

NELSON COMMUNITY POWER

August 30, 2022

Attendees

- In-person
 - Patsy Beffa-Negrini
 - Lisa Sieverts
 - Bill Waterston
 - Mare-Ann Jarvela
 - Gary Robinson
 - Rick Weyerhaeuser
 - Greg Rothman
- Guests
 - Terry Clark, Cheshire County Commissioner, and a Director at the Coalition representing Cheshire County, and a member of the Cheshire Community Power Committee
 - Dori Drachman, Co-chair Monadnock Sustainability Hub, and a member of the Peterborough Community Power Committee
- Zoom
 - Sandy Mackenzie
- Absent
 - Jonathan Pfister

Action Items

- ALL
 - Compare our Energy Aggregation plan to the County Plan, especially for the sections each of us wrote, what's missing from the County Plan? Prepare to talk about this on October 4
- Lisa
 - Bring survey flyers to Ice Cream Social and Farmers Market in September

MINUTES

- Meeting called to order at 2:32 PM
- Motion to approve the minutes of August 16, 2022, as sent by email on August 16, 2022, by Rick and Bill seconds, all in favor
- Nelson in Common Board Meeting

- Patsy attended on August 20
- Went well, small group, good questions
- Status of Survey
 - Bill had an announcement sent to the Church mailing list
 - 70 respondents so far
 - We are second only to Wilton in terms of percentage of respondents
 - We'll try again at the Ice Cream Social and Farmer's Market
- Presentation by Cheshire County Community Power
 - Dori
 - New law: towns can adopt a County's plan with only a Selectboard vote. Don't need to go to Town Meeting. Though of course, education is still needed.
 - Residents can opt-out after the Selectboard has opted in, with the same process we were looking at in Nelson
 - There are no tiers for different rates currently, for example a 100% renewable tier, but tiers are not prohibited. Nelson residents are in favor of more choice especially when it comes to a higher percentage of renewables than in the Default service
 - Cheshire County has selected the Coalition, so that is the implementation partner
 - Cheshire County is the FIRST NH County to do this
 - Terry
 - Any town where the Selectboard votes to join the County would have representation on the Cheshire County Energy Committee.
 - Our towns are legally considered part of the County
 - Steps
 - Selectboard votes
 - At Selectboard level, it is opt-in. At the resident level, it is opt-out.
 - County goes to Eversource, gets the data about what power we use,
 - sends letter to all residents, giving the opportunity to opt-out.
 - Cheshire County itself, for powering its own buildings, will be opting-in, but this is mostly a semantic difference.
 - Opted in residents get their power from the sources chosen by the County and the NH Coalition
 - Next week, the „Monadnock Sustainability Hub and County Commissioners will be meeting to publicize this option
 - Questions
 - What about a town like Walpole that is already in the Coalition?
 - Anyone in any Cheshire town can opt-in to the County Energy Aggregation plan even if their own Selectboard has not opted in
 - Have you met with other towns in Cheshire County?
 - They have met with Winchester to date, but the more the merrier for better leverage with the brokers.
 - The County hasn't done any outreach yet but intends to do so
 - What is the burden on the Town if we join the County Energy Plan?
 - Basically zero, as long as we send someone to the Cheshire Energy Committee. The County has a full-time person in the role of buying power already.
 - And if we go it alone, think about continuity: we have a committee in Nelson today, but what about the

future? The County has continuity, it is a layered piece of government with stability and continuity.

- Timeline
 - This started for County buildings, like the Jail and Maplewood. Though Dori thinks it actually was the idea in the beginning to include the towns, but then towns couldn't have done their own EA plans and they would have been forced to be included. HB315 was a Republican bill that caused some issues. HB265 fixed those problems.
 - This is all still brand new
 - Still at least 6 months away to be actually buying power, and that assumes that the JLCAR votes soon to approve the PUC rules
 - County, and actually the whole Coalition, is looking at next spring to get started
 - Could have the Selectboard vote to join the County before then, but they would be voting on something that hasn't been finalized. Joining earlier would give us input on the plan.
- Steps for Nelson to join the County
 - Educate the Selectboard about how this County option works
 - Educate residents
 - We could still go to Town Meeting if we wanted to, without all the rules of the other method, wouldn't need the posted Public Hearings, but could still have an information session
- If we joined the Coalition as a Town, that would be same increase in buying power as joining the County.
 - Yes, but with more administrative overhead for the Town
 - But slightly different buying power if we went with a different broker
- What is Nelson wants to fund a solar project with a reserve fund?
 - The Reserve Fund will go to the County Committee and therefore goes where they choose to spend it. Being on the Committee would give us a voice for our projects.
 - The County is always looking for locations for solar projects
 - So We would lose a bit of control by joining via the County
 - What about energy conservation projects in Nelson? The County has invested a lot into conservation for its own buildings but doesn't see this as something that can be easily fit under County Energy.
 - Note that the Coalition requires the Reserve Fund to even out price fluctuations. And that same Reserve Fund can be available to projects, once there is enough money in the fund. Bill W talks about the advantage of having money available for leverage via the Reserve Fund, which might mean that larger projects can be tackled.
- Is Mass doing anything like this with Counties?
 - Dori thinks the NH law is giving more leeway to Counties than is possible in Mass
 - Cheshire is the first County in NH doing this
- Pros and Cons
 - Pros
 - Less administration for the Town
 - More buying power for our small Town
 - Saves money, no public hearings, and no requirement have a lawyer review the EAP
 - Cons
 - A bit less control
- Sandy talked to Nelson School

