**Bethlehem Energy Commission**

 **Tuesday June 1, 7:00pm**

**Minutes**

**Attending:** David Van Houten, Josiah Chamberlain, Bruce Caplain, Mary Lou Krambeer, Dan Crosby,

**Excused:** Mark Koprowski (on leave)

**Public:** Melissa Elander (Clean Energy, NH advisor) – on phone

Mission: The Bethlehem Energy Commission was established for the study and planning of energy resources for the town. The commission will evaluate existing energy usage in the town and suggest possible improvements in energy efficiency and conservation, as well as potential clean renewable energy solutions in order to reduce expenses and increase self-reliance.

Town Garage – LED lights -- we have a 50% grant from Eversource to

Bethlehem Elementary School –

Town Hall --Iris wait, engineer – look for low hanging savings then look at boiler will spec out three different systems. Will also look at ventilation system – a heat recovery system.

Review minutes from May 4, 2021 meeting. Dan makes motion, Chuck seconds motion. Approved.

Town Hall Energy Audit – the work done 10 years ago reduced energy use by 40%. Our recent energy audit by Margaret Dillon doesn’t show substantial savings. Next step an engineer will be looking more closely at possibilities. Town Hall is burning propane for heat -- one of the questions is to now look closely at its efficiency and the Town’s maintenance plan.

Highway Garage – lighting upgrade from 10 years ago is in need of assistance. Now it’s time to upgrade to LEDs. David worked with Eversource, which will pay half the price of upgrade. Bruce will run this by the Selectboard.

Town solar project:

BES meeting next Tuesday. David will attend the meeting.

Library board meets on Wed via Zoom. TO DO: Remind folks that project is in the works and to help them reduce their energy costs and green up their power usage. Mary Lou said she will attend meeting (instead she spoke to board chair who said he was happy to give update).

Solar: 1) ReVision Energy will check the scope and cost of our project on Wednesday – free consultation (thank you Josiah). This second consultation will help us project costs and savings as accurately as possible.; 2) Melissa, Dan and Mary Lou are working away on the Solar video piece which will explain the project; 3) NH DRA has reviewed our revised warrant article for correct wording – our request request use of an Unassigned Fund Balance (UFB) which has zero taxes associated with it.

**BTS Project Timeline**

**May**  5/4 meeting; 6pm. 5/18 meeting; 6pm. Finalize solar estimates & warrant article & video.

**June** Deliberative session 6/4; 6pm

**July** Town Election 7/13

Next meeting date: Tuesday, May 18 at 6pm at the Gazebo.

Public input

Next Meeting

Next meeting: July 6 at 7pm at the Gazebo.

Adjourn 7:00pm

Minutes submitted by: Mary Lou Krambeer

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Background: Bethlehem Energy Commission (BEC) is appointed by the Select Board. All meetings are open to the public.

Clerical Assistant Nicole McGrath ensures that BEC meeting notices, agendas, and minutes are posted as necessary.

To find BEC info go to: www.bethlehemnh.org

-go to government tab

-our committee is listed under: boards and committees tab

-our meetings are posted through Nicole on: agendas and minutes tab

 Nicole also posts a hard copy of meeting notices in the Town Hall and at the post office (thank you!)

To see if the Town will VOTE TO APPROPRIATE the sum of $150,000 (One Hundred and Fifty Thousand Dollars) from the Town's unassigned fund to install a solar array estimated to cost a total of $475,000 on town-owned property to reduce Town electricity costs for the next 30 years and rely on clean energy.

The solar array is expected to offset approximately 100% of electricity used by the Town for Town Hall, Highway Department, Elementary School, Library and street lights.

The total cost of $475,000 will be funded through:

·         $165,000 USDA grant (received)

·         $150,000 from the Town’s general fund in 2021

·         $160,000 subject to a future warrant article appropriating the remaining funds through short-term borrowing, or other sources, that would be paid through reduced electricity costs

Savings, including installation and maintenance costs, are estimated to be:

·         $150,000 over the 25+ year life of the project

* $616,000 in “utility avoided costs”

If this proposal is approved, the Select Board will solicit bids from solar installers, and will be under no obligation to purchase a system if it is not economically beneficial to the Town.

2021 Tax Impact = $0.