

FINAL

**LEBANON ENERGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (LEAC)
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Remote Via Microsoft Teams
LebanonNH.gov/Live
May 15, 2025
3:30 PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Henry Bromberg (Chair), Clifton Below (virtual), 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 3:34PM

2. PREAMBLE – Read by Mr. Chris Kilmer

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

**A MOTION was made by Mr. Woody Rothe to approve the March 20, 2025 minutes as amended
Seconded by Mr. Patrick Kenelly*

** 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 shared slides that he had presented at the CPCNH annual membership meeting held on April 24, 2025, in Manchester, NH, where a majority of communities were represented in person and others remotely. CPCNH just elected new and returning directors. Mr. Below had completed his term so is now an immediate “past Chair.

Mr. Below reviewed some of his slide presentation from that meeting, about “Foundations: Enterprise Risk Management Policies & How We Got to Where We Are Today”.

Mr. Below’s presentation at the Concord meeting was followed by Mr. Henry Herndon, acting General Manager, and the work plan that is being implemented (at the April 2025 live meeting).

Next Mr. Below provided a slide of a “Quick Background Story” going back to 2016 and telling the story of why towns combined forces and also when LEAC was elected to be the designated committee (late 2019) under the RSA 53-E, to support the proposed pilot with Liberty of the opt-in dynamic real time pricing buy/sell rate”, for the City of Lebanon.

He covered the rate history of CPCNH and explained why the June 2024 setting was a problem which resulted in unexpected loss reserves, first revealed on December 19, 2024. Subsequently on December 26th, their CEO called Mr. Below to tell him about his updated financial outlook, at which time Mr. Below sounded the alarm about the situation and the fact that they were only approximately half hedged for December. CPCNH has since completed an assessment of their policy compliance and led to the CEO departing from the coalition, and the Board putting Mr. Herndon in the Acting General Manager role.

Their goal going forward is to be 100 – 110% hedged, the logic being you can lose more margin being underhedged rather than over hedged.

They are in the process of bottoming out and rebuilding. They are conforming to the policies and this year they will be reserving at costs and rebuilding reserves. Mr. Below provided LEAC members with several links to additional in-depth information and background explanation.

He then shared some information on the status of some competitors:

Eversource was under collecting from 2-3 years ago. They will have to stop accruing interest on +\$6.5M, since it was their error. The Commission will issue a supplemental order of notice to make a decision on what to do about the \$6.5M, and a correction could be reflected in their future pricing.

Mr. Below and Mr. Samuel Golding will be witnesses on May 16, 2025, against **UNITIL** regarding their past period under collection and the problems with their load settlement system. UNITIL had 15% apparent line losses. He anticipates they will include their underreported rates into their new rates. Therefore, their rate could be higher than CPCNH.

Liberty never “bought in” to the idea that their should be cost shifting for default service, rather they continued with the way they had been doing their accounting, and so in their June rates, it is expected that they will collect for their under collections since last August, so it is expected that CHCNH will be either at similar pricing or a bit under Liberty.

CPCNH will in all likelihood be competitive and still has a large volume of customers.

Mr. Below commented that CPCNH has excellent staff and executives, including a retired CPA as the Treasurer.

B. Landfill Gas to Energy Project

Mr. Chris Kilmer gave an update LG2-E. There was a failure of a cooling unit, but they were able to do single stack testing. They should be on site late May, for the fourth try of final testing. All other parameters are met, and so Walden will turn this over to the City of Lebanon. The plant will be up and running and will be put on the grid.

Ms. Sherry Boschert said that there is a request for proposal for EV charging, and she knows of one company that is interested in putting EV fast chargers at the landfill with the landfill gas to energy project. More to follow as they get the proposals.

C. Municipal Solar Currently on hold

D. Lebanon Energy Savings Program

Mr. Jonathan Chaffee said that this project is being stalled. The EPA staff has been cut (but not the money) and so the State is waiting for guidance on how to disburse the money. He doesn't anticipate any movement on this until at least 2026.

Also, he and Mr. Rothe are working with Resilient Buildings Group, the contractor for Liberty Utilities, for the NH Saves Program, and they have money set aside to do weatherization, and will provide free audits for landlords, and what it would cost to undertake these, so Mr. Chaffee and Mr. Rothe have supplied them with a list of Lebanon Landlords. In turn, Liberty will send a flyer to these landlords, outlining the programs that they offer and the availability of free programs if 50% of the residents are below 65% of median income. So, they hope to bring some landlords into this program.

E. EV Subcommittee Report

Ms. Boschert said about 300 people got access to the PDF Guide showing the sites of the Earth Day event. People came with a diversity of interest, some just about heat pumps, gardening. April is a good time for this, but she thinks going forward, she would like to see more of a working group rather than primarily herself, including members from this committee, as well as members from "Sustainable Lebanon", Sustainable Hanover, and other partners in Upper Valley towns.

