

**TOWN OF BEDFORD
ENERGY COMMISSION MINUTES
May 26, 2022**

A meeting of the Bedford Energy Commission was held on Thursday, May 26, 2022 in the Town Meeting Room, 10 Meetinghouse Road.

I. Call to Order: Chairman Russell opened the meeting at 7:00 PM

Present: John Russell (Chair), Chris Bandazian (Vice Chair), Tom Elwood, Bill Foote (School Board), Chuck Nettleship

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

II. Welcome new commission member : Chuck Nettleship

Mr. Nettleship stated that he was retired Army Reserves currently working at Hanscom Air Force Base. He has quite a bit of experience in the energy field, but not as a practitioner; more of a volunteer. He has been with a group called InfraGard for a number of years. He did some consulting for FEMA on long-term power outage planning. He wants to give back to the community and get them up to speed for emergencies and preparedness.

III. The commission thanks commission member : Bart Fromuth

Chairman Russell thanked Bart Fromuth was stepping down. He expressed their gratitude to Bart for his considerable expertise and willingness to share his incredible knowledge with them.

IV. Election of the Chair 2022-2023

MOTION by Mr. Elwood that John Russell continue as Chairman. Seconded by Mr. Foote. Vote taken – all in favor.

V. Election of the Vice-Chairman 2022-2023

MOTION by Chairman Russell that Chris Bandazian continue as Vice Chairman. Seconded by Mr. Foote. Vote taken – all in favor.

VI. Approval of Minutes – 3/24/22

MOTION by Chairman Russell to approve the minutes of the March 24, 2022 meeting. Seconded by

VII. Review of the rules of procedure

Mr. Bandazian proposed that they take input and then circulate a draft before their next meeting.

Mr. Bandazian went through his proposed changes:

Article 4 – Organization Meeting

Mr. Bandazian stated that they had it in March, because appointments were made in March. Now the Town Council makes their appointments in April, so he thought it should be at their regular May meeting. He will make that change to Article 4.

Article 6 – Meetings

Mr. Bandazian stated that they didn't have a teleconferencing attendance provision and it is allowed under limited circumstances and would track what was in the Town Council Rules of Procedure. It's not like you can sit at home and call in; it's when it's not practical to be here or someone is unable to be here. There is a little provision about that. Also, who chairs the meeting if the chair is not there and the vice chair is not there. He's going to propose to add that. Regarding attendance, if somebody knows they can't come in advance, he would ask that the chair and vice chair be notified 24 hours in advance that way they can let BCTV staff know if they aren't going to have a quorum. Obviously, things come up and people run late, but that's a different situation.

Mr. Foote thought that was the purpose of alternates, having alternates sitting there in case of an absence. Mr. Bandazian stated that it is, but they don't have alternates.

Mr. Nettleship wanted to know how the filling of vacancies work. Mr. Bandazian explained that anyone can fill out and send in the application found online. The Town Council would hold an interview 10-15 minutes prior to one of their Wednesday night meetings.

The Commission discussed having alternate members. Mr. Bandazian stated that they did years ago, but that it didn't work out well.

Chairman Russell mentioned Section 6.4, site visits and thought it was a little bit strict. He referred to the statement that said, 'At no time shall more than four (4) members of the Bedford Energy Commission be present simultaneously during a site visit unless the site visit has been called as a public meeting and proper public notice. Mr. Bandazian stated that it's to meet the open meeting rule. He pointed out that it should now be five (5), not four (4). That's a quorum. When there is a quorum then it is a meeting and you have to go through all of the formalities of a meeting.

Mr. Foote stated that it's only a meeting if they are making decisions for the Commission. If it's a site visit, there is no decision made. It's just an observation. He didn't think it was a public meeting. Mr. Bandazian stated that from his own experience, they had a site visit when he was on the ZBA and they took minutes and there was public there as if it was a meeting. If you are just going to observe things and not talking business, you would certainly post it, but you wouldn't be precluded from it. You shouldn't talk business.

Mr. Bandazian stated that he would like to circulate a draft and vote on it at the next meeting.