- Been with Good Energy/Standard Power for years, and they are very happy with them.
- Status of the Energy Aggregation Plan
 - Compare our plan to the County Plan, especially for the sections each of us wrote, what's missing from the County Plan? Prepare to talk about this on October 4
- Brainstorm dates for Public Hearings (2 are required)
 - These would not be required if we go with the County
 - Lisa advocates that we still bring a warrant article, but it's not under the same legal requirements as before
 - So that the town can vote on it and get educated at an information session
 - We want the Selectboard to vote in favor of this, that can basically be the wording of the warrant article
- Plans for September
 - Sunday September 4 Ice Cream Social
 - Saturday September 10 Farmer's Market

Next Meetings

- Tuesday October 4 2:30 PM
 - Talk about next steps, decide if we recommend going with the County Community Power
 - If so, then 10/12: Patsy Meets with Selectboard to update them about the County option
 - And maybe 11/12: hold an informational hearing, not a formal Public Hearing
- Tuesday October 18 2:30 PM

Motion to adjourn at 3:53 PM by Gary, second by Greg, all in favor

Upcoming events

- Ice Cream Social Sunday, September 4, 3:00 PM
- Nelson Farmers Market Saturday, September 10, 9 AM - noon

Completed Action Items

- Patsy
 - Write a short email about taking the survey, send to Bill for Nelson Church distribution and Gary for Nelson Dems distribution
 - DONE
 - Ask Andrea in Harrisville if they had to publish the EAP in their Town Report
- Sandy
 - Ask Kelly French who is the broker for the Nelson School (Good Energy?) and for how long have they worked with them?

Yes, Good Energy, worked with them a long time, and very happy with it

- Work on your section of the Energy Aggregation Plan (EAP) by reviewing that section in the examples we have from other towns, choosing the wording you think is best, and identifying your questions/issues related to that section, for discussion on 8/2
 - Examples on Google Drive
 - Community Power Electric Aggregation Plans - Google Drive
 - Note that these section numbers refer to the description of the EAP in the legislation. You'll have to look through each of the Town's plans and figure out where they put that section
 - Sections 1–4 Patsy
 - Section 5–1 Organization Structure GREG and PATSY
 - Section 5–2 Operation and Funding BILL
 - Section 5–3 Rate Setting and Product Options LISA
 - Sections 5–4 Entering and Terminating Agreements and 5–5 Rights and Responsibilities GARY
 - Section 5–6 Net metering JON
 - Section 5–7 EAP program RICK
 - Section 5–8 Termination Mare-Anne
- We can all fill out the Pros and Cons Google Sheet
 - docs.google.com/document/d/1Hu9boFB1py7eRVdMpk7PYF8lN8ZO0IkpV-AMGrStQE/edit

Useful Links

- Our Draft Energy Aggregation Plan
 - docs.google.com/document/d/18KtihWHUubydITstlS84_Vf06fmmjy9ioXdwtViGnQM/edit#
- 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
 - <http://bit.ly/3QyOGJG>
- Nelson Community Power Google Drive Contents
 - drive.google.com/file/d/1xnS85vJ7RBCjZQpcZmtSswU_2aDhfpi_/view
- Consultants' Web Pages
 - Standard Power: standardpower.com.
 - Good Energy: goodenergy.com/
 - Community Power Coalition of NH cpcnh.org/
 - Freedom Energy Logistics felpower.com/
 - Colonial Power Group website: <https://colonialpowergroup.com>