

Draft Minutes
Town of Brookline Energy Committee (EC)
Friday June 16, 2023

Members Present

Committee members: Bruce Mello-Chair, Daniel Schoener, Jonathan Ballou, Somara Zwick

Public: Patty Mello, Marie Tattersall

1. Bruce Mello called the meeting to order at 2:05pm
2. Appointment of Recording clerk: Somara Zwick was appointed recording clerk
3. Changes to the agenda: One item was added to the agenda - completion of the draft application for M.E.R.P mini-grant which will be presented at the June 21, 2023 Selectboard meeting for approval to file. Draft was initiated per Select Board approval the previous Friday by Daniel & Somara. The additional details necessary for filing were added to this draft after discussion by the committee members and public present.
4. Opening statement by Committee chair: Bruce outlined his background with town building work, his interest in more efficient energy usage and commitment to the project of community resilience in Brookline. He cited several steps already undertaken in Brookline, e.g. heat-pump installation in the town owned School building ("Daycare") that now houses Susie's Little Peanuts.
5. Statements from Committee members: Each committee member briefly shared their interests in being on the EC. Daniel shared his commitment to energy resilience, expressed interest in finding collaborative towns, and expressed the urgency felt by younger people about the issues; John shared his concerns and stated he was interested in the steps to be taken to implement the choices under VT Act 172 in particular; Somara stated her interests in energy resilience issues. Also, Marie expressed her interest and prior experience with solar energy installations at the Newbrook school as well as at her home.
6. Brief Discussion of Act 172: Some of this discussion was interspersed in earlier portions of the meeting. In general questions were discussed regarding how much money was available too. Members discussed need to apply soon as money will be parsed out by town need priority and assessment will need to be the first step. Questions about who will do the assessments and who is in charge (Dept of Energy) were discussed & some answers provided. Daniel stated he had viewed and introductory presentation about Act 172 and would share a recording of this with the EC.
7. Discussion re. Priority of Town Buildings: Bruce asked for priority opinions. Primary buildings discussed were the Town Office, Daycare and the Brookline Meetinghouse. Somara and Marie stated they thought that the Town Office should be a priority, largely because reducing energy consumption projects have already been started in the Daycare building. Also that potential energy/cost savings in Town Office would more directly benefit the town. Discussion occurred about net metering potential from solar panels in any town building or location. Last, discussion regarding the requirement that any buildings to receive funding is required to be ADA compliant; while some buildings are partially compliant, Bruce anticipates additional work will need to be done even in those buildings. All members present discussed that likely priorities should be determined as part of the initial building assessment(s) provided by the Energy Dept.
8. Other information/discussion: Daniel will be sent several contacts in neighboring towns so he can reach out and find out their interest in the M.E.R.P and any interest in collaboration. He will also introduce some younger people in town to hopefully recruit more participation in the EC or related projects.

Next EC meeting date was set for July 14, 2023, 2pm at the Town Office

9. Meeting was adjourned at 3:08pm

Respectfully submitted: S. Zwick, 6/20/2023