ENERGY COMMITTEE

TOWN OF SOUTH WINDSOR

Minutes Page 1 September 24, 2019

Madden Room – South Windsor Town Hall
Special Meeting

1. Call Meeting to Order
   The meeting was called to order at 4:32 p.m.

2. Roll Call
   Members Present: Larry Brown, Resident
                    Robert Dickinson, Resident
                    Anitha Elango, Town Treasurer
                    Mike