

FINAL

**LEBANON ENERGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS OR
REMOTE VIA VIRTUAL PLATFORM
4:00PM, THURSDAY FEBRUARY 15, 2024**

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: James Mashal, Devin Wilkie (Alt. Council Rep)

STAFF ABSENT: Tad Montgomery (Energy & Facilities Manager)

OTHERS PRESENT: Bill Stearns

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bromberg called the meeting to order at 4:12pm.

Ms. Boschert said she is attending remotely because of family health (COVID) issues.
Jon Chaffee said he is attending remotely because was in Minneapolis.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 18, 2024

A MOTION was made by Woody Rothe to approve the January 18, 2024 Meeting Minutes as amended. The Motion was seconded by Sherry Boschert.

Amendments: Page 2, Line 33: Change “great” to “grant”

Roll Call Vote:

Voting in Favor – Mr. Rothe, Mr. Bromberg, Mr. Below, Mr. Benzel, Ms. Boschert, Mr. Chaffee

Voting Against – None

****The MOTION was approved (6-0).***

3. OLD BUSINESS

A. Legislation/PUC Regulations/CPCNH Updates

Mr. Below said House Bill 1600 is being sponsored by Rep. Tom Cormen and will be voted on next week. He said the bill 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.

B. Landfill Gas to Energy Updates

Mr. Montgomery said Erica Douglas has not gotten back to him with any new developments since the last LEAC meeting.

C. Municipal Solar Updates

Mr. Montgomery said he contacted the DOE staff person who is responsible for the Value of Distributed Energy Resources tool to estimate value. He said the staff person told him the tool was not designed for municipalities to use, but rather utilities. Mr. Below suggested he input into that model 8760-hour annual production profiles from solar tracker companies to estimate values. He said a production profile or data set from a larger project for 2021 and 2022 would provide valuable output.

Mr. Montgomery said he had conversations with Jesse Pollard, chair of the Hartford Energy Commission and professional solar developer, about the City's plan to buy out our Phase 1 Solar Power Purchase Agreement. He said he will talk with Jesse about the elements necessary to complete a detailed and robust cost-benefit analysis of whether to buy out the PPA or not.

He said that registration of renewable energy credits (RECs) from the Phase II Solar (Civic Memorial Field and Valley Cemetery Building) is still up in the air, but he said he met with Rick Brown to discuss completion of the project.

D. Rental Decarbonization Pilot Project

Mr. Chaffee said the decision about whether Lebanon will make an application for the grant is still in flux. He said the weatherization aspect of Lebanon's application overlaps NH DES's application, so may not be considered. He said he is considering whether Lebanon should make a general grant application request for this project before the City Council. He said the application deadline is April 1, 2024.

Regarding the project getting a UNH Sustainability Fellow to assist with the development of this project, Mr. Chaffee said there were 600+ applicants for 40 UNH Fellow positions. He said UNH staff will go through the applicants and make recommendations for the Lebanon Sustainability Fellow candidate.

E. Water Energy Technology SHARC Heat Recovery

Chair Bromberg said it seems like SHARC Energy technology might best be utilized as a district energy/heating/cooling project in the future. He said the City is looking for proposals now for the Taylor Street project. Mr. Montgomery said he spoke with Deputy City Manager David Brooks, who said the Taylor Street redevelopment project is still in development and it will probably be a couple of years before the SHARC technology will be considered there.

F. EV Subcommittee Report

Ms. Boschert said there is an EV Expo planned for Earth Day on April 21 from 12-3pm in the Shaw's parking lot in West Lebanon. She said details are available at nhev.org.

She said the grant for the electric street sweepers is still moving forward. Mr. Montgomery said he and Rebecca Owens have been working with DES and it is possible the City will be able to install two Level-3 EV charge ports at the Landfill, and two Level-2 EV charger ports at the DPW Garage. He said he just learned that engineering and design work is not eligible for the grant, even though it had been included in the project budget that DES approved. He said he will be working that out with DES. He & Rebecca Owens are also talking with City Staff about applying for Direct Pay federal incentives to cover most if not all the City's portion of this project's costs.

Ms. Boschert said she's been doing research regarding what to do regarding public EV charging stations now that they did not get the CFI grant. She said City Manager Mulholland said the City has a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) fund earmarked for economic development and he approved using some of it to install EV stations. She asked the LEAC members to share any ideas of locations for EV chargers in the TIF district.

Mr. Montgomery proposed the following location ideas:

- Parkhurst St
- three locations on Taylor Street
- two locations in the Hanover St parking lot

Draft City Workplace Charging Policy

Ms. Boschert referred to the draft policy included in the agenda materials.

She said there's one additional section she added to the draft she sent City Manager Mulholland about the potential costs to the City:

- Initial program set-up costs
- How to collect participation fees
- Electricity costs
- Ongoing cost to periodically reset participation fees

She discussed how she calculated the amount of electricity used in order to estimate the costs, and the savings that employees would enjoy by using electric instead of gas.

