

**Dennis Alternative Energy Committee
July 10, 2023
Final Minutes**

Members Present: Mike Sarli, John Benker, Susan Klein, Mark Lambdin, Lyn Solomon, David SanClemente, and David Langan via Zoom
Members Absent: None
Others Present: Tom O'Connor (DPW Deputy Director and Committee Liaison); Ken McAloon (Dennis Climate and Coastal Resiliency Advisory Committee); Andrew Lane (prospective committee member)

A quorum was declared.

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by Chairman Mike Sarli at 5:00

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

None

APPROVAL OF JUNE 5, 2023 MEETING MINUTES

Motion: Move to approve minutes of the June 5, 2023 meeting as amended. Motion made by David L, seconded by David S. Approved unanimously

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Andrew Lane has expressed interest in becoming a member of the Committee. Hopefully, he will be appointed to one of the alternate positions on Wednesday, July 12.

Mike noted that he had reminded the Admin. Assistant who worked with the Select Board that he had requested that Dave L. be promoted from alternate to a full member. He told Dave that he should be on the look-out for a notice of change of status.

ANTICIPATED BUSINESS

Green Communities and Other Municipal Updates

Updates were provided by Tom.

• **Green Communities**

Tom, together with Cape Light Compact, has come up with a plan for the final dispersal of the Designation Grant. The plan has been submitted to DOER for approval. It differs slightly from what he reported at the last meeting.

The plan includes the lighting upgrades in the remaining municipal buildings, part of the cost of the upgrade to the Library's EMS system, and part of the cost of the upgrade to the HVAC system at the Dennis Pines. If DOER approves the plan, and he presumes that they

will, that will spend down the remainder of the Designation Grant. Once that money is spent, we will be in a position to apply for another grant.

Mike suggested that now might be a good time for the Town to start looking at possible projects that might be eligible for the Competitive or other grants. He asked Tom whether he thought the Committee might be helpful in this process. Tom agreed that this would be very helpful. He said that he knew a lot of the things that had to be fixed in town but he didn't know the grant vehicles that might be available to cover the costs. He noted that Susan had done some homework on this and circulated the information to the Committee.

Mike opined that it might be useful if we could access a list of all the Green Communities grants that had been approved over the past couple of years to give us an idea of the kind of projects we might propose. Susan responded that, while he was away, she had circulated the Program Opportunities Notice (PON) for both the competitive grants and the META grants from the last round as well as the list of the approved Competitive Grant projects. Mike had not yet had an opportunity to catch up on his emails and will review these documents. The documents are attached here for easy reference as Attachment 1-3. **Mike gave the Committee a homework assignment of going through these documents and coming up with a list of a half dozen or so possible projects.** Susan noted that the list of projects is not very detailed but the PONs are much clearer on the direction the DOER is going with its Green Communities grants, a real laundry list of what they are considering. They are definitely moving away from renewable energy in the form of solar and are focusing on energy conservation. The big push for the future is decarbonization/ electrification of buildings, i.e. moving away from any fossil fuel. Mike added that another of foci might be on the Town fleet of vehicles. Susan commented the move toward electric vehicles is definitely a part of it but she believed that the most subsidy the Town could get was \$7,500 of the total cost per vehicle. She added that we can't actually apply for a Competition Grant until we have completely closed out the Designation Grant and submitted our final report. However that is not the case of the META grant. Hopefully, we can aim at the round of Competition Grants that will likely be issued in March 2024 with proposals due in May of 2024.

- **Charging Stations**

Tom has been in touch with Power Options and has copied Mike on his communications with them. Walter Gray is Power Option's point man for this project which will include Lily Pad for the equipment, DK Power as the installer for both the infrastructure improvements under the Make Ready program and for the charging station equipment, and Eversource itself. Hopefully, sometime in the coming week there will be an on-site meeting of all parties involved to get the ball rolling and be clear on the roles of each of the parties.

There is also a good deal of paperwork involved with getting the project off the ground. Tom already has the proposal for the Chargepoint as a Service, but needs the proposal from DK for the install and Eversource's contract for the Make Ready Program. Once received, he can send one package up to Town Hall so they will have a clear picture of what is involved. Mike added that having one package will facilitate the legal review.

- **Energy Consultant**

Dave L. brought up the issue of a shared energy manager/consultant that could work on writing grants such as they are doing in Brewster. Mark interjected that this option was no longer available. He had been in touch with the Cape Cod Commission to talk to them about this very subject. If he understood what they were telling him, this is not on their list of current priorities. He interpreted this to mean there was limited perceived usefulness of such a consultant. Susan asked for clarification—was this the Cape Cod Commission or the Cape Light Compact? He responded that he had talked to both. She said that this was peculiar because Cape Light Compact was the entity that was supposedly hiring the energy specialist that Brewster was buying into.

