding Available for State Climate Pollution Reduction**

Vice Chair Chaffee said DES got an EPA grant to produce a Priority Climate Action Plan (deadline: April 2024). He said, also in April 2024, there is a deadline for an implementation grant that he feels Lebanon could piggyback DES on with the Rental Decarbonization / Weather Decarbonization plan that he and Mr. Rothe have been working on. He said he will attend a webinar on November 30 to find out more.

The group discussed whether the City Council would want to use the funding (if granted) for the Decarbonization plan or for another type of project. Mr. Below discussed a proposed project to help residents (including low-income residents) replace existing traditional hot water heaters with heat pump hot water heaters. He said DES seemed enthusiastic about federal funding for that kind of project, which is ready to be implemented.

Mr. Below said that kind of project would be a top priority for the City Council, and it could be tied into what is proposed for the EPA grant application. Vice Chair Chaffee said the Letter of Intent for the EPA grant application is due in February, and said the group is going to have to decide quickly what project to propose. Mr. Below said that Andrew Hatch could help with the application process.

**F. Recent and Upcoming Conferences or Webinars of Note**

Mr. Montgomery said there's a group that meets every third Thursday of the month at Salt Hill Pub called, BS and Beer. He said BS means "Building Science" and the members are all professionals in the building industry.

**G. Proposed Letter to NH PUC in Support of Net Metering and NH Saves: Docket Numbers DE 23-068 (NH Saves) and DE 22-060 (Net Metering)**

Vice Chair Chaffee referenced a draft letter to NH PUC in support of NH Saves and Net Metering was included in the Agenda materials. Mr. Below said the draft letter should be reviewed by the City Manager. Mr. Below said the LEAC could vote to recommend it to the City Council, but he said it would not get on the Council's agenda until December. Vice Chair Chaffee suggested this item be tabled for the time being.

[Mr. Below left the meeting at 5:27pm.]

**H. EFM Report**

Mr. Montgomery said the Hartford Energy Commission is organizing a tour of the Wilder Dam during the first two weeks of December. He asked if any of the LEAC members wanted to attend, and Mr. Mashal volunteered to attend.

Mr. Montgomery said he has been added to the Green Energy Consumers Alliance's mailing list. He said their information is well-tailored for consumers.

Mr. Montgomery said he launched an RFP to revamp lighting for the DPW garage. He said the intention is to use that building as a first project, and then use the winning contractor to revamp all indoor building lighting for the City.

Mr. Montgomery said Anna Gunther of Vital Communities hosted a gathering at Kilton Library for all towns that participated in the eBike Lending Library. He said it was a wonderful time.

He said, at the event, Library Director Sean Fleming asked why the bus station is moving away from the Kilton Library. Mr. Mashal said the West Lebanon Revitalization committee has been fielding complaints about the number of buses that clog up Main Street in West Lebanon. He said a plan by Advanced Transit to move the connection central point away from the Kilton Library has been discussed, but he said no decision has been made yet. He said there is a lot of discussion on both sides of this complicated issue (for and against the move). He said the City does not make decisions about where bus stops are located. Mr. Mashal said he would reach out to Mr. Fleming to discuss this issue.

Mr. Montgomery said he wrote a detailed memo about why some of the City's new streetlights are not Dark Sky Ordinance compliant. He said it is because the lights are designed to shine out and they cannot be compliant with the Dark Sky Ordinance. He offered to share the memo with the LEAC members.

The group discussed a graph from the Vermont Energy Plan that shows the cost of carbon reduction policies that was included in the Agenda materials. Mr. Montgomery said there is a link to the full report in the Agenda materials as well.

Mr. Montgomery said he has been meeting with Dana Clawson, Sustainability Director in Hartford, Vt., to create a regular gathering of municipal energy professionals.

He said he will not hear until after Thanksgiving about the Granite State Clean Fleet grant for the streetsweepers. He said there has been a lot of response to it.

Mr. Montgomery said Rebecca Owens of the Planning Department has not had time to work on the LEAP grant.

Mr. Montgomery said he read an article called, “The Eight Deadly Sins of Analyzing the Energy Transition,” which is about the pace of change that's happening and accelerating. He listed the eight “sins:”

- Linear thinking
- Lagging indicators
- Turning points
- hardest to solve.
- Static world
- Climate Streetlights.
- Under Appreciation of energy efficiency
- Getting lost in the complexity.

Mr. Montgomery congratulated Mr. Bromberg on his appointment to LEAC.

## **5. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

No members of the public were present.

## **6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

## **7. ADJOURNMENT**

***A MOTION was made by James Mashal to adjourn the meeting at 5:45pm. The Motion was seconded by Henry Bromberg.***

***\* The Vote on the Motion was approved: (4-0).***

**The meeting was adjourned at 5:45pm.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Paula Roux  
Recording Secretary