Ms. Boschert said City Manager Mulholland made the following comments:

- Prefer payment by credit cards, but the chargers do not currently have the capability
- Agreed with the idea of including questions about EV charging in the annual employee survey and asked her to work with HR
- Liability waivers would be required for employees willing to participate
- Add this benefit to recruitment ads

- Need to be formatted into the City's administrative policy format
- Need to discuss payment methodologies with the Finance Department

She said if the City adopts the policy, it can be a role model for other employers to offer workplace charging to their employees.

The group discussed the availability of EV chargers in downtown Lebanon, if all City employees could possibly be using them. They also discussed the possibility of varying electric rates, based on usage during certain times of the day and other conditions that could impact City employee EV charging.

Ms. Boschert asked Mr. Montgomery to review her recalculated figures based on the rates discussion the group just had. She also asked him to help her connect with the right people in HR to work on survey questions.

G. City Master Plan-Energy Chapter Update

No update

H. Lebanon Strategic Plan – Input from LEAC

The group discussed the value of adding the goal of creating a Climate Action Plan to the Strategic Plan. The group discussed how to add metrics to a Climate Action Plan and whether a consultant could be hired to write the plan. Mr. Montgomery said City Manager Mulholland asked him to develop an environmental procurement policy and to train all staff in environmental procurement.

The group also discussed adding updated baseline measurements to set goals for reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. The group agreed to add the following goal to the Strategic Plan (instead of the goal of creating a Climate Action Plan): "The city seeks strategies to develop community-wide baseline greenhouse gas inventory numbers."

Mr. Montgomery said he would add that item and make all the other changes that had been suggested at the last meeting by LEAC members to finalize the LEAC's input on the Strategic Plan.

4. NEW BUSINESS

A. Appoint Tom Benzel to LEAC EV Subcommittee

Chair Bromberg congratulated Mr. Benzel on his appointment to the LEAC EV Subcommittee. Ms. Boschert said she would like to get two more members to join.

Chair Bromberg said Mr. Bill Stearns said he'd like to join the EV Subcommittee. Mr. Benzel said he would coach Mr. Stearns in the process of becoming an Alternate member of LEAC and then can be appointed to the EV Subcommittee.

Chair Bromberg discussed how the website still says there's a Planning Board Representative position available on LEAC and said filling that position is a priority for the City Manager. Chair Bromberg confirmed that Ms. Butts had submitted her letter of resignation from LEAC and that needs to be corrected on the website.

B. Discussion on Proposal for Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Application Endorsement

Already discussed earlier in the meeting.

C. NH Net Metering Statute Changes

Mr. Below said the only net metering statute change at present is House Bill 1600, which was discussed earlier in the meeting. Mr. Below said the agenda materials include the PUC proceeding, which is like a court. He discussed the impact of net metering policies/legislation.

Mr. Montgomery said LEAC members could contact the New Hampshire Network and suggest it coordinate its efforts with CPCNH and/or Clean New Hampshire on net metering issues. Ms. Boschert said she would contact the New Hampshire Network.

D. City Workplace Housing Development Project

Mr. Rothe said the City has proposed a City-owned housing project on three possible sites. Mr. Below said the Planning Department is considering cottage clusters of single-family homes on these sites using standardized designs that can be quickly constructed. He said Mayor Tim MacNamara is also very involved in the staff housing committee that is working on developing these plans.

Mr. Rothe asked if any LEAC members are interested in getting involved in the effort. Mr. Rothe and Mr. Benzel both said they would attend the meetings about the project. It was suggested they ask Deputy City Manager David Brook and Mayor MacNamara if LEAC can have input on the design.

E. LEAC Website

Chair Bromberg said the website has been updated, but he is still waiting for new members' names to be added.

Mr. Below discussed the status of the 19-197 Data Platform grant application.

5. ENERGY & FACILITIES MANAGER REPORT

Mr. Montgomery discussed the following:

- Nature Conservancy workshop on resiliency.
- City staff participating at Harvard Kennedy school boot camp workshop series on green procurement
- Launched retrofit of DPW garage lighting

- Children Center of Upper Valley reached out for help by LEAC to do major energy upgrades
- The NH Network has a meeting for municipal energy committees on February 21 at 3:00 PM. He recommended that LEAC members attend.
- Quarterly meetings of the Energy Advisory Council focused on the energy burden in the Upper Valley
- Focus on Phase III Solar project and Downtown charging infrastructure

6. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

No members of the public spoke.

7. UPCOMING EVENTS

- Upper Valley Earth Day EV Event – April 21 noon – 3:00pm

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- A. Strategic Plan
- B. Master Plan Chapter 13

9. ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION was made by Clifton Below to adjourn the meeting at 6:34pm. The Motion was seconded by Sherry Boschert.

Roll Call Vote:

Voting in Favor – Mr. Rothe, Mr. Bromberg, Mr. Below, Mr. Benzel, Ms. Boschert, Mr. Chaffee

Voting Against – None

****The MOTION was approved (6-0).***

The meeting was adjourned at 6:34pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Paula Roux
Recording Secretary