VIII. Reports of Members and Committees

a. School projects progress and planning

Mr. Foote stated that he was hoping the ventilation improvements at the schools would be

operating under some sort of sense of urgency. Unfortunately, because Federal monies are involved, sense of urgency is out the window. They were talking about going out to bid on the work at Peter Woodbury next week, because it's taken that long to get the T's crossed and the I's dotted. Memorial construction will be completed sometime during the summer. They've got the equipment. They are still trying to nail down designs for the sprinklers and sprinkler controls, so those won't happen any time immediately. What he hoped was going to be a one year turnaround was now turning into a two to three year slag.

IX. Old Business

a. Solsmart – No update.

b. Solar Projects

1. Transfer Station

Mr. Bandazian stated that he thought the Town Council would make a decision on June 8th. He explained to Mr. Nettleship that to put solar on the landfill it needs to have 3-phase power. They have a \$500k Federal grant approved to help pay for that. The Town needs to come up with about \$450k in addition to that. It's questionable whether they use ARPA money or some other money for that. The price that is locked in was only locked in until June 12th. June 8th was the last Council meeting. It was tabled back in April. Mr. Foote thought it was use it or lose it. Mr. Bandazian stated that they would have more time before the grant goes away, but the price would be higher. Instead of being Federal Town money it would be taxpayer Town money.

2. Town Pool PV Shade/Shelter

Mr. Bandazian didn't know the status of the Town Pool shade shelter. A lot of this hinges on the hiring of an Assistant Town Manager who would have time to offer help on these special projects.

c. Municipal Aggregation Cost Analysis and Presentation

Chairman Russell wanted to know what the Commission members thought about proceeding with this. He was impressed with Eversource in the Greenfield Farms development and thought they do a nice job. He felt they were investing in the grid, which for him was the critical thing. His worry was do they subtract from their ability to do. Mr. Foote stated that with aggregation it didn't affect Eversource, because their focus would be on transmission. Chairman Russell wanted to know if you move from one profit center to two profit centers, do they reduce their ability to deliver in those critical months. Mr. Elwood stated that if they could show him what's it going to cost and what are they going to get. If they come out ahead and aren't locked in for too long. Chairman Russell thought there were two strong reasons to do it. One is they could drive up the percentage of alternative energy that they get. They get a higher percentage of alternative energy and that should be a voter selling point to a lot of people. For other folks, getting the cost down and having a guy that they know in Town theoretically doing it for them would be a good thing. If they could couple those two things together, then it makes sense. Mr. Foote stated that he's got solar so he's almost out of the equation. It's more of a question of what the margin was going to be for the rate payers, about two cents. Mr. Bandazian would like to see the track record in NH; the track record in MA looks positive. Mr. Nettleship wanted to know if methane recovery from the landfill had

been looked at and was it viable. Mr. Foote stated that Manchester had. Mr. Bandazian didn't think they had enough of a landfill to be economically viable. Chairman Russell was reluctant to go before the Town Council with this until after their June meeting. Mr. Bandazian stated that there was the political hurdle that the Council would have to get over, which was determining who the default provider was for people. That's not going to be popular with some people, because they don't like being told what to do even though they are told what to do. Chairman Russell stated that the Council didn't like the idea that you are forced in and have to opt out. They would rather that they default to opt in. The argument being used is unless you push people in, they never hit that 70-80% number to make it work well. Mr. Bandazian stated that this wasn't something he would push. They should continue to study it, but he didn't feel they were at the point of being able to convince anybody it's the right thing to do.

X. New Business:

Mr. Bandazian stated that Clean Energy NH of which they are a member, was doing a legislative recap by Zoom on June 10th from 12:00 - 1:00 PM. He thought it would be beneficial for people to tune in to if they can.

Mr. Bandazian stated that on June 4th is a Drive Electric NH in Exeter from 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM at the Unutil facility.

XI. Reminders:

a. Next upcoming meeting June 23th, 2022

Chairman Russell stated that he may be out of the country for this meeting and may ask Mr. Bandazian to chair the meeting.

Mr. Bandazian stated that he would put on the agenda to review the list of objectives that they have. One of which is to help the average citizen. It's something he would like to have as a focus. If they can identify something that they could do. They are looking at community power, but they aren't finding much they can do to help the average homeowner. Other things he thought they were doing great on whether it's schools or Town facilities.

XII. Adjournment

MOTION by Mr. Bandazian to adjourn by at 7:34 pm. Seconded by Mr. Foote. Vote taken – All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by,

Dawn Boufford