

Nelson Town Buildings Committee
December 7, 2015

Attendees

- David U
- Dave B
- Russ
- Sandy
- Bert
- Lisa
-

Action Items

Dave B

- Assign references (1 each from GEO and South Pack) to Lisa, Sandy and Dave B)
- Ask South Pack why they don't recommend optimizers

Lisa

- Call References assigned by Dave B

Sandy

- Call References assigned by Dave B

MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 6:05 PM

Motion to accept the minutes of November 9th, by Dave, second by Sandy, all in favor
Solar for the Library

- Bid packages were received from all three of the companies that were sent the RFP.
- GEO quote appears to be 7.5 kW instead of the 8.5kW, if you do the math. This has to be confirmed. Is this actually a number that should only be applied to the optimizers.
 - Rex from GEO responds
 - panel rating is a "flash rating" in the factory environment, so panels don't produce that perfect output in any environmental setting.
 - Nelson we wanted the AC to be 8.5, they did the DC rating instead.
 - So GEO would need to add a higher output panel in order to meet 8.5
 - Would they add more panels?
 - They like to keep working space on the roof.
 - He likes landscape orientation because you get more energy when there is snow on the bottom of the panel.
 - optimizer vs. microinverter
 - major advantage of micro-inverters
 - if you build your system one panel at a time, and keep growing, the micro-inverters are the way to go.
 - optimizers isolate the panel and have all the other advantages of micro-inverters, but it's harder to add more.
 - micro-inverters are more expensive
 - micro-inverters: the monitoring system is dogged with problems, and only has 2-year warranty.
 - His experience is that he's replaced as many of the monitoring systems as he's put in
 - And the information starts to be untrustworthy

- Monitoring is better in the optimizer system, has a 25-year guarantee.
 - 25 years on the optimizer, 25 years on the inverter with an extended warranty, and the cost of that extended warranty is in the GEO price.
 - what if net metering goes away?
 - so far, the states that have gone to net metering have stayed with it. It's a national goal to increase renewable energy.
 - Experience with municipal projects
 - this really is the equivalent of a residential project
- GEO came up with a generic calculation on output, where the RFP required the pathfinder calculation.
 - Will this be provided to us as an addendum?
 - yes
- There is recent research that shows that purchasing panels that are US-made has a better carbon-cost payback.
 - is South Pack able to source panels from the US
- Optimizers
 - We are interested in why South Pack doesn't recommend Optimizers.
- 12 year "product" warranty, what does this mean?
 - if the wind bends the panel and the aluminum panel is bent, or the panel develops a foggy spot, that's the 12 year warranty. The 25 year warranty is for the production of energy.
 - Rex has seen panels still in use after 25 years.
- Rex James joins us at 6:36 PM
 - from GEO
 - discussing the commitment to solar by the company founders, who have been living off-grid for more than a decade
 - GEO isn't only dependent on solar, this means it's a durable company.
 - monitoring is similar to the advanced nphase monitoring that you usually have to pay for
 - Solar World panels
 - this is the "rock" of american solar manufacturing
 - it's out west, using hydroelectric power
 - now using solar power to make the panels!
 - China started "dumping" panels
 - Solar World has been the only long-term choice for US-made panels
 - Rex has years of experience with Solar World panels, with trouble-free
 - Rex will help us figure out the "smartest" way to put of this system, and 7.5 kW may be better for us than 8.5. But he will do a bid for 8.5 kW AC at the inverter.

Motion to adjourn by Russ, second by Bert, at 7:51 PM

Next Meeting

Monday December 14th 6 PM Town Offices