

TOWN OF BEDFORD
January 27, 2022
ENERGY COMMISSION MINUTES

A meeting of the Bedford Energy Commission was held on Thursday, January 27, 2022 in the Town Meeting Room, 10 Meetinghouse Road.

I. Call to Order: Chairman Russell opened the meeting at 7:05 PM

Present: John Russell (Chair), John Schneller (School Board Liaison), Tom Elwood, Bill Foote (School Board Alternate), Chris Bandazian (Vice Chair).

Absent: Sue Thomas (Town Council Liaison), Lori Radke (Town Council Alternate), Andrew Gillis, Bing Lu, Bart Fromuth

II. Quorum Count (5)

III. Approval of Minutes – December 16, 2021 – No quorum to take a vote

IV. Reports of Members and Committees

b. School projects

Mr. Foote stated that the total School budget \$83m. It's a \$0.23 increase on the tax rate. They have a teacher warrant coming up, which is \$0.27, for \$1.3m. They also have a warrant article for HVAC improvements for the elementary schools, which includes Riddlebrook, Memorial, Peter Woodbury, and McKelvie. That's \$0.02. There's an article for a sprinkler system that they've tried the last couple of years to pass. They've stretched those out over 20 years, so the cost is a little more affordable. He encouraged everyone to vote on March 8th and support the budget and warrants as presented.

Chairman Russell thought the HVAC system was important. Mr. Foote stated that they are hoping to have the materials and be ready to do that project in the summer, but if the voters don't vote for it, then it won't get done this summer. Mr. Schneller explained that a lot of people think that the School is resistant to changing and swapping out old equipment, but that's not the case. Engineering firms are not available to do the engineering work that has to be done in advance and the supply chain, getting the physical equipment.

V. Old Business

a. Solsmart – No comments

b. Solar Projects

1. Transfer Station

Mr. Bandazian stated that the information he had from Jeff Foote was that the Town was putting down the deposit for the 3-phase power. It's a refundable deposit. The purpose was to get an RFP out there to see what kind of proposals they have for the landfill solar. That ability to hold the price on 3-phase will stay open until mid-May. At that point, the money, which is about \$37k, gets refunded if they don't go forward. It encumbers the \$500k in direct congressional funding. Essentially the 3-phase power to the Transfer Station and Public Works garage would be \$400+k, which is more affordable and has offsetting benefits in terms of having 3-phase HVAC systems at

the Public Works garage, lifts and welding equipment and all the good stuff that goes along with that and then getting it out to the Transfer Station and being able to get some solar that will power all the Town buildings. That's possible because of the legislative change last year.

Mr. Elwood wanted to know if there was a possibility, if the laws changed, to expand the project and do they have enough room. Mr. Bandazian stated that they don't have any proposals, so it's pure speculation. The proposals they have seen have taken the best level land; that's the least expensive. In the meeting with Eversource, the 3-phase that would go in would support 2 megawatts and this is .7, so there's lots of capacity. It's not unlimited, but there is capacity to double at least what has been shown to them as cash positive. It may not be that this year or next year. Once you get on slopes you have to use ballasts and you're on landfill, so there's a bunch of approvals they have to get. They might get a 2 megawatt proposal. The legislation allows them to take surplus power and use it for another political subdivision in the same community. Mr. Foote mentioned Riddlebrook School being right there. Mr. Bandazian stated that it wouldn't offset completely the School Department's use of electricity, but it could definitely make a dent in it. He thought looking down the road that they might use less prime real estate. To have done that municipal group net metering was a big deal. That should allow them to maximize pretty much.

c. Municipal Aggregation Cost Analysis – Presentation next month

VI. New Business:

a. Discussion: December 2021 Public Works report

Chairman Russell stated that at the Transfer Station they are still talking about \$20 for comingled, but Jeff Foote had documented it at \$50. Mr. Bandazian stated that there was some lag in getting the publicity. The price did go up substantially, but it's still a lot less than regular trash. Mr. Foote wanted to know if there was a website where they could see it or a link. Mr. Bandazian responded not that he's knows of. The department reports don't go on the Town website. The Town Manager reports do, but he didn't think the department ones do. He thought it was a good suggestion to make. He didn't know why Department Heads wouldn't post their reports.

There was discussion about finding agendas on the Town website.

Mr. Schneller wanted to know on the cost of recycling if Mr. Bandazian could bookend it. Mr. Bandazian stated that glass was \$54.03/ton, comingled for December was \$51.44/ton, and municipal solid waste was close to \$80/ton. He stated that the Townspeople made a lot less trash last year. Cutting that down makes a difference in the budget. Eventually they would like to see composting keep those numbers low. It wasn't in play last year. Mr. Schneller stated that the target is to take 10% out of municipal solid waste. Chairman Russell wanted to know the total tonnage in 2020 versus 2021. Mr. Bandazian stated that for solid waste it was 7,493 tons in 2020. This year it was 7,215 tons. Single stream was down from 893 to 813. Glass was down from 277 to 233. Scrap was down as well.

b. Discussion: Other possible Solar Projects in town – No discussion

c. Discussion: Charging Station updates

Chairman Russell noted that the new Nouria gas station still hadn't formally installed their charging station.

d. Discussion: Any March 2022 ballot initiatives of interest – No discussion

Mr. Bandazian mentioned the Green Business Award and that it would be nice to get going. It sort of stopped because of COVID. They had intended it to coincide with Earth Day. He thought it was difficult to get momentum when starting in January. When they have a full board in April that would be something they would look at.

VII. Reminders:

a. Next upcoming meeting Feb 24th, 2022

b. Guest Presentation : Community Power Coalition NH Presentation

CPCNH is a non-profit joint powers agency to assist cities and towns in launching community power programs. 14 towns, cities and Cheshire County are part of this Coalition. <https://www.cpcnh.org/> Phillip Stephenson and Henry Herndon

VIII. Adjournment

MOTION by Chairman Russell to adjourn by at 7:27 pm. Seconded by Councilor Elwood. Vote taken – All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by,

Dawn Boufford