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COMMUNITY POWER COALITION OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
For communities, by communities.

Community Power Launches Successfully

By Rob Taylor, member, Hanover Community Power

Hanover led toward renewables as community power successfully took on the responsibility to buy electricity for more than 75,000 customers in ten cities and towns across New Hampshire.

Preliminary figures projected the supplier shift will save Hanover customers $576,000 over the first three months, while collecting cash in local reserve funds and making a modest climate-saving increase in purchases of renewable energy. Savings through July for ratepayers across all ten communities will total an estimated $5 million.

As of late May, only 311 customers in the ten cities had "opted out" of community power to stay with utility-bought power, investor-owned utilities reported. Almost all the rest were automatically switched to buying power through Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire (CPCNH). (Some exceptions were customers with solar panels whose net-metering arrangements with utilities could not be transferred promptly for technical reasons.)

Offered a choice of four cheaper rates than utilities are charging, ratepayers almost universally stuck with the rate and percent of renewable power that was chosen by their local community power committee as the "default" service.

This was no surprise, said Judi Colla, co-chair of the Sustainable Hanover Energy Subcommittee and its electricity panel: Hanover Community Power. "It's true nationally," said Colla, "whatever your default is they go with it."

Most communities set their default as "Granite Basic", the lowest rate which matched the 23.4 percent, minimum-allowable renewable content of utility power for a price of 15.8 cents per kilowatt hour. This gave them a hefty discount from rates charged by utilities: 22 cents for Liberty, 20.2 cents for Eversource and 25.9 cents for Unitil.

Three communities pushed their default price up a notch to "Granite Plus", which supplied 33 percent renewable power for a slightly higher rate: 16.2 cents per kilowatt hour. Hanover, Plainfield and Peterborough went with "Plus", and early reports showed 93 percent to 96 percent of their electric customers went along.

Hanover has been pushing to achieve 100 percent clean electricity by 2030. Colla said it was "fortunate" that Hanover made a step in that direction by making "plus" the default option. She said Sustainable Hanover will mount a campaign to encourage people locally to "opt-up" to higher renewable content.

A few community power newcomers opted to pay a higher rate for cleaner power than their local default: 279 chose the intermediate "Clean 50" rate, 50 percent renewable power for 16.9 cents per kilowatt hour, and 590 made commitments to "Clean 100", which offers all-renewable power for 19.1 cents per kilowatt hour (still cheaper than the utilities). A total of 48 Hanover customers went with Clean 50 and 89 rose to Clean 100.

In all cases where Community Power New Hampshire took over buying power, the price customers pay will be included in their bills from the utility serving their area. Utilities will also continue to charge for maintaining power lines, which remains their responsibility.

This is only the beginning of a major shift in electric service in the granite state. Another 20 or 30 communities have expressed interest in joining the community power system, said Henry Herndon, a consultant for CPCNH. Those that decide to proceed need to get approval of local governments and select representatives to serve on CPCNH.

Yellow = Contact Center Input		Total Customer Op-Actions Through 5/30/21			
CPCNH Total — Customers Served & Opt-Actions					
	% of Customers	Total	Default	Opt-up/down	Opt-in
Total Customers		75,974			
Granite Basic (23.4% RE)	90%	68,671	68,325	130	216
Granite Plus (33% RE)	8%	6,434	6,361	53	20
Clean 50 (50% RE)	0%	279		257	22
Clean 100 (100% RE)	1%	590		536	54
Opt-outs	0%	311	TOTAL:	976	312
Hanover — Customers Served & Opt-Actions (Granite Plus Default)					
	% of Customers	Total	Default	Opt-up/down	Opt-in
Total Customers		2,865			
Granite Basic (23.4% RE)	2%	54		53	1
Granite Plus (33% RE)	93%	2,674	2,668		6
Clean 50 (50% RE)	2%	48		45	3
Clean 100 (100% RE)	3%	89		86	3
Opt-outs	0%	13	TOTAL:	184	13

CPCNH-Hanover Community Opt-Actions report

Picture credit: Advanced Transit

Federal Grants in Action: Advance Transit Electrification

by Camry Gach and Grace Turne, Energy Justice Clinic, Dartmouth College

In Mid-March, Advance Transit introduced two new electric buses into their fleet. These buses serve the Upper Valley in both Vermont and New Hampshire, and were funded by a $3 million grant from the Vermont Agency of Transportation and the US Department of Transportation as well as financial incentives from Green Mountain Power. Two more are on the way next year.

