

Energy and Water Conservation Committee
September 17, 2008
5:00 pm

Attending: Chairman Lutz Wallem, Tom Smith, Debbie O'Connor, Peter Joseph, WT Bishop, Dave Beaudin, Vice-Chairman Paul Kasianchuk

The meeting started with a review of the relevant 5 pages of the 22 pages from DSIRE. These had information that related to New Hampshire Electric Cooperative (NHEC) members. Topics covered property tax exemption possibilities, low income energy assistance grant program, residential energy efficiency rebate programs, SmartSTART energy efficiency loan program and the solar and wind energy rebate program. Customers can ask for an energy audit or get rebates when installing equipment, etc. WT Bishop asked if NHEC would have the personnel to do these home audits. Tom Smith responded that if we ask, they must provide these, based on the program, as NHEC is owned by its members, the people that get their electric through NHEC.

Tom Smith made a motion, seconded by WT Bishop, to accept the meeting minutes of August 20, 2008, as written. The vote was unanimous.

The next topic was the proposed Energy Forum, regarding Reducing Home Energy Use. Information will most likely be posted in the PennySaver, White Mountain Shopper, and Littleton Courier newspapers, as well as the committee's website and Channel 3. The new mobile sign acquired by the police department could also be used to pass on this information, while checking speed. Volunteers for Meals on Wheels could spread the word as well. The group felt that the Community Center on Pollard Road might be the best place to hold the event, as many people already come there, and we could show off the NHEC work done there already.

Some related questions included having consultants or team captains who could watch over 5-10 families this winter who might not have someone else to turn to, and make sure they are not left alone in the cold. It was decided that this could be brought up at the event, looking both for volunteers to help navigate the systems, as well as those families that might need the contact person. Potentially, some of the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) could help here too. The group felt it was too early to involve the churches, as they are already helping to some extent. The welfare department will certainly be visited more, and Mr. Bishop asked that we double the budget. Town Manager Joseph mentioned that CAP and DHHS will also have available funding.

The group discussed having presentations by individuals who have made their homes more energy efficient, like Mr. Henderson or Mr. Duquette, both of Pollard Road. Local contractors, like 3 Rivers or George Spanos, might like to speak as well, describing their green experience while possibly getting more customers. Jim Collier of Loon Reservations might be another good speaker, having converted all units in his rental program to CFL's already. On October 4th, there will be a tour of energy efficient homes,

sponsored by the New Hampshire Sustainable Energy Association (www.NHSEA.org), throughout the state.

The grassroots grant has not yet been applied for, as we don't have yet have a set budget or information. We would need a business plan, and could apply in January for April funding. Possibly costs to that date could be reimbursed, but current foreseeable costs are small. Eventually maybe we can have paid speakers. Vice-Chairman Kasianchuk also suggested contacting Wolfeboro for a copy of their business plan on which to model ours.

Tom Smith reviewed the Rate Watcher flier with the group. This booklet was full of great information. For example, on page 2 is a paragraph describing the cost savings with CFL's (compact fluorescent lamps), and how they look less "twisty". The NHEC NHSAVES fliers we have on hand describe the many options, as does the www.NHSaves.com website. People that we will work with may not have computer access, so brochures are handy for them. Page 3 describes www.DSIREUSA.org (the Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency). www.EnergyTaxIncentives.org describes federal tax incentives for energy efficient products people install, such as \$500 towards a new boiler, etc., and would appear on the federal taxes due in April. The "Keep 'em tuned up" paragraph and ones following describe many good, basic and easy ideas around the house. Debbie O'Conner thought that the FBLA or Community Service class might help do minor winterizing for the elderly or infirm, such as putting up storm windows and storm doors. Town Manager Joseph said even the cheap plastic sheets one puts on windows with a hairdryer are a great savings. Maybe we could contact Home Depot for local contractors. Other resources are on page 4. Chairman Wallem noted that a local gas station owner is thinking of installing a home heating oil tank and selling smaller amounts of heating fuel to those that can't afford the 100+ gallon minimums that the larger companies require. Page 5 describes the Carbon Challenge, which is not a focus for us, but the idea of comparing energy use before and after installing/incorporating efficiency meetings is important. Driers are 10% of some homes energy costs, so the Town Manager suggested promoting a free clothesline/rack to promote air drying. This led to the suggestion of creating a blog for our website for energy tip ideas, etc. Page 6 describes again, checking energy use before and after instituting energy savings measures. Also, Home Depot collects CFL's, and has many other conservation fixtures. Town Manager Joseph suggested unplugging everything when not using it, and Tom Smith said he put his appliances on a power strip so he only has one switch to turn off. Computers should be turned off when not in use. Chairman Wallem mentioned putting the Rate Watcher newsletter out to the public, maybe via the quarterly Town Talk, and possibly distributing the information to a larger email group interested in energy conservation. Mr. Bishop wondered if condo owners should be on this list also. In summary, everyone felt this was a very good newsletter!

Paul Kasianchuk presented his revised press release, which the group reviewed. Everyone agreed that EAGL should be the short name for the committee (Energy Advisory Group of Lincoln). Vice-Chairman Kasianchuk noted that the Chamber of Commerce is willing to take news releases from us at any time. He felt that EAGL would catch people's eyes

because of the “misspelling”. He explained again that public relations need to come before public education. He will make final edits and send the revised news release to Secretary Chenard for distribution.

On September 29, there will be a listening session videoconference at the school at 6pm. The Selectmen and Town Manager plan to attend. It seems to be the same idea as the event as Chairman Wallem, Mr. Bishop and Mr. Smith attended in Meredith, but this is more of a chance to provide input. Mr. Smith pointed out that the NH Climate Change Action Plan, to be discussed at the videoconference, is several hundred pages long, and geared more towards how we can help statewide. It can lay foundations for code changes for energy code in all towns.

Town Manager Joseph mentioned that he would love to get trains to come back to Lincoln from the southern part of state, allowing visitors to save fuel and still come here. He and Chairman Wallem will see about networking at the Hobo Railroad event tomorrow.

Chairman Wallem noted that he was happy to see the Selectmen’s minutes showing progress on energy and water savings at the Kanc Rec. ski hill, and that Mr. Beaudin would bring this up. There was a discussion about budgeting by hours or gallons.

The discussion returned to the forum and who the intended audience would be. It was decided that this meeting should be more for people hoping to make it through this winter, with a future event geared towards installation of alternative energy options, etc. Next month’s event, however, would cover how to contact and sign up for CAP, who would volunteer to help, and how to save energy this season. The title of the event will be “How to Reduce Your Home Energy Use This Winter” and the date was set for October 22, 2008.

The next committee meeting date will be October 15th, to allow for last minute preparations. The meeting adjourned 6:35pm.