By selling guides and some commitments from some members of the EV subcommittee, they raised \$1,454 for the e-bike project for electricity. They have applied for a grant of \$24,000 from AARP and will know sometime in May 2025.

What they have raised so far will cover 5 or more years of electricity along with maintenance.

The next event is the Upper Valley EV Expo, to be held Saturday, September 6, from 11AM – 4PM, at the Hartford, VT City Hall. She asked that LEAC support this event.

Ms. Boschert MOVED to ask LEAC to co-sponsor this Upper Valley EV Expo event September 6, 2025.

Seconded by Mr. Bill Sterns

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

DPW (City of Lebanon) has issued the RFP for the installation of EV charging stations; bid opening will be on Thursday, May 22, 2025, and afterwards they will undergo several days of Q&As. Shortly thereafter LEAC will have an idea of the costs of these proposed charging stations. Ms. Boschert asked if LEAC could help evaluate the proposals. Mr. Kilmer said the City of Lebanon would be looking for LEAC members' expertise.

Ms. Boschert explained that she has recently learned that full power level two is "overkill". She cited the difference between Level 2 power, low power Level 2, and Level 1 power. Lower power Level 2 is sufficient for EV charging stations for any type of housing, including multifamily and single-family homes, etc., and draws substantially less energy from the grid as well as being less expensive.

She then met with the Planning Department, and they gave her “next steps” for staff or LEAC. It has been agreed that LEAC is the logical team to champion this initiative.

She will share her white paper on this topic, prior to LEAC’s next meeting.

She is asking LEAC to propose these changes and it was agreed that they will put this on the agenda for the June LEAC meeting.

Ms. Boschert mentioned that there might be some funding from the TIF Board that can be used for LEAC for EV charging stations. Some members of TIF commented that they thought this would be good use of some of TIF money for this. Once LEAC has more information, Ms. Boschert can go back to TIF.

City staff also suggested that these requirements be put in front of Site Plan Regulations rather than Zoning Ordinance, the logic being that Zoning is “set” and controlled by City Council. This will have the Planning Board overseeing this and they can make waivers of site plan regulations, if needed.

Mr. Kenelly weighed in on this matter as well and agreed with Ms. Boschert’s assessment. Mr. Below explained the history of why this has historically been addressed by Zoning; it has more “staying power” under Zoning. LEAC will discuss this further at their June meeting.

Ms. Boschert will put together a Power Point to explain this relatively new option of Low Level, including the lower costs. She plans to share this via a Zoom meeting and perhaps invite new developers to this event.

Ms. Boschert foresees all properties eventually wanting a Lower Power Level 2 charger (cited the analogy of indoor plumbing), and so it will encompass long-term planning as well.

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

This matter is in front of Mr. David Brooks, Deputy City Manager. Design and money are under consideration. No updates at this time.

F. City Master Plan-Energy Chapter Update

Mr. Chaffee said that Ms. Catheryn Hembree, Associate Planner is now formatting and working on the City Master Plan. She will share this with LEAC when she completes her first draft.

G. Strategic Plan Update

Mr. Kilmer said that there was a public hearing last night with the City Council and he thinks it was adopted. He was not in attendance.

H. LEAC goals-review & prioritization

Chair Bromberg opened up discussion for LEAC goals, given the current political environment.

Mr. Rothe said that he had a discussion in the Master Plan meeting and a member said that it is possible to change building codes piecemeal. Mr. Rothe is hoping that he and Mr. Kenelly can have a meeting with Mr. Leigh Hays, Code Health Inspector, Planning & Development.

Mr. Below expounded on a law that was passed last year, that would allow for a piecemeal approach. There is another bill that is currently pending in the Senate that defers to the 2018 building codes with no modifications. He will stay current on the legislation of this matter.

Mr. Chaffee suggested that they simplify LEAC setting their goals by combing through the Energy Chapter and the Strategic Plan, and decide what resonates with LEAC member, and make these their updated goals and priorities and take these on as projects. He offered to review the Energy Chapter and come up with a list of recommendations for LEAC.

Mr. Bromberg will decide when LEAC will put this on the agenda.

I. Environmental Justice Task Force-Update

No current updates.

5. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Mr. Bromberg inquired about Mr. Below's current status with the City Council. It is being decided. He anticipates continuing to be a member of LEAC.

6. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC None

7. UPCOMING EVENTS

Ms. Boschert shared that tomorrow, May 16th, there will be an ebike Event in Colburn Park from 7-9 AM called "Curb Your Car" put on by Vital Communities. Omar & Bob's will be doing quick bike tune-ups. On Saturday at Kilton Library there will be an ebike event from 12-2PM, and people can sign out an ebike.

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS None

9. ADJOURNMENT

**A MOTION to adjourn the meeting was made by Ms. Cherry Boschert
Seconded by Mr. Jonathan Chaffee*

**The vote on the MOTION was approved 6-0*

***The meeting was adjourned at 5:08 PM**

Respectfully submitted,
Cinda Mersel
Recording Secretary