

FINAL

LEBANON ENERGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (LEAC)
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Remote Via Microsoft Teams
LebanonNH.gov/Live
February 20, 2025
3:30 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Henry Bromberg (Chair), Clifton Below, Sherry Boschert (virtual), Jonathan Chaffee, Patrick Kenelly, James Mashal (virtual), Woody Rothe, Bill Sterns

MEMBERS ABSENT: Thomas Benzel

STAFF PRESENT: Chris Kilmer, Asst. Director, Public Works

1. CALL TO ORDER – Chair Bromberg called the meeting to order at 3:39PM

2. PREAMBLE – Read by Mr. Chris Kilmer

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

**A MOTION was made by Mr. Woody Rothe to approve the December 19, 2024 minutes as amended
Seconded by Mr. Jonathan Chaffee*

Amendments:

Page 4, Line 35, Change Fall to Spring of 2025

Change Mr. Kenelly to absent on December 19th

** The vote on the MOTION was approved 8-0*

4. OLD BUSINESS

A. Legislation 1 PUC Regulations 1 CPCNH / LCP updates; CPCNH

Mr. Clifton Below provided an update. With current rates, Lebanon's rate is more than Liberty. The basic rate for February 2025 is 8.9 cents per kilowatt hour, and March rate (starting March 3rd) the basic rate will be 9.7cents per kilowatt hour. Liberty's base residential and small business rate for 2/1 to 7/31 is 8.416 cents per kilowatt hour.

Mr. Below also provided some history of what transpired in late December when the CPCNH was ready to set rates but had an unanticipated loss of financial reserves (caused from rates below the cost of service). The *proposed* rate had been set last June to be less than the co-op's rate; CPCNH was inadequately hedged when prices hit historic highs in December, and the cold weather increased loads as well.

Mr. Below suggested they need to advise the community that they still have options to utilize Liberty or other providers if they prefer, through the Community PowerNH.gov website.

B. Landfill Gas to Energy Project

Mr. Kilmer said that the plant is in service but there is a heater that needs to be replaced due to malfunctioning. So, the plant will remain closed until this heater is replaced. The anticipated date is within a few weeks following March 14th, when the heater is expected to arrive.

Mr. Kilmer learned today that the City's recs application was denied because methane is not considered an eligible thermal. There is methane from natural sources as well as methane from natural gas. Mr. Below explained more details about the background of methane being acceptable, along with possible current options and workarounds, to get the recs registered. Mr. Kilmer will be looking into these. Additionally, he has a meeting planned with Power Dash to discuss getting a meter installed.

C. Municipal Solar

Currently on hold

D. Lebanon Energy Savings Program

No updates

E. EV Subcommittee Report

Ms. Boschert provided an update and said that they had a good meeting with some members of the public. The CFI Grant is being delayed by the current administration, but she thinks this is temporary.

The Lebanon workplace charging is up and running and she thanked everyone that was involved, including Mr. Kilmer, DPW, Human Resources and others, as well as some Committee members.

Regarding the e-bike charging stations, much of what the Dartmouth students put together as a proposal will not work for the City of Lebanon. Ms. Boschert is revisiting this along with vetting potential sites as well as contractors for trenching, electricians, etc. The deadline for the AARP Grant is March 5th and Rebecca Owens thinks the City is a good match for this grant. Ms. Owens has also identified a couple of other possible grants. City employee resources are limited so Ms. Boschert is working to compile information and apply for the grant.

She has also been working on collecting funds for electricity for the ebike project and has already collected \$1,400 to pay for electricity for somewhere between 5-10 years. Any grants will help with this effort.

****A MOTION was made by Ms. Sherry Boschert for LEAC to sponsor the e-bike charging station project.***

Seconded by Mr. Jonathan Chaffee

****The vote on the MOTION was approved 8-0***

Ms. Boschert said that she and Mr. Sterns have been working to have an Upper Valley Earth Week Open House with 24 homes and 1 school to be site hosts to talk with visitors about their solar, heat pumps, and EVs as well as their pollinator gardens, and other earth-friendly features. This will be in several communities in the Upper Valley and will take place the last weekend in April.

