

Meeting of the Norwich Energy Committee  
Tuesday, 2/27/24, 7 pm, via Zoom

Attending: Rob Gere, Linda Gray, Garret Heaton, Charlie Lindner, Erich Rentz (chair), Eva Rosenbloom (until 8:20)  
Staff: Harry Falconer, IREC

1. The 1/23 minutes and the 2/27 agenda were approved by consensus.

2. Upcoming events:

a. Eat Low & Local – Charlie has done weekly listserv posts, making sure to direct readers to the NEC web site so that we can gauge the response. Linda reported these stats: unique visits – 78 on Feb 25, 37 on Feb 18, 54 on Feb 10, 45 on Feb 7, 58 on Feb 3; page views for Feb – 221 for window inserts, 100 for Eat Low & Local, 85 for food resources, 69 for Electrify Everything. General discussion about doing more in this campaign next time; perhaps a raffle, a community meal with plant-based dishes; debriefing with the CSA farms.

b. March event – there was agreement that no specific event was ready for March; agreement to not pursue doing an outreach / info table outside Tracy Hall on voting day.

c. Energize UV (4/6) – Erich reported that, after the Hartford Energy Commission contacted him about the NEC sponsoring, promoting, and providing volunteers for the event, there has been little communication. There was consensus to not worry about cosponsoring; Erich will follow up with his contact to ask if they need volunteers for 4/6.

d. Earth Day EV Expo (4/21) – this event is in Lebanon, 12-3 pm, Shaw's parking lot, organized by the Lebanon Energy Advisory Committee. Erich moved, Charlie seconded that the NEC cosponsor and promote; approved unanimously. Members who are available on 4/21 can volunteer.

e. VEEP Community Energy Workshops collaboration with NPL – after discussion, agreement to prioritize scheduling the community Transportation workshop in May, on a Sunday afternoon, at NPL, with a school-age version as well if possible. Linda will follow up with the NPL staff contact; Erich will get a budget status report on NEC spending to date for the current FY. There is also interest in doing the Home Electrification workshop in early summer and the Home Heat Transfer workshop in the fall.

3. IREC (Energy Coordinator):

Harry Falconer introduced himself; he's been at TRORC for a year, working (for non-IREC towns) on the Municipal Energy Resilience Program (MERP), enhanced energy planning, and other energy-related programs. As IREC he has some projects across all 6 towns, others that are town-specific. For Norwich projects, he reported that the MERP energy assessment of Tracy Hall was done 2/22 by Dubois & King, and will enable Norwich to apply for up to \$500,000 in grant funds for recommended building improvements. MERP applications will not require complete designs for the building retrofits; grants will be awarded by the end of 2024. Harry is helping NPL on its application for a grant from the [US Treasury Capital Projects Fund](#). The NPL application would be for \$350,000 for an energy retrofit project. He has compiled the Town's solar PPA credits and payments, and is also bird-dogging repairs to the Dan & Whit's EV charging station.

Harry's work on all-towns projects includes the community solar project in Thetford, targeted to low/moderate income households; the [Climate Action for You](#) web page on household energy incentives, hosted on the TRORC web site, which all the towns can link to when final; getting green procurement embedded in the towns' procurement policies; surveying the towns' police departments on their needs and concerns re hybrid and electric vehicles; compiling data on municipal energy usage; and organizing demos of electric landscape equipment for towns, schools, and residents.

#### 4. Other Business:

Charlie was asked about where to get repairs on electric lawn and snow equipment; he learned that Fogg's does repairs on the EGO equipment they sell; Charlie will research further.

Linda noted that the 2/28 Selectboard meeting will include action on the application by Aaron Lamperti / Franny Eanet for a preferred site designation for a potential solar project on their property; and possible discussion of the number of members for the NEC. Linda emailed the Town Manager and Asst Town Manager the citations for the 6-27-2018 meeting at which the SB set the number at seven.

Erich noted that terms are up in March for Rob Gere, Linda Gray, and Garret Heaton. Rob said that he has applied for the vacancy on the Planning Commission and may therefore need to leave the Energy Committee. Garret said that he won't reapply, as his energy start-up is moving forward and he wants to avoid any appearance of a conflict of interest.

Re e-bike loans, Linda reported that Vital Communities staff has asked Lebanon Public Libraries (which carries the insurance on the bikes) for a legal and insurance review of the liability waiver as revised by Norwich town counsel. She hopes to get an answer by mid-March.

#### 5. Public comments, correspondence and announcements: none

Adjourned at 8:45. The fourth Tuesday in March is 3/26.

submitted by Linda Gray