



CLEAN ENERGY COMMISSION

Virtual Meeting

December 15, 2021 at 7:00 PM

This meeting of the Clean Energy Commission was conducted as a virtual meeting. A recording of the meeting is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2XdajBH7XpA>

MEETING MINUTES

1. Meeting Opening – Call to order 7:02 PM

- Roll Call – *Present: Bernard Pelletier, Max DuBuisson, Joe Campanella, Catherine Diviney*
- Approval of Meeting Minutes – *Nov 17, 2021, approved.*
- Administrative
 - 2022 Meeting Dates – *approved.*
 - Vacancy – candidates – *Town Clerk has indicated that the WH-CEC vacancy needs to be filled with anyone other than a “Democrat.” Bernie is interested trying to find some minority representation. Bernie will ask the new Town Councilors for recommendations.*
 - Youth representatives

2. Old Business

- Sustainable CT / SAG update –
 - *Matt Hart attended the CCM conference to receive WH’s certification award. The plaque hanging in Council Chambers has been updated with the new 2021 “Silver” level status.*
 - *Sust CT is proposing a Climate Leadership Designation in 2022 for municipalities to earn a “special designation” for being climate leaders and completing actions with impact in this area. Sust CT coffee hour on Fri 12/17 @ 10 AM is devoted to seeking input on the new proposed program. Catherine has already participated in some early feedback sessions. There is debate on how restrictive the program should be in terms of actions that have a DIRECT or indirect impact in reducing GHG emissions. As the program currently stands, West Hartford would be eligible for the designation without further actions.*
- Climate Emergency Resolution –
 - *Resolution is with Town Manager/Committee for edits; has not gone to Town Council. Catherine believes plan is for it to be presented to the Community Planning and Economic Development Committee (CPED) standing committee before going to Council in Dec/Jan.*

- *The clause on carbon pricing is likely being removed.*
- *Bernie expressed that he reversed his opinion on this – at first, did not feel it was important, but now believes it will be beneficial, especially the clause which commits to use Climate Change as a "lens" for evaluating all Town policy/action.*
- **HeatSmart West Hartford**
 - *Funding/CPEEEI MOU - Bernie/PACE has received MOU for \$20K from Eversource for WH Heatsmart campaign to increase number HES audits by 10%. Will also receive staff support and training and program materials/collateral, as well as the grant.*
 - *Volunteer Team formation – Joe Campanella. Christine Feely, Mike Leon are potential volunteers. Catherine will review solicitation Bernie wrote and post to WH-CEC listserv and Sustainable WH facebook. We are looking for 6-7 committed volunteers, more if possible.*
 - *Partner status (HES – HVAC – IHMH) – Energy Efficiency Solutions and New England Smart Energy are the HES partners. High Grade, Link, and Nutmeg mechanical have expressed interest in being HVAC partner. Actively talking to geo-thermal partners.*
 - *Timeline – Targeting Jan for first meeting of Volunteer Team. Team will then be trained and build out schedule of campaign events, identify and work with partners. Between now and then, solicit a few more volunteers, prep Town leadership for quotes for website and press releases, build out website.*

3. New Business

- **Revisit Next Steps**
 - *Tracking Slides – A format for tracking status of next steps directly in Energy Plan was developed w/ Green, Yellow, Red color coding and 3 Categories – “Done, In Progress, Not Started”*
 - *Volunteers for 2022 priorities – Bernie volunteered to connect with Public Works, Plant & Facilities & Sustainability Committee on standing report (for Next Step #2), and revisiting Ground Mount Solar (letter written previously)*
 - *Add other items/priorities for 2022 – Bernie stated interested in adding more on outreach to diverse communities, as well as focusing on a GHG inventory.*
- **Discussion of Commissions/Organizational Structure - Catherine mentioned that both the SAG and she herself have been thinking about whether the Town Boards & Commission are organized effectively for supporting sustainability initiatives. There are also gaps, such as solid waste & recycling, landscaping, gardens, watershed, water conservation outreach, public transportation, etc.**
 - *Clean Energy Commission – by resolution, not ordinance. In a conversation with Corporation Counsel, it came to light that the Clean Energy Commission and Pedestrian Bicycle Commission should really be established by ordinance. Also, Catherine and Bob (staff) should not be Commission members. This “correction” might provide an opportunity to revise our scope of work and membership (including youth?). Any revisions will need Council approval so all changes should be consolidated. At the next meeting, we will talk more about this. Bernie would like to make sure that different groups aren’t duplicating work on this. Perhaps a join meeting would be should be convened by Town Manager? Max emphasized that the most important part is not what’s on paper, but to make sure you have good people, who will get stuff done. Voting is not a large part of what WH-CEC does – so youth representation would not be*

disadvantaged without a vote.

4. Staff Report

- *Energy Updates/Budget – Catherine indicated utility budget will be about 3-4% higher than last year. Usage is back up, but not to pre-Covid levels. Although Town is locked on electricity supply rates @ ~ 7.5 cents/per kwh until 2024, electricity delivery, natural gas, and water/sewer rates have increased. Demand savings realized during COVID will start to evaporate as 12-month peaks are higher with a full-year of occupancy. 4 buildings are enrolled to a demand response program, and Town has been doing some preliminary investigation on whether battery storage is a good fit. Town is still ventilating at high rates for COVID under state requirements, so energy use is taking a hit. There is a pilot study being done in conjunction with UCONN with portable fans/filters.*

5. Public Comment – *none.*

- *Bernie mentioned CT Energy Network's free Net Zero / All-Electric Homes + BEV Info Session, @ 7 pm Dec 16.*

6. Adjournment -- 8:42 PM

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