

Center Harbor Energy Committee Meeting Minutes – August 21st, 2023

Attendees: Carol Sullivan, Bernie Volz, Michael Rich and Selectmen Representative Richard Drenkhahn.

Carol called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

On-Going Business

Review and approval of June minutes

Richard moved to accept the minutes of the June meeting. Bernie seconded. There was no July meeting due to a pause in the schedule for the Solar Array.

Potential Solar Project for behind Municipal Building

Bernie reminded the committee that we would be receiving proposals from solar contractors no later than September 14. The committee will review these proposals at the September 21st meeting and then make a recommendation to the Select Board.

Carol discussed the grant for our solar project that we were hoping to receive from the US Department of Energy's Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program (EECBG). With the help of Lisetta Silvestri and Sandra Jones of PAREI, Center Harbor and five other towns completed most steps to apply for this grant. In the end we were not able to complete the application since none of the towns was willing to be the "Prime Applicant". The Department of Energy required that one town play this role and given the lack of resources within the five towns, we were not able to fulfill the requirements of the grant. The Prime Applicant Town would be responsible to managing money from the DOE for all projects within this grant and also for reporting back to the DOE.

In addition to this grant, we intend to apply for rebate through the Inflation Reduction Act with input from Sen. Shaheen's office. Carol will also be in touch with Clean Energy NH, PAREI and the NH DOE to inquire about other grants.

New Business

There was no new business.

Other Business

PAREI Update

PAREI issues regular newsletters that are forwarded to all Energy Committee members. Recent topics have included Solar Shares projects such as the one that will benefit some lower-income Center Harbor residents. It will be located behind Lakes Region Conservation Trust on Rte 25B. Bernie and Carol have participated in some of the planning and land-clearing for that project. We can talk to Robin Woodaman, our town's Welfare Officer about approaching Center Harbor families who may qualify to benefit from this project. One potential resource is last year's list of families who qualified for support with their energy bills.

CleanEnergyNH Updates

Melissa Elander, a Clean Energy NH Circuit Rider NH for the North Country, has been helpful in giving feedback about possible grants for our solar project.

DOE Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

Carol is now on the mailing list for info from the US Dept. of Energy about grants and other opportunities. On August 16, she forwarded to CHEC members the Weekly Jolt - a newsletter from the DOE.

Environment Energy and Climate Network

The NH Network sponsored a "Keep NH Green" summit on Aug. 12 at Prescott Park in Laconia.

Richard moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 pm. Bernie seconded. Meeting was adjourned at that time.

Respectfully submitted, Carol Sullivan