

FINAL

**LEBANON ENERGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS OR
REMOTE VIA VIRTUAL PLATFORM
4:00PM, THURSDAY JANUARY 18, 2024**

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

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

STAFF ABSENT: Tad Montgomery (Energy & Facilities Manager)

OTHERS PRESENT: Tom Benzel

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bromberg called the meeting to order at 4:08pm.

Ms. Boschert said she is attending remotely because of family health (COVID) issues.

Mr. Mashal said he was attending remotely because he had work commitments immediately prior to the meeting.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – December 21, 2023

A MOTION was made by Jon Chaffee December 21, 2023 Meeting Minutes as amended. The Motion was seconded by Woody Rothe.

Amendments: Page 5, Line 10: Delete the two sentences following “community power.”

**** The Vote on the Motion was approved: (Roll Call: 6-0 – Rothe: aye; Chaffee: aye; Below: aye; Bromberg: aye; Boschert: aye; Mashal: aye).***

3. OLD BUSINESS

A. Legislation/PUC Regulations/CPCNH Updates

Mr. Below said membership in CPCNH will grow to 55 members after the next board meeting. He said it will soon represent about 30% of the state’s population.

He explained that House Bill 1600, which will be heard on January 29 at 2pm, would make clear that municipal hosts under group net metering (generators up to 5 megawatts) could be used to offset the load of community power aggregations, if the generator is a customer of the community power aggregation. He said, if passed, the bill would open up potential projects (up to five megawatts) that could be selling their output to serve Community Power communities’ electric loads.

He said at the January 28 meeting, the Board approved the CPCNH support of several pieces of legislation. He said the issues that they were facing were resolved surprisingly quickly thanks to support from key state representatives. He said he felt they were making progress on the legislative front.

Mr. Below said he used the concept that Mr. Rothe and Mr. Chafee worked on, which is on the Sustainability Fellows website at UNH, to help develop an application for an ambitious community benefit plan that will target disadvantaged communities through the Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnership funding program.

Mr. Below said there has not been a lot of progress in the hiring of a person to run a publicity campaign, but there are several contract hires of the Coalition that are helping with community engagement. He said there is an opportunity to use Lebanon's social media sites to announce that Lebanon Community Power is lowering its rates as of February 1.

B. Landfill Gas to Energy Updates

Mr. Montgomery said Erica Douglas said they will be breaking ground on this project in the spring. He said they did receive their amended air quality permit that allows them to remove catalytic converters from the system's design. He said Ms. Douglas said they expect to receive the utilities' interconnect permit by July 20, 2024.

C. Municipal Solar Updates

Mr. Montgomery reviewed the 2023 Lebanon Municipal Solar Production chart included in the materials in the meeting agenda packet. He said the database does not include net export details for the Valley Cemetery and Civic Memorial Fieldhouse buildings because of a lack of Wi-Fi connection to those buildings until late in the year. He reviewed a graph of the same data that was also included in the meeting materials packet.

D. Rental Decarbonization/Utility Burden/Sustainability Fellow Update

Vice Chair Chaffee said he attended a meeting on January 16 with NH DES, who shared some of the methodology they intend to put into their planning grant for measuring the output or savings garnered from weatherization programs. He said they would not commit to including a pilot program in Lebanon in their implementation grant application but would discuss it with DES management. He said they are looking for projects around the state they can bundle together and implement. He said they did have a lot of helpful suggestions. He said the decision about whether Lebanon will make an application will not be decided until the end of January 2024. He said they should learn something from NH DES before their February meeting. Vice Chair Chaffee said he did not hear that anyone was interested in becoming a Sustainability Fellow, but there may be candidates to interview.

[Chair Bromberg introduced Mr. Tom Benzel, who he said is interested in becoming a member of LEAC.]

E. Water Energy Technology SHARC Heat Recovery

Chair Bromberg said representatives are scheduled to visit February 5 or 6. He said the sales rep will focus on the DPW garage and get an idea of the Taylor Street project. He said he met with Ledgeworks regarding their village market redevelopment. He said that company will probably be interested in speaking with the SHARC representative also.

Mr. Montgomery said Fire Chief Wheatley said the timing does not seem right for the new fire station to participate in a WET district energy program. Mr. Montgomery said he asked that the fire station's heating system could be designed so this type of system might be connected to in the future.

[Mr. Montgomery spoke about the Strategic Plan item next, which was out of the order of the agenda.]

G. Lebanon Strategic Plan – Input from LEAC

Mr. Montgomery said that the City Manager had asked LEAC to make recommendations or action items that could be added to the City's Strategic Plan. He asked committee members to give comments to him so he can put them together for final review at the next meeting. He said that DPW has been asked to get the finalized list to administration by March 1.

Vice Chair Chafee suggested the following:

- Weatherization
- Code update
- An additional goal besides 80% reduction
- Hydroplant at the base of the Mascoma River

The group discussed these ideas. Mr. Below said the administration is asking LEAC to review the items in the strategic plan and see what should be updated or if anything new should be added.