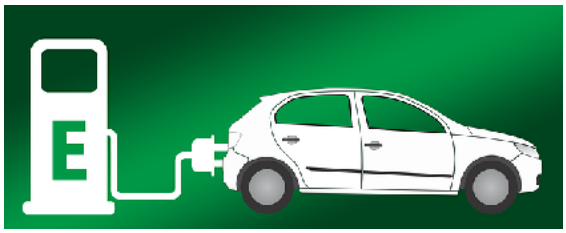
The transportation sector produces 27% of greenhouse gas emissions, according to 2020 data from the EPA (link). These emissions primarily come from fossil fuels. Moving to electric buses away from diesel buses is a big step towards reducing these emissions; in addition, these electric buses offer a quieter and more pleasant experience to riders, plus the reduced pollution associated with a transition to electric transportation.

While government incentives, new technology, and a growing used-EV market make personal electric vehicles more accessible to the average consumer, they are still out of reach for many due to cost, accessibility of charging stations, parking limitations, or ability to drive. AT's transition to electric makes the benefits of electric vehicles accessible to people who may not have access to a personal electric vehicle or may not be able to drive. Advance Transit has no fare to ride, and can be used by anyone for commuting and accessing healthcare, shopping, and other community resources in the Upper Valley.

Making the benefits of electric vehicles available to everyone, regardless of financial status or driving

abilities, is an important aspect of energy justice here in the Upper Valley and around the country. As stated by the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, "**It's how we will mitigate the climate crisis, accelerate the clean energy transition, and contribute to social equity".**[1] The grants provided by the Vermont Agency have served as an important step in extending the benefits of electric vehicles to the public as a whole. When you see the Advance Transit electric buses, you're seeing energy justice in action!

Further reading:
https://advancetransit.com/about/
https://www.epa.gov/greenvehicles/fast-facts-transportation-greenhouse-gas-emissions.
https://enterprise.vnews.com/2023/04/30/dont-you-just-love-that-new-bus-smell
https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/access-to-electric-vehicles-is-an-environmental-justice-issue/
https://www.energy.gov/eere/articles/electrifying-transportation-benefit-every-american



EV Chargers – What's Up?

By Dennis Robison

If you have an electronic vehicle (EV) or are planning on purchasing one, you will have more than a passing interest in where you are going to find EV chargers, particularly when traveling. As EVs become more and more popular, the demand for chargers of all types is going to dramatically increase. Currently Upper Valley EV charging capability is primarily located in the I89 interchange in West Lebanon. While there are a few chargers in the towns and villages, there is going to be a greater demand.

Ben Steele, Chair of Sustainable Hanover's Energy Committee's EV interest group, and Peter Kulbacki, Hanover's Director of Public Works, joined representatives from Lebanon, Hartford and New London earlier this year to begin working on a joint application for grant funds for EV chargers. Each community was to identify charging locations and charging types. Certain conditions needed to be met which included serving low and moderate income residents, being near a renewable energy supply, and being open to the public. In addition, there were matching fund requirements.

There are a number of sites and a variety of chargers being considered for Hanover. One would be a Level 3(2) fast charger at the Department of Public Works which has solar on site and is across from Gile Hill apartments and near Lebanon's low and moderate income residents. This would also facilitate the transition of Hanover's fleet of vehicles from fossil fuel to EVs. Other Level 3 chargers would be at the RW Black Community Center adjacent to affordable housing and a shopping destination, the Municipal Parking Lot behind Town Hall and Howe Library. Level 2 chargers are being considered for all day parking such as the Marshall Lot (Maple Street) and 6 West Wheelock.

As this grant proposal was in its final draft, New Hampshire's Department of Transportation (DOT) announced it was putting together a proposal for funding under the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) for EV charging stations for New Hampshire. As a result, the local efforts were placed on hold. The work done regarding placement of chargers should be helpful if the NHDOT is successful in getting funding.

Many issues remain. EV chargers are a relatively new phenomenon with emerging problems

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[1] https://www.energy.gov/eere/articles/electrifying-transportation-benefit-every-american

[2] Level 3 DC Fast Charger (DCFC) siting principles – should be within one mile of Federal Highway Administration designated Alternative Fuel Corridors with 50 miles apart to support lower range EVs. Should have high traffic volume, access to ample parking, and proximity to restaurants or other publicly available amenities . Level 2 chargers siting principles - are ideal for local attractions and destinations with high traffic volumes. https://driveelectricdayton.com/2023/02/18/where-to-locate-public-charging-stations/

and challenges. While strategically siting them is important, valuable existing parking spaces will given over to chargers with a subsequent loss of meter income for the Town.

