

FINAL

**LEBANON ENERGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (LEAC)
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Remote Via Microsoft Teams
LebanonNH.gov/Live
December 18, 2025
3:30 PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Henry Bromberg (Chair), Clifton Below, Thomas Benzel, Sherry Boschert (remote), Jonathan Chaffee, Patrick Kenelly, Woody Rothe, Bill Stearns

MEMBERS ABSENT: James Mashal

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

1. CALL TO ORDER – Chair Bromberg called the meeting to order at 3:33 PM

2. PREAMBLE – Read by Mr. Chris Kilmer

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. November 20, 2025

*Ms. Tom Benzel MOVED to approve the November 20, 2025, minutes as written.
Seconded by Mr. Jonathan Chaffee*

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

4. OLD BUSINESS

A. Legislation 1 PUC Regulations, 1 CPCNH / LCP updates: CPCNH Publicity Campaign

Mr. Below said that Liberty Utilities presented proposed rates as a result of under collection. They are still reviewing other under collections and anticipate recovering them via future proposed rates, sometime in 2026.

CPCNH also set their rates today, which will remain slightly higher than Liberty for the current period starting in February (approx. 1 cent per kilowatt hour 13.7 Liberty compared to 14.6 CPCNH), to help ensure they continue to get back on solid financial footing with their finances/reserves. CPCNH customers continue to be able to opt out by contacting the coalition via phone or their website; it is a frictionless process.

Mr. Below chairs a Regulatory Legislative Affairs Committee and they have been reviewing bills as they come out and they have taken a position on two bills. They are *supporting* the balcony solar bill which will be heard by the New Hampshire Senate on January 8, 2026. This is a bill that would support the low power (up to 1200 watts), a portable system that will simply plug into a wall outlet (likened to an appliance). It would be exempted from the interconnection requirements and it would not be net metered.

This is already used heavily in Europe and is great for renters and property owners alike to help them offset some of their household load with the system. The one state that has already passed it is Utah (primarily Republican State legislature), so the Committee is hopeful that this bill will have appeal and gain support in New Hampshire's Libertarian oriented legislature, among others.

The other bill that CPCNH has taken a stance *against* is ***a bill proposed by the New Hampshire House Republicans, to repeal the 50-year-old local option to exempt solar PD systems from local property taxes.*** The significance of this is when one invests in solar, it is low cost and almost all capital solar is free with low operating costs, and it is very low cost compared to natural gas which is what solar offsets on the margin, most of the time, meaning solar production in New England displaces natural gas combined cycle ***and the way this bill is written, it favors out of state generation and fossil fuel generation over clean local solar generation.*** He stated that any person interested in solar should be concerned about this partisan bill.

If the House Republicans were proposing a uniform tax both solar and gas, then it would be a fair way to do it, rather than this biased proposed bill *against solar.*

B. Lebanon Community Power refresh policy

Mr. Below, along with Mr. James Mashal worked on a draft for the power refresh policy for CPCNH, and he shared this draft on the overhead screen.

This Draft was included in the Agenda Packet for today's meeting and it was suggested that this be an Appendix to the Electric Aggregation Plan.

LEAC is proposing that the City of Lebanon adopt the following Lebanon Community Power Customer Refresh Policy:

To "refresh customers" means to enroll new electric utility customers into Lebanon Community Power (LCP) as an alternative default service provider, with 30 days advance mailed notice and the option to opt-out of becoming an LCP supply customer and instead remain on utility default service. When new residents and businesses begin electric service from Liberty Utilities, they are placed on utility default service for electricity supply, even though community power aggregations (CPAs) are also defined as default service providers under NH law. CPAs have to go through a "refresh" process detailed in Public Utility Commission rules.

In coordination and conformity with the Community Power Coalition of NH's refresh policy and scheduling, Lebanon Community Power shall periodically refresh customers from utility default service by rate class whenever LCP's lowest available rate for the respective rate class is lower than the utility's default service rate at the time the refreshed customers are expected to begin service. No refreshes shall occur when LCP's lowest available rates are expected to be higher than those of the utility, by rate class, during the month of enrollment, unless otherwise directed by the Lebanon City Council.

Mr. Clifton Below MOVED that LEAC recommend the above policy to the Lebanon City Council for adoption by the City Council.

Seconded by Mr. Jonathan Chaffee

****The MOTION was approved (8-0)***

Mr. Below will get a memo for the City Council to Mr. David Brooks, Assistant City Manager, with the above recommendation that is to be presented on January 7, 2026 to the City Council.

B. Landfill Gas to Energy Project

Mr. Chris Kilmer said that recently there have been pressure issues and the system is being very temperamental. Unison is coming early next month to try to work through the numerous issues that have plagued this system, caused mostly by pressure issues in the gas processing skid with the Unison equipment. Unison seems committed to getting this fixed, and they have their best team working on this. Also, they will provide complete full training for City employees, for this system, that was to have been provided several months ago.

He has worked out the emissions report and they will now get monthly reported numbers (from Knollwood for the City) so that he can apply for City rec credits quarterly instead of only annually. Additionally, Mr. Below offered to look at the Liberty bills.

Mr. Below added that Representative Corman along with Senator Prentiss are sponsoring a bill to make it clear that the City of Lebanon qualifies for New Hampshire recs.

C. Lebanon Energy Saving Program

D. Mr. Woody Rothe said that he got a mailing from Liberty offering rebates on mini-splits, lower cost water heaters, and full energy audits. For the program that he and Mr. Chaffee have been working on, mailings are continuing and now Liberty Utilities is also sending out mailings to all of their commercial customers, so these tie well together with the NH Saves Program.