Susan noted that Lisa Sullivan, the Green Communities coordinator for our region, had told her that Orleans was looking to share an energy manager with one or more other Cape communities, so we might want to start talking to Orleans to find out what they have in mind. Mike suggested that we might want to take this one step further and contact our counterparts in all of the Cape towns to gauge their interest in sharing a resource like that. Susan noted that this position should be more than just grant writing, including things like developing more comprehensive master plans. Mark added that Barnstable County is small enough to establish a uniform structure across the entire county. Mike asked for a volunteer to draft a brief note requesting an expression of interest in sharing the services of an energy consultant. **Mark will make some preliminary contacts with a few of the towns and from there will send a letter out to the AECs in all the other towns on the Cape.** Mike suggested that contact information for our counterparts in other towns might be found on those towns' website. **Mike will add an agenda item for the August meeting to have Mark report to the Committee on his progress.**

Susan noted that, if had we decided to partially fund an energy manager under our Designation Grant, we could have used 20% of the Designation Grant (up to \$20,000) to fund such a position. We did not use any of the Designation Grant to do so, but we can still receive support for an energy manager under a Competitive Grant but the level of funding would decrease to 10% of the grant (up to \$10,000). This would fall under the heading of Administrative Services, along with the funds we use to get assistance from Cape Light Compact for doing reports, etc. She added that Brewster had used the \$20,000 out of their Designation Grant to pay the first-year salary for their share of the energy manager. After that, they used a portion of the monies derived from the lease of their golf parking lots to a solar canopy developer.

Sub-Committee Updates:

- **Charging Station Pilot Project**

Discussion of the pilot charging station project was covered under Municipal Updates above.

- **Solar Installations**

- **Solar installation at the Highlands Golf Course**

Mark and Lyn reported that any solar installation at the Highlands Golf Course would be on hold at the request of Maryellen Fabiano-Stowe, the Acting Golf Director, until the energy consultant issue is sorted out.

- **Solar Canopies to Power EV Charging Stations**

Mark reported that he had done some research into the possibility of using solar canopies to power EV charging stations, particularly those that might be erected in beach parking lots such as West Dennis Beach.

Solar canopies even without EV charging capability are likely to be pretty expensive—on the order of 6 figures—if they are to cover any appreciable ground area. For solar canopies that would be dedicated to EV charging, there would be the added cost of including some sort of management system as well as the installation of battery storage. There is also the issue of storm resiliency, particularly storm surges. For these reasons, Mark recommends that this idea be put on the back burner. Mike added that all of these concerns underscore the reason why any such projects should be turned over to a third-party developer with the Town simply collecting lease payments for the use of the parking areas.

- **Misc.**

Susan reported that she had reviewed the memo that we were given by Brewster Town Administrator, Peter Lombardi, a while ago and they went through the procurement of lease program for their solar canopies through one of the rounds of procurement done through CVEC. Mike reviewed the process he sat in on the review process of one of CVEC's past rounds of procurement for solar canopies. He noted that several of the developers responding to the procurement gave the option of constructing solar canopies that the town would own or leasing the ground and owning the canopies themselves. Under the CVEC umbrella, towns are able to specify which of these options they would be willing to entertain, so it's not surprising that Brewster chose the lease option for their canopies. Susan said she didn't know whether CVEC was still conducting new procurement rounds for canopies. **Mike will follow up to get an update on what CVEC is currently doing given the staffing changes they experience a couple of years ago.**

- **Residential Wind**

No discussion

UNANTICIPATED BUSINESS

- **Status of the Solar Panels on the Police Station**

John asked if there was any update on the solar array at the police station. Tom responded that he had spoken to Police Chief Jack Brady who told him that the police department had nothing to do with the management of the solar array. Chief Brady referred him to Greg Rounseville. Tom sent an email to Greg who has been on vacation. He is hoping to hear back from him as Greg weeds through his inbox. **Tom will let the Committee know what he hears from Greg.**

- **Status of the Solar Array at the Wixon School**

Susan raised the issue of the status, current and future, of the solar array at the Wixon School given the fact that the Wixon School is now closed. At the ECCCI meeting last week, she had asked Sandy Cashen, the former building manager of the DY school system, that question. Sandy, now retired, said she didn't know the details but that it was her understanding that the array would revert to the Town in the next couple of years. If this is true, it raises the management issue of who in Town would be dealing with that. Susan said that she was willing to follow up on this but Tom interjected that CVEC had recently reached out to him on this subject and he referred them to Town Hall so they can begin discussions on how the process will be handled. Mike felt that this was going to be part of the whole plan on what will be done with the building and grounds of the school. He supposed that there was a group being put together to study the disposition of the school and the property around it. Tom commented that, as a result of a Town Meeting article, the Town had issued a Request for Interest asking developers for ideas of what might be done with the property. The few responses that were received were generally lackluster. He hasn't seen a report from the RFI yet, but commented that this was going to be a long process with many moving parts, not the least of which will be hazardous material removal from the building itself. The Town has already done building studies and knows that there is going to be a big price tag, no matter what they do.

Susan suggested that, if the Town was putting together a committee to plan the disposition of the school, our Committee should request that we be included in the discussions so that we can weigh in on matters regarding the solar array. Mike commented that, of all the issues to do with the school complex, the solar array is probably one of the easiest to deal with and furthest down the list of priorities. **Tom will inform the Administration that there is interest on our Committee to take part in the planning process vis a vis the solar array.** Mike offered to make himself available to talk to the Administration about this if they were interested.

John had some thoughts how the property might be used; for instance something that would provide jobs for our young people, or a headquarters for the off-shore wind projects. Mark added that a similar building in Brooklyn was converted to housing, some of which was affordable housing, and had an easy way of storing bicycles for the J1 workers.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Move to adjourn. Motion made by Mark.; seconded by Lyn. Vote: unanimous
Adjourned: 5:45 pm.