

**Minutes of Monthly Meeting  
Sustainable Hanover-Energy Initiative  
Tues, Jan 10, 2023  
In Town Hall and Via Zoom**

**Attending:** Yolanda Baumgartner, Bill Brown, Judi Colla, Sophie Edelman, Maron Greenleaf, Andrew Hatch, Emily Henrich, Robin Kaiser, Sarah Kelly, Peter Kulbacki, Dennis Robison, Marjorie Rogalski, Ben Steele and Rob Taylor

1. **Introductions.** All attending introduced themselves.
2. **Minutes.** Yolanda had distributed a draft of minutes for our last meeting that was held jointly with Sustainable Hanover. Rob Taylor agreed to keep minutes for today's meeting.
3. **Announcements.** During introductions, Yolanda added a pitch for Styrofoam collection at the town Public Works Department on Sat, Feb 11 from 10 am to 12 pm with a rain date the following day.
4. **Hanover Community Power.** Judi reported that on Jan 9 the Town of Hanover Selectboard approved the Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire (CPCNH) cost sharing agreement necessary for the launch of Hanover Community Power (HCP). HCP is one member of the consortium of communities banding together to buy electric power independently of the utilities. Judi said Hanover's Electric Aggregation Committee (HEAC) will meet several times over the next three months as the HCP project gets launched. She said the HEAC will face three primary decisions: whether to launch, what rate options to offer ratepayers, and whether to have an "adder" to fund local energy projects. Judi also suggested that a public relations committee be set up to coordinate public outreach and media responses on community power. This committee will first meet weekly, then biweekly.

Pete shared a one-page printed sheet, under the new Hanover Community Power logo, spelling out actions that CPCNH and the committees in towns in the initial "Wave 1" launch need to take through March (attached). He said Lebanon and other communities are following Hanover's lead to authorize their representatives to proceed with the launch. He noted that Nashua and some other communities might be delayed for one reason or another. Hanover is checking to make sure CPCNH meets our town requirements for privacy protection, etc.

CPCNH expects to know what power purchases will cost by Jan 30. Consultant Ascend will recommend rates. The CPCNH Risk Management Committee will draft a recommendation to the CPCNH Board of Directors, which will set the final rates by Feb 15. Based on these rates, all wave 1 towns will then decide whether or not to launch and what options to offer rate payers.

Pete expects that CPCNH will be able to offer rates that are about 5 per cent lower than the default rates offered by the electric utilities. He doesn't expect to beat the default by much, however, because of the need for an adder to pay off startup costs over the next 18 to 24 months.

After CPCNH approves final rates, each community's governing body will select three or four trademarked rate options for local ratepayers to choose from. Those were described as:

- "Granite Basic" (approximately the same or slightly better % renewable as currently offered by utilities (~25%))
- "Granite Plus" (33% renewable)
- "Clean 50" (50% renewable)
- "Clean 100" (100% renewable)

Pete predicted that most ratepayers will not respond, thereby opting for whatever rate HCP designates as the default. He expressed the need for a long list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) to help customers understand what they are getting into.

Pete noted that CPCNH will give utilities a notice of service commencement 45 days before the launch date (~ Feb 17th). Launch is tentatively set for ~April 3. It will notify customers by mail 30 days before launch (~Feb 28), and hold a public hearing within 15 days of that mailer (~March 15).

The public relations (PR) team will zoom weekly on Tuesdays at 1:30 PM with the exception of Wed, Jan 17th when it will zoom at 3 PM. Rob Taylor agreed to participate with the caveat that he'll be traveling one week in February and another week in March. Pete said he could sometimes participate. Andrew said he might be able to participate once a month. Yolanda mentioned the importance of involving town manager Alex Torpey. Maron said someone from the College would participate.

Rob Taylor asked how net metering for solarized homes would be treated in the transition to community power. He was told that longer-term solar installations

(prior to 9/1/17) would continue to get full kilowatt hour credits for power they feed into the grid. Equal benefits will also go to more recently completed solar projects (starting 9/1/17 or later) that currently get less than 100 percent of their power feeds as cash credits.

## 5. Brief Updates & Discussions

- *Equity, Inclusion, Justice (EIJ)*. Sarah's said a report is being drafted.
- *Communications*. Yolanda reported that Sarah Stewart is now working with us on our website. We will collaborate with CPCNH in creating a page for HCP.
- *Transportation/Mobility*. Pete sent to the State a letter of intent regarding plans for EV charging sites in the Upper Valley but has received no response. He agreed to include Ben in these EV charging conversations.
- *Thermal & Efficiency*. Andrew completed 66 projects in the Upper Valley in 2022. Liberty Utilities has leftover money. For the first time in four years, he has a budget in January for the coming year. He noted that Republicans in the legislature are eager to cut funds devoted to sustainable energy and renewables, so nothing is guaranteed.
- *Public Schools*. Yolanda and Judi are working in collaboration with the respective school boards on articles for the Dresden, Hanover, and Norwich school warrants committing to the Ready for 100 goals adopted at the 2017 Hanover Town meeting. The intent is to galvanize political will within the school district.
- *Other*. A brief discussion ensued about geothermal energy being used for residential heating. Yolanda mentioned some exploratory conversations with Norwich. Bill Brown said Dartmouth College should have great insights into the geology of Lake Hitchcock, which should be critical to analyzing where geothermal heat projects might be successful.

8. Next Meeting of SH – Energy/HEAC: Tues, Feb 7, 1:30 to 3:00 PM. In-person with a zoom option at the Howe Library. **NOTICE WE ARE MEETING ON THE 7TH AT THE HOWE LIBRARY (MAYER ROOM) RATHER THAN OUR REGULARLY SCHEDULED MONTHLY MEETING ON THE 14TH AT TOWN HALL.**

Submitted by Rob Taylor