Once installed, how are they going to be maintained? Niraj Chokshi, NYT correspondent for transportation, noted in a recent article (3) "Many sit in parking lots or in front of retail stores where there is often no one to turn to for help when something goes wrong. Problems include broken screens and buggy software. Some stop working mid charge, while others never start in the first place." In recognition of this, the IRA funding "comes with a requirement that chargers be functional 97 percent of the time and adhere to technical standards for communicating with vehicles. Stations must also have a minimum of four ports that can charge simultaneously and not be limited to any one automotive brand."

Recently it was announced that Tesla's network, available only to owners of Tesla EVs, may soon be available for other EVs. However, there are complexities. Tesla has only committed to opening up 3,500 fast chargers, or around 20 percent of the automaker's overall fast charging fleet. The other 4,000 chargers could come from the automaker's roughly 10,000 slower, "Level 2" chargers. EV owners will have to get a Tesla app or use the Tesla website to plug in.(4)

Funding is also an issue. Even if Hanover's request for chargers is successful, there will be matching funds involved and there will need to be continued maintenance funding. The EV world is moving along at a very fast pace with many new challenges. Overall, the trend seems positive. Stay tuned!

(image credit: Shutterstock)

Senior Stewards
Acting For the Environment

"We're green, we're gray and we're not going away!"

by Dennis Robison, Resident, Kendal at Hanover, Member of SSAFE

The title of this article is the theme of Senior Stewards Acting for the Environment (SSAFE) (ssafe.org) reflecting two facts and a commitment. The organization was formed in 2019, just prior to environmentalist Bill McKibben's effort – Third Act (thirdact.org) - to encourage those over the age of 60 to become involved in climate issues. Both efforts recognize the value this age group can bring to influence action to meet national climate goals – years of experience, a larger share of society's financial worth and they vote.

SSAFE differs in that it is targeted to senior living communities. It was inspired by residents living in Kendal communities. Currently there are eleven Kendal affiliates, including Kendal at Hanover. The overall goal is to "set Kendal affiliates and other elder communities on the pathway to 50% reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2050" through advocacy, education and implementing strategies "for creating environmentally friendly elder communities, using science-based and professionally guided best practices."(ssafe.org)

In its two plus years, SSAFE's Advocacy Team has joined national campaigns supporting Strong Truck Emission Standards, stopping methane pipe leakage and supporting the Break Free Plastic Pollution Act. Local Advocacy Team members have

[3] https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/16/business/energy-environment/electric-vehicles-broken-chargers.html

[4] Shannon Osaka, "Elon Musk agrees to open parts of Tesla's charging network to everyone" Washington Post February 15, 2023.

tracked State and local legislation and encouraged petitions and letter writing campaigns. SSAFE's Greening Team goals include addressing campus buildings and developing a carbon-neutrality road map. The result has been actively promoting sustainability through encouraging energy audits and adopting carbon footprint calculation methodology. They have also been active in developing sustainable food projects such as hydroponics, composting and recycling.

SSAFE's Kendal at Hanover group has a membership of approximately one hundred and fifty. Its Green Team, working with the Facilities Department, conducted a successful campus-wide program of replacing fluorescent and incandescent light bulbs with LED bulbs. This will help reduce Kendal's carbon emissions footprint as well as electricity costs. With encouragement of SSAFE, Board and administrative support, Resilient Buildings Group was selected to conduct an energy audit of the facilities which will be completed this year. The results will be incorporated into K@H's long range plan for future action. Recycling has long been a campus wide effort. SSAFE members reactivated a moribund composting program recently adding three 35 gallon composting bins for residential use. Ongoing education programs keep all residents informed about sustainable opportunities, most recently through a series of earth day celebratory events.

SSAFE's impact on all of the Kendal affiliates has been significant as well as energizing. They're not going away!

Upper Valley E-Bike Lending Library

Is coming to Hanover, June 14-28.

In 2022, the Library traveled to 14 Upper Valley towns and two workplaces (Hypertherm and Dartmouth Health). In 2023, that number is 19, including nine new locations. Hanover was a founding member of the UV e-bike library coalition and will be our 4th year of hosting.

- We will be offering overnight rentals which are very popular and get booked up quickly.
- We will also offer "Demo Days" on Saturdays (Jun 17 and 24) that provide one-hour opportunities for people to try one or more e-bike models.
- All library services are free.
- The fleet consists of four different models of electric pedal-assist bicycles (RadWagon, Converted Bianchi, RadMini Folding, Turbo Como). For more information see https://vitalcommunities.org/transportation/upper-valley-e-bike-lending-library/
- Reasons to consider commuting and errands on an e-bike? Lower carbon profile, reduce pollution, increase fitness and joy!
- **Reservations required.** www.vitalcommunities.org/uvell

(Sponsored by Vital Communities and the Hilton Public Library and hosted by Sustainable Hanover and Hanover Bike Walk,)

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