



**Minutes for Town of Pawlet Energy Group
Pawlet, VT
Monday, September 26, 2016, 12:00 PM
Town Hall Conference Room**

Members Present:

Elizabeth Gibson, egib@vermontel.net
Nancy Morlino, nancym259@aol.com

Members Absent:

Ken Friedman, kenneth.j.friedman@gmail.com
Sue LaPorte, susanlaporte53@yahoo.com
Harry Van Meter, hevanmeter@gmail.com

Others Participating via Conference Call:

Ben Bolaski and R.J. Adler of SunCommon, www.SunCommon.com

Others Copied:

Deb Hawkins, pawletclerk@vermontel.net

Purpose of Meeting: To foster discussion of topics relevant to the awareness of energy use, efficiency and conservation within the Town of Pawlet and to establish and promote guidelines for the implementation of the energy initiatives set down in the Town Plan.

Item 1: Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the last monthly meeting on August 22, 2016 have been distributed and posted at the town website, <http://pawlet.vt.gov/town-offices/energy-group/>. There were no corrections.

Item 2: Possible Solar Installation at Town Landfill

Bhima Nitta of Power Guru of Southern Vermont has sent us some plans and calculations based on his site visit in August: he estimates that the Town would only use about 1/3 of the power generated by a 150 kW site for its energy needs, so there would be enough for about 20 additional households.

Representatives from Clean Energy Design are planning to attend the October 11 Select Board meeting.

Conference call with RJ Adler and Ben Bolaski of SunCommon regarding their approach to this site. Key points:

- Nancy described the capped landfill site and explained that the Town is investigating potential solar installations in such industrial zones.

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- RJ and Ben talked about SunCommon's mission to make solar energy easy and affordable. They could build and find financing and help us determine which model would be a best fit – community solar, service town buildings, etc. They recommend an optimum size of 150 kW, the “sweet spot” in terms of permitting: big enough to generate a chunk of renewable energy credits and small enough to make for a manageable project (6-9 months from conception to start-up, of which about one month is required for site construction).
- Nancy asked if multiple phases of 150-kW arrays would be worth considering. RJ and Ben said that it depends on the resiliency of the grid in our area, but that generally the Rutland County-area grid is pretty resilient right now.
- Nancy explained that presently the Town uses about 60 kW of electricity annually.
- RJ and Ben said that there would be no upfront cost to the Town, and that they could arrange favorable financing. One basic choice would be community solar vs Town-owned. They would help us reach the best financing arrangement. If the Town were to own the system, maintenance packages are available. There would be a 25-year warranty on the panels, with provisions to replace the inverters after 12 years. A ground-mounted array could be used to power town buildings. And further incentives will be available for “preferred sites” such as this one in pending legislation.
- Next step: Mike McCarthy, s solar project consultant with SunCommon, will make a site visit on October 17. Nancy and Elizabeth will show him the site then.

Item 3: Solar Project at Mettawee Community School

This project is still on hold while the UD 47 School Board is preoccupied with the redistricting process related to Act 47.

Item 4: Energy Fair at Town Hall

The target date for this event is sometime in the spring, as we need sufficient lead time. Nancy is conferring with Dan Mackey at the GMP Innovation Center about this event. Location: Town Hall auditorium.

Item 5. Next Meeting Date and Agenda

The next regular monthly meeting of the Pawlet Energy Group is scheduled for Monday, October 24, 2016, 12 PM, at the Town Hall.

The agenda for that meeting will be:

- Review minutes from last meeting (5 minutes)
- Old business: landfill solar site, Button Up Day (30 minutes)
- New business: (10 minutes)
- Audience (10 minutes)

Minutes submitted by Elizabeth Gibson