

NELSON COMMUNITY POWER

February 15, 2022

Attendees

- In-person
 - Patsy Beffa-Negrini
 - Lisa Sieverts
 - Sandy Mackenzie
 - Gary Robinson
 - Rick Weyerhaeuser
- Zoom
 - Greg Rothman
 - Mare-Ann Jarvela
 - Bill Waterston
 - Betsy Street
 - Jonathan Pfister
- Absent
 - None
- Guests
 - Peterborough: **Dori Drachman** from Monadnock Sustainability Hub and Peterborough Energy Committee
 - Harrisville: **Andrea Hodson** working with Community Power Coalition of NH

Action Items

- Sandy
 - Ask Andrea for the “commonly asked questions” that townspeople ask

MINUTES

- Motion to approve the minutes of February 1, 2022, as sent by email on Feb. 1, Sandy, and Patsy seconds, all in favor
- Dori's Presentation - Overview of Community Power and Differences between the Coalition and brokers
 - Dori is also co-chair for Monadnock Sustainability Hub, trying to move the region to 100% renewable power
 - Question about Reserve Funds, how is this money managed? The Coalition manages it but hasn't figured out exactly how to do it yet. Interviewing California towns as an example. They pool all the money. Harrisville wants to have their own reserve fund, not pooled with other towns.
 - This is a question to ask our prospective brokers

- With the Coalition, the Reserve Fund is integral to the process, the Coalition will use it as a hedge against energy price fluctuations. This is different from the brokers like Standard Power, Dori is not sure they offer the Reserve Fund option.
- Question from Betsy: what's the catch? It sounds too good to be true and why does Eversource let this happen?
 - The utilities do NOT make their money by generating energy. That's why they let this happen.
- You can sign the joint powers agreement (Coalition) and still buy from a different broker at implementation
 - The brokers have a set price, thousandths of a penny per kw. But for the Coalition, still trying to figure out that price. It will be more than a "mil" but it is not apples to apples comparison. So the Coalition in Harrisville is requiring that the rates have to be at least as good as Eversource
- Question from Gary: how to sell the plan to the community while not knowing if the PUC will accept it
 - There is RSA 53e which does guide the process. By the time you get there (March 2023), this should be entirely settled.
gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa/html/nhtoc/NHTOC-III-53-E.htm
- How often does Eversource buy power?
 - Twice a year
 - They don't want to change this
 - Community Power can go out anytime, which is the main "secret" to getting better rates
 - The broker looks at your town's load, and your renewables mix, and then buy at that mix. If expensive, buy a little. If cheaper, buy a lot.
- What **process** did you go through to decide to work with a broker/consultant or not?
 - Hvl had a Energy commission, so they did the work. They consulted with CPCNH "orbit" but before they incorporated. SO this was a different process than Nelson will go through. Nelson would have have scaffolding if you went through this process with the Coalition now, if we sign the "joint powers agreement."
 - Their electric aggregation plan
 - Harrisville adopted their EAP before the PUC published its rules
 - As soon as your town adopts, you have to file (by a deadline) and then the PUC has their own deadline.
 - If you pull other towns plans from their websites, know that Harrisville Hanover Lebanon, received DENIALS from the PUC, because they had not done their rules first.
 - And also, how to manage customer data, or how to pick the vendor. Neither of which were in the state RSA
 - Bottom line: wait for updated plans before copying them!
 - Rye filed their plan before their town voted, which puts the town in a ticklish place if it is voted down at Town Meeting
 - Dori says PUC received two sets of plans, denied one and accepted the other (from Community Power). The good news is that PUC rule making has started ... no idea when it will be done.
 - Peterborough Dori they are in process to bring their plan to Town Meeting in May. They are also "going it alone" without consultation. They are talking a bit with the potential brokers, but mostly doing it themselves.
 - They **can** do this because of the work that towns like Harrisville did. Pboro looked at Harrisville, Keene, Hanover and Lebanon Power Plans.
 - Sub committee did the work
 - The easier way to go is to follow a template
 - The hub wants to educate people about Community Power and have materials, but the hub/we don't have expertise to guide a town through all the legal issues
- What do you like about working with Community Power Coalition of NH?

- Harrisville: We are at the table influencing how our policies will be shaped. It puts the “community” in Community Power. We are able to determine everything. We like being hands on, and being at the table.
 - Harrisville interviewed Keene, asked why they partnered with Standard Power. Harrisville is 900 people and we tracked everyone who came to a meeting and ended up with a list of 150 people. Asked Keene about performance of Standard Power with engaging voters, they also reached 100 people in a much larger town! If you bring your plan to Town Meeting yourselves, you’ll be more invested in it.
- The Monadnock sustainability Hub wanted to understand Community Power. Dori, personally, had a stake in it because Peterborough was working on a warrant article to transition to 100% renewable by specific dates. Town Administrator would only endorse the warrant article if there was a “viable path” to do it, and Community Power is the way to do it. So Dori wanted to be a part of the process. Went to Henry Herndon and Bob Haydn. Coalition said yes, help, Bob Haydn said no.
- **Updates** (10 minutes)
 - Communications from Bob Audette and Mari Brunner. (Patsy), shared via email
 - Freedom Energy Logistics (Patsy)
 - It’s been hard to find someone from a town that they are working with who will come talk to us. Maybe we are too small ...
 - Discuss Broad plan for March 1 meeting: Setting goals vs. meeting with FEL vs. ?
 - March 1 is us setting our goals
 - Look at Lisa’s summary of goals from other towns at docs.google.com/document/d/1YIkRJNPR1LgYkf_o8WGU971VQLUzWDGCr3zXkQ0OS-U/edit#bookmark=id.30j0zll
- Retrospective
 - Microphone in the room helped with the sound for the Zoom attendees, Lisa will continue to bring it
- Completed Action Items
 - Patsy
 - Get the criteria used for consultant selection from Mari Brunner and share with this committee

Future Meetings

- 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 2:30
- Details at docs.google.com/document/d/1y74JQsmHZ3gkaI09E-_lXyU8wZtkFFFD/edit#

Motion to adjourn at 3:50 PM by Lisa, second Sandy, all in favor

Useful Links

- Google Group Email
 - nelsoncommunitypower@googlegroups.com
 - Using this email address will automatically send your message to everyone on the committee
- Nelson Community Power Web Page
 - sites.google.com/view/nelsoncommunitypower/home

- Consultants' Web Pages

- goodenergy.com/
- cpcnh.org/
- felpower.com/

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