She is finishing the website for this event along with the PDF guide and anticipates having both completed soon. She is checking to see if she can place ads here as well, to help raise funds for the EV Bike project.

Lastly, Ms. Boschert encouraged LEAC members to watch a recent PSA short video she made featuring Mr. Henry Bomberg and Mr. Bill Sterns, about ways to volunteer in Lebanon.

F. Energy Efficiency Standards of the City's Staff Housing Initiative

Mr. Kenelly said that he talked with Mr. David Brooks, Deputy City Manager, and learned that they do not have the designs finalized and are working to keep the costs down. Mr. Below said that he understands it is being priced by LaValley in Claremont and the name Preferred Building Systems was referenced as a potential vendor.

G. City Master Plan-Energy Chapter Update

Mr. Rothe said that this work is proceeding slowly.

H. Strategic Plan Update

Ms. Boschert has been working with Mr. Kilmer. He let the director know that this update is being delayed because this Committee did not have any information until January whereas other committees had this information back in November.

Mr. Kilmer sent out a summary to LEAC of all the items within the mural board listing the open items that this Committee touches. His ask is that they reconcile this summary of items included in LEAC's strategic plan against what is currently listed on the mural board. Members asked for Mr. Kilmer to resend this, since this Committee had anticipated discussing this in today's meeting.

Mr. Kilmer will send this information out in a spreadsheet as well as the actual document so that they have both to work with.

Mr. Kilmer quickly read numerous action items on this master list, including EV charging stations, proposed EV downtown charging equipment, purchasing Electric vehicles for the City, LED lighting for City buildings, energy audits, etc., and made some suggestions on some. Mr. Kilmer said that even though much of this work cannot be completed at this time, due to capacity limitations, most items should remain on their master list, for future consideration.

Mr. Rothe stated that he wants an interim goal of 50% reduction of greenhouse gases of by 2035. LEAC also discussed the fact that the verbiage has changed on this strategic objective to transition to 100% renewable energy sources. These two objectives align.

After some discussion, it was agreed that this Commission will do some leg work prior to the next LEAC meeting, to provide specific feedback and coordinate with Mr. Chaffee who in turn will work on the Master Plan and get his exact feedback to Mr. Kilmer prior to their next meeting.

Ms. Boschert followed up on her commitment to check to see what other Cities are doing in the absence of a dedicated Energy Manager and recently spoke with other communities as well as Linda Grey, previously with Vital Communities. Many communities in New Hampshire share an Energy Manager and they each pay a pro-rated amount based on their population. This can be up for consideration at some future date, when the budget permits.

I. LEAC goals-review, prioritize

Chair Bromberg spoke recently with Sarah Brock (at Clean Energy of New Hampshire) about the circuit rider role (Sullivan County) that LEAC discussed in December's meeting. In the past, the perception was that Lebanon did not need help, but she provided him the name of Mr. Doug Cogan, and said he could be a resource for the City of Lebanon, but LEAC would need to be specific with any requests. Also, she gave Chair Bromberg some templates for LEAC's use (included in the Agenda Packet).

It was agreed that during their next meeting on March 20, 2025, this Commission will have an extended conversation about what this committee is interested in working on, and what their strategic plan and goals should be for 2025 and beyond. This will be on the Agenda.

Mr. Below shared that the City Council just last night approved a change to the Master Plan which allows for development benefits for greater density in residential area (brought forth from a prior Master Plan), and that C-PACE (commercial property assessment clean energy method of financing) could be revisited, as could other potential initiatives. He also referenced Steve DuPrey's column and a recent article about New Hampshire financing and working through things that have been obstacles in the past.

J. Environmental Justice Task Force-Update

No current updates other than they are meeting tomorrow.

