

Meeting of the Norwich Energy Committee
Tuesday, 2/24/26, 7 pm, via Zoom

Attending: Rob Gere, Linda Gray, Tom Griggs, Charlie Lindner, Erich Rentz
Guest: Harry Falconer, Shared Energy Coordinator (until 7:50)

4. Shared Energy Coordinator report was moved to the first meeting item. Harry reported on the successful installation at Dan & Whit's of a fast-charging station, privately funded. He has lined up his TRORC colleague, Brian Kovalick, to work with the Enhanced Energy Planning group (because Brian has more expertise with energy planning, and Harry needs some assistance with SEC hours). He has had a few meetings with Jeannie Kornfeld, in her new role as SAU70 sustainability coordinator, on items relating to Marion Cross School energy issues. The Town Manager asked him to review reports that the Solaflect solar array has operational problems; Harry confirms that solar generation has declined ~40% in the past 2-3 years – per Solaflect, due to weather, labor shortages, and supply chain issues. Because the Town did not buy any of the solar array, rather has a power purchase agreement (PPA) with Solaflect, the Town is at no financial risk when there are such problems. It does mean that it has less solar generation as part of its electricity use; this is useful to know, for considering future on-site solar as improvements to Town buildings are considered. Harry has also supported the Norwich Public Library in its application for a HUD grant for building repairs.

1. The 1/27 minutes and the 2/24 agenda were approved by consensus.

2. Events

a. Sustainable Hanover Button Up Collaboration: The original request was to several VT and NH energy committees to cosponsor a presentation (3/12) by NH Saves (NH equivalent to Efficiency VT) sponsored by Sustainable Hanover. Most of the content is relevant to any homeowner, except for state-level financial incentives. Sustainable Hanover decided to not ask other committees to cosponsor, just to help publicize, with VT groups noting where to get VT incentive info. Charlie will cover this event in March listserv posts.

b. Eat Low & Local: Charlie reported that web site activity shows that people are reading the listserv posts and visiting the NEC web site. Also, one of the local farms asked to revise its description on our web page. After discussion, there was agreement to pursue a presentation within the next year on the connection between ruminants and keeping land open, and the trade-offs involved. Various partners were suggested; Tom will take the lead on planning.

c. UV Earth Week Open House: Charlie reported that planning for the event is rolling along, with 20 houses, 4 businesses, 4 non-profits and 1 church participating (among them in Norwich, Willing Hands and Sweetland Farm). Registration for attendees will be via Eventbrite and will be open later this week. Charlie and Linda will help confirm participant details and publicize.

3. Energy Plan Working Group: Rob reported that the group's 2nd meeting is tomorrow, 2/25. He expects that their work will extend over several more months. He noted that if he is elected to the Selectboard, he would have to resign from the Energy Committee and his role with the working group.

5. Toolship: Continuing discussion about a Brandon, VT, project (a solar-powered shed from which residents can check out EGO battery-operated lawn tools <https://brandonpubliclibrary.org/the-toolship/>), Linda reported that the Brandon group did not develop it in response to a documented need, rather their informal assessment of interest. They find that users are a mix of people trying the

equipment before buying and those borrowing instead of buying. Discussion was around the \$8,500 cost and the work involved to raise that. Committees from several other towns are also considering the project, including Sustainable Woodstock. Agreement for Linda to contact them to compare notes.

6. Other Business:

- a. Slides (but not a recording) from the Thetford virtual “Ask A Neighbor” session are available and posted on the NEC home page. The Thetford contact indicated that they might be able to do a repeat session; there was agreement to pursue, for scheduling on a weekday night sometime in April, so that it could be either a feed-in or follow-up to the Earth Week Open House. Linda will follow up.
- b. Efficiency VT is doubling its rebates to businesses on efficiency upgrades (while funds last); there was agreement for Erich to follow up to the Norwich Business Council, to alert Norwich businesses to this opportunity.

7. Public comments, correspondence and announcements: none

8. Adjourned at 8:50. The fourth Tuesday in March is 3/24.

Submitted by Linda Gray