E. EV Subcommittee Report

Ms. Boschert shared that New Hampshire AARP has given Lebanon \$3,000 for the City of Lebanon E-Bike charging station project spearheaded by LEAC.

Ms. Sherry Boschert MOVED that LEAC advise the Department of Public Works that the RFP that was issued in May 2025 for EV charging installations should be closed without award and DPW should consider issuing a similar RFP when funding is secured.

Seconded by Mr. Thomas Benzel

****The MOTION was approved (8-0)***

Next, Ms. Boschert MOVED that LEAC notify the Planning Department that it formally rescinds the proposed Zoning Ordinance amendments endorsed by LEAC on June 19, 2025, and instead LEAC supports the "compromise" proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and the Site Plan Review regulations that were endorsed by LEAC on November 20, 2025 and endorsed by the Planning Board on December 8, 2025.

Seconded by Mr. Clifton Below

****The MOTION was approved (8-0)***

Mr. Patrick Kennelly is on the Planning Board and represents LEAC. He will continue to provide any relevant updates on this topic.

She also said that LEAC did not get the T-Mobile grant they applied for in 2025, but DES and Granite State Clean Cities still has some VW money to perhaps replace some forklifts. Mr. Kilmer will be working on this.

There is a State bill on e-Bikes regulations at Clean Energy New Hampshire, HP1410-FN and the EV Subcommittee endorsed Clean Energy New Hampshire's proposed wording change in that bill. This is a bill that creates a new sub-class of vehicles, like fast motorcycles, and these are proposed to fall under road vehicles (battery size greater than 750 watts and a top speed of greater than 20 miles per hour, without pedaling), which is deemed more appropriate for these vehicles.

Lastly, they are planning a **2nd Earth Week Open House** event and she has several volunteers that will join her in a Zoom meeting on **Friday, January 9, 2026, at 12:00 noon**. All are invited to attend and participate.

F. City Master Plan: Chapter 13 – Energy. Final edit. Next – Planning Board

The final edit is with Ms. Cathryn Hembree, Assistant Planner, and the Planning Board will meet soon to discuss this document. All LEAC members that were instrumental in the making of this document are asked to be at that meeting. The date will be communicated soon.

G. UV's 'Energy' Committees 'conference'

The initial meeting for this group has been set for January 13, 2025, in the PM (no time stated), and will be hosted in Lebanon. The participating towns are Hanover, Enfield, Plainfield, Norwich, Hartford, Lyme, Woodstock and Lebanon. LEAC is limiting the size due to meeting space constraints.

H. C-PACER – Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy and Resiliency

Ms. Boschert and Mr. Doug Cogan shared information about the C-PACER program along with how to move the process along, for the City of Lebanon to participate in this program.

It is a private financing mechanism, done through commercial banks and rather than people financing clean energy related investments, and attaching them to a mortgage and/or loan, the loan is attached to the asset itself, the property. That allows an extended payment period, with smaller payments being a benefit as well. This is an incentive for those who would like to make this type of investment.

In order to establish this C-PACER program here, the City Council would need to vote on 1- stating they would like to adopt this C-PACER mechanism itself and 2- a second vote based on RFA-53 stating that this program is in the public interest and that there are benefits to adopting it.

Mr. Cogan addressed concerns raised in the last LEAC meeting and provided them a question/answer document (thru Mr. Bromberg). He said that his opinion is that the City/municipality would not become entangled in the types of issues posed previously, and he and Ms. Boschert a review by the City Attorney

Mr. Below said that LEAC only has authority to make a recommendation to the City Council. They will add “subject to legal review” if there is a future motion. They will revisit this in the future.

I. CIP – Capital Improvement Plan: priorities stemming from Chapter 13

Ms. Boschert said that she recently went through the Master Plan to see if there were any “shovel ready” projects to propose for 2026 CIP and she listed 10 ideas. She and the EV Subcommittee will be focusing on both EV-related along with other energy projects to prioritize these.

Mr. Chaffee also spoke of some priority energy projects (included in the Agenda Packet), with the focus On City buildings. He noted that any of these projects will need to pay for themselves in energy savings to be feasible in this tax climate.

He listed 9 potential locations for energy projects and suggested LEAC work with Doug Cogan and CPNH and CDFA Municipal Energy Reduction Fund, to secure NH Saves investment in any particularly Energy wasteful City Buildings (he listed 8 locations to review).

The next topic was about dimming LED lights wherever this is practical. Mr. Below said he thinks this would be a good time to do a trial on this. For example, the original idea was to dim lighting to 40% (they are currently at 80%) at a late hour, such as 11 or 12 PM. He has seen this firsthand on his street, and the 40% lighting level still provides ample lighting.

To assist in energy project efforts, the list that Mr. Cogan included list three capital providers, all for C-PACER commercial projects. They are certified in New Hampshire and ready to do business.

Chair Bromberg asked Ms. Boschert, Mr. Chaffee, and Mr. Below to collaborate and come back to their January meeting, prepared to have a concise list of priority opportunities for LEAC. Mr. Kilmer can also assist with internal items such as timing.

5. NEW BUSINESS None

6. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC None

7. UPCOMING EVENTS Earth Day Open House, April 2026

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

A. LEAC’s April 16th meeting was changed to April 23, 2026.

9. ADJOURNMENT

*Mr. Tom Benzel MOVED for adjournment.
Seconded by Mr. Bill Stearns*

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

The meeting was adjourned at 5:19 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Cinda Mersel
Recording Secretary

Ms. Erica Hiller, Vital Communities attended this meeting.