

Charlotte Energy Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 1, 2024, 7:00 PM

Attendees: Mike Yantachka, Rebecca Foster, Jim Hodson, Dierdre Holmes, Wolfger Schneider, and Selectboard liaison Frank Tenney.

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 by Mike Yantachka.

Approval of Minutes of the April 3, 2024, meeting was moved by Rebecca, and seconded by Wolfger. Approved unanimously.

Review of member appointments status

Mike, Rebecca have received letters of appointment. Jim is still waiting. Suzy has probably been approved. There is still one vacancy remaining, so we should look for someone to fill it.

Review of status of recommendation to increase EV charging rate at town charging station.

The recommendation of the committee has been submitted to the Selectboard. Wolfger reports that it is scheduled to be reviewed sometime in May.

Review of Charlotte Earth Month events

The April 22 story telling and April 27 town Earth celebration were both well attended. Both events had basically the same people that always show up for events in town. Members suggested doing more educational events, e.g. Heat Pump maintenance, Septic system maintenance, and inviting the state Climatologist to speak on climate change impacts to Vermont.

Solar discussion

- Solarize Charlotte 2024
 - Jim is the point person on this project. He suggested holding an educational event on the program. He has spoken with HarvestStar, Green Mtn Solar, and Building Energy as potential providers. They are negotiating universal discount by all providers (~3%). It will include a referral program as well for customers who successfully refer other customers. All providers would compete at the same rate. Details are still being worked out. Mike suggested reaching out to AllEarth Renewables, too. We'll need a form on our website for potential customers to contact us. Jim will develop such a form. We will likely use the Charlotte News to distribute solarize flyers as we did last year. A question was raised on whether we need Selectboard approval; Frank thinks not since we are not hiring anyone, entering into contracts or spending outside of our approved budget.
 - Jim made a motion to create a Solarize Charlotte program in 2024 to offer a discount to Charlotte residents or homeowners with details to be worked out with providers, and to allocate up to \$500 from the CEC budget or from other sources for promoting the program.*
 - The motion was approved unanimously.

- Uses for low-cost solar panels
 - The Grange hall may not be suitable for roof panels because of its classification as an historic building. If it has a slate roof, solar panels cannot be roof-mounted.

- The Beach house may be able to host panels to offset some electric usage, but would not be sufficient to power the well pump and would require maintaining the grid connection. This would be an additional net-metering application and would require Selectboard approval.
- The CEC can promote panels at events for individual use.

East/West Villages CCRPC project

Official public participation elements are complete. Dubois & King planning consultants are putting together proposals for the town.

CEC Budget decisions

- Charlotte has received a MERP grant of \$4000 for energy resilience.
- Renewal of domain and website licenses - Rebecca paid the renewal fees and was reimbursed from the CEC budget.
- Library crosswalk project - on SB agenda for May 6 at 7 PM. The cost is \$10,500; \$13,000 is available from three separate grants. If CEC wants to contribute to the project under its transportation bucket, any balance of the unspent \$13K can carry over to FY25. A possible 2nd crosswalk has been suggested by some residents.
- Tracking town solar generation/consumption
- Placing a monitor in library to display the town solar generation by the panels on the town garage which is now online. Wolfger will talk with Margaret to set it up.
- Conservation corner additions (Library of Things) - Wolfger suggests getting a metal detector.

Wolfger's energy consumption reports - should they be sent to Nate?

(At this point, Mike had to leave the meeting.)

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Mike Yantachka