

Meeting of the Norwich Energy Committee Tuesday, 12/17, 7 pm, Tracy Hall

Attending: Rob Gere, Linda Gray, Susan Hardy, Suzanne Leiter, Norm Levy, Charlie Lindner  
Guests: Joel Stettenheim (Norwich Solar Technologies), John Pepper

Updates:

- Suzanne has contacted staff at the Vital Communities Farm & Food program about contacting local farms that offer CSAs to determine if they would be interested in a campaign with us offering discounts for Norwich sign-ups. There was consensus that she should proceed and that we could discuss in more detail at the January meeting.
- Linda is meeting with members of the Norwich Congregational Church climate group and Jack Cushman on a possible revival of "Town Eating Day" in February, with discussion topics TBD related to climate action; this could be linked to what develops on local CSAs.
- Linda reported that planning is proceeding for an e-bike loan program with a stable of bikes located in the Upper Valley; it is very likely the NEC will be able to offer another e-bike loan sometime next summer.
- the next meeting will be January 28.

Points re net-metering from Joel Stettenheim

- Joel is concerned that distortion of facts is driving the state's n-m policy now
- his observation is that the utilities are fighting against n-m now, and their view is influencing the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) and Dept. of Public Service (DPS)
- in the upcoming legislative session, there will be a push to increase the % of in-state renewable energy generation for utilities (the Renewable Energy Standard, "RES") from 10% by 2032 to 100% by 2030
- another bill that will be pushed is the Global Warming Solutions Act, which will translate current state energy goals into mandates/requirements
- the in-state renewable requirement is known as Tier 2; the PUC has been treating the current 10% requirement as a ceiling, rather than a floor.
- the PUC is now in the midst of reviewing the rules surrounding n-m; in February, it will also start a biennial review on n-m prices (decisions to take effect 7/1/2020)
- most all the "renewable" electricity in VT's portfolio is from HydroQuebec; no other state defines large-scale hydropower as renewable
- GMP is required to retain a % of the RECs from in-state solar and wind, but sells what it allowed to and then buys cheap hydro RECs (cheap b/c no other states consider them renewable)
- GMP does retain the RECs from small residential n-m solar

To the common question of whether costs are shifted from n-m customers to other customers, Joel answered that all benefits of installing and operating n-m solar must be taken into account. Norwich Solar attempted to do this and their calculation included avoided purchasing costs to the utility, savings to public customers like towns and schools (which reduces their costs), taxes paid, the solar installers' upgrades to the grid, other work mandated as part of project permits. It showed an impact of \$.009/kWh.

	Value	Percentage of Total	Impact \$/kWh
<b>Total Cost of Net-metering Credits Generated NST 2019 Portfolio(no REC)</b>	\$ 1,379,747	100%	\$ 0.134
Avoided Purchase and T&D Cost Savings	\$ 861,217	62.4%	\$ (0.089)
Direct Muni Savings /kWh	\$ 36,344	2.6%	\$ (0.004)
Direct School Savings /kWh	\$ 45,253	3.3%	\$ (0.004)
Muni Tax Revenue /kWh	\$ 63,925	4.6%	\$ (0.006)
Vt Ed Tax Revenue /kWh	\$ 22,533	1.6%	\$ (0.002)
Annualized Utility Benefits /kWh	\$ 56,333	4.1%	\$ (0.005)
Annualized Mandated Public Good Benefits /kWh	\$ 17,164	1.2%	\$ (0.002)
Annualized VT Payroll Tax Benefits /kWh	\$ 32,110	2.3%	\$ (0.003)
VT Income Tax on Solar Generation Revenue /kWh	\$ 103,481	7.5%	\$ (0.010)
<b>Actual Cost of NM after Direct Benefits Added/kWh</b>	\$ 141,386		\$ 0.009

Actual Cost of Net-Metering Using NST's 2019 Portfolio of Non-Residential Net-Metered Projects

In addition, the n-m program overall is small: 7/2018-7/2019 total electric retail sales for Vermont utilities was approximately \$833 million, while the annual costs for n-m systems < 15 kW was \$1.4 million; for n-m systems 15 -150 kW, it was < \$1 million; and for n-m systems > 150 kW in size, it was \$1 million.

Joel will keep the committee informed when workshops are scheduled as part of this rulemaking and the biennial review; committee members agreed to ask other local energy committees to join in discussing these issues with PUC Commissioner Margaret Cheney, a Norwich resident.