H. City Master Plan-Energy Chapter Update

No update

F. EV Subcommittee Report

Ms. Boschert said she is excited to have Mr. Benzel join the EV Subcommittee.

She said she was notified that the City did not receive the CFI grant. She said a Maine group received \$15 million. She said her team will be looking at the entities that did receive money to learn how and why they were successful. She said the Electrification Coalition is having a webinar on this topic later in January. She said the committee is inquiring into why it did not receive the grant and considering whether it should re-apply for the second round of funding, or seek alternative foundation grants, etc.

She said there is a Drive Electric Earth Month event being planned for April 20 or 21 (tentative dates). She said they would like to have it in the Shaw's parking lot in West Lebanon because there is a new charging station being installed by Rivian in that lot.

She said Fire Chief Wheatley said the new fire station plans include areas for two outdoor EV chargers with the possibility to add more in the future. She said he said they are incorporating EV charging technology to charge electric fire trucks once they are available.

She said the team reviewed the Lebanon Fleet Electrification policy, which has been adopted. She said Mr. Montgomery can get the committee members copies of the policy. She said they need to create an EV infrastructure plan for the City. She said she will contact Mr. Montgomery to discuss that idea in more detail.

A MOTION was made by Sherry Boschert that the Lebanon Energy Advisory Committee (LEAC) agrees to be the official sponsor of a Drive Electric Earth Day event in Lebanon or West Lebanon to be organized by Sherry Boschert and other volunteers. The MOTION was seconded by Clifton Below.

Ms. Boschert said she would advise City Manager Mulholland that LEAC will sponsor the event. She also said the location of the event may wind up being on City property because they need insurance to hold it in the Shaw's parking lot.

**** The Vote on the Motion was approved: (Roll Call: 6-0 - Rothe: aye; Chaffee: aye; Bromberg: aye; Below: aye; Mashal: aye; Boschert: aye).***

Mr. Below noted that Emerson Place now has three EV chargers. Ms. Boschert said she noted that the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission's long-range transportation plan includes a **map of area/local EV chargers**. She said the map is somewhat incomplete or misleading because it does not indicate that some of the EV chargers listed are not open to the public.

4. NEW BUSINESS

A. NHDES climate Action Plan Listening Sessions

Mr. Montgomery said there is a listening session planned for January 25 from 5:30-7:00pm at the Claremont Savings Bank Community Center at 152 South Street in Claremont. He said it is an opportunity to get local input on the state's Climate Action Plan. He encouraged LEAC members to attend.

B. Collaboration with Regional Organizations for Greater Focus and Impact

Chair Bromberg said he has learned so much about local organizations doing great work independently. He suggested it might be beneficial to work together. The group discussed past collaborative efforts with groups in the area.

C. LEAC Website

Chair Bromberg asked about who updates the LEAC website and how often it is updated. Mr. Montgomery and Ms. Boschert described the process and said committee members often ask for things to be added to the website.

5. ENERGY & FACILITIES MANAGER REPORT

Mr. Montgomery discussed the following:

- The NH Network is creating a dedicated monthly meeting for energy committees. He encouraged LEAC members to be part of that.
- Funding issues – There are several that are being researched and/or pursued. He has been forwarding information related to the multifamily rental decarbonization project to Mr. Chaffee & Rothe.
- Webinar on the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG - DOE funding) about several programs.
- NH DOE announcement on a hearing on Feb 7 on Class 3 RECs.
- Update on streetlight project – Liberty is finishing up the last lighting installations.
- Details on the lighting retrofit project for the DPW garage with expansion to the rest of the City. He said that the project will use the Liberty on-bill financing tool with an estimated cost of \$364/month for 36 months and an estimated average gross savings of \$1,856/month, resulting in an average net savings of \$1,492/month for three years and more after that.
- Tour of Wilder Dam in December 2023 with representatives from Hartford and Great River Hydro. Another tour is being planned for those who could not attend this one.
- Met with Fire Chief Wheatley about energy systems for the new fire station building, including solar (both PV and SolarWall) and the proposed HVAC system. He said that the intention is for the building to be net-zero energy ready, and that the current design incorporates both heat pumps and propane-fired boilers.

6. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

No members of the public spoke.

Mr. Mashal asked about the open alternate board member seat on the CPCNH. Mr. Below said they need former Chair Ames's formal resignation and then he will bring it to the City Council.

7. UPCOMING EVENTS

- NHDES Climate Action Plan – Jan 25 5:30pm – 7:00pm
- Upper Valley Earth Day EV Event – April 21 noon – 3:00pm

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None

Ms. Boschert gave an overview of the content of the Sustainable Hanover meeting with officials from Dartmouth College about decarbonizing the district heating system at the College.

9. ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION was made by Clifton Below to adjourn the meeting at 6:04pm. The Motion was seconded by Sherry Boschert.

**** The Vote on the Motion was approved: (Roll Call: 5-0 – Rothe: aye; Chaffee: aye Bromberg: aye; Below: aye; Boschert: aye).
Mr. Mashal had left the meeting and was not available for the vote.***

The meeting was adjourned at 6:04pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Paula Roux
Recording Secretary