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. Commemorate Tad's work as the City's Energy Manager

Ms. Boschert brought forth the proposed resolution (input from several LEAC members) and she read the entire document since it was not included in the Agenda Packet, though she shared it with all LEAC members in advance of today's meeting. This document is included in these meeting Minutes, as page 6 of 6.

****A MOTION to adopt this resolution about Mr. Tad Montgomery was made by Ms. Sherry Boschert. Seconded by Mr. Bill Sterns.***

****The vote on the MOTION was approved 8-0.***

Mr. Thomas "Craig" Ames, a local citizen voiced his support for this resolution, for Mr. Montgomery.

B. Comprehensive Climate Action Plan work group

No update

C. 'Electrify Everything' worksheet

Ms. Boschert shared this document in advance, and it was included in the Agenda Packet. It was agreed that she will update this document and include LEAC's logo and that this will be available at upcoming events such as the

6. Energy & Facilities Manager Report

None

7. Open to the Public

Ms. Anna Guenther with Vital Communities sat in on this meeting and supports LEAC's work, and their adoption of the resolution for Mr. Tad Montgomery. She is particularly interested in the progress of the EV bikes initiative.

8. Upcoming Events

April 2025 Upper Valley Earth Day (last weekend) events at a school and several homes –website forthcoming

EV Expo – September event – date TBD

9. Future Agenda Items

None

10. Adjournment

****A MOTION to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Jonathan Chaffee
Seconded by Mr. Woody Rothe***

****The vote on the MOTION was approved 8-0***

****The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 PM***

Respectfully submitted,
Cinda Mersel
Recording Secretary

Resolution Honoring

Tad Montgomery

WHEREAS, the City of Lebanon hired Tad Montgomery as its first Energy and Facilities Manager in 2017, in which position he achieved major energy-efficiency accomplishments until the City Council eliminated the staff position in December 2024; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery's efforts saved the City of Lebanon an estimated \$13.2 million in energy costs, a sum that more than paid for the cost of the staff position and expenses; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery oversaw upgrading of Lebanon's streetlights to use energy-efficient LED bulbs, saving the City \$80,000-\$100,000 in energy costs per year; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery oversaw implementation of Phases 1 and 2 of the Solar project, saving the City \$30,00-\$45,000 per year through the use of solar photovoltaic power, which reduced energy use by 15%-20%; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery assisted energy-efficiency renovations at Lebanon City Hall, which saved the City an estimated \$6.5 million by cutting energy use there by approximately half; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery supported the rebuild of Fire Station #1 to be "net zero ready;" and

WHEREAS, Montgomery shepherded multiple policies for greater energy efficiency and greenhouse gas reductions into implementation by Lebanon, including the City's Workplace Charging Policy, Electric Vehicle and Equipment Procurement Policy, and others; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery designed highly energy-efficient support buildings at Civic Field and Valley Cemetery; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery tirelessly pursued grant opportunities, Direct Pay credits, and other means of reducing City costs for these and other improvements; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery served as the staff liaison to the Energy Advisory Committee, enabling its volunteers to contribute to the City's progress; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery showed exceptional abilities in positive and engaging outreach, networking with other communities and organizations, and being Lebanon's ambassador for climate action; and

WHEREAS, During his tenure Montgomery performed many more tasks and generated many more ideas that advanced Lebanon but are too numerous to be listed here,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Lebanon Energy Advisory Committee that we, the members of the Lebanon Energy Advisory Committee, express our gratitude to former Energy and Facilities Manager Tad Montgomery for his service in enabling the great progress that Lebanon has made toward adoption of energy efficient infrastructure and policies, reducing our greenhouse gas emissions,

and reducing energy costs for the City of Lebanon. We are grateful for his efforts and look forward to the day when Lebanon again can hire an Energy Manager to continue this crucial work.

Passed unanimously by LEAC on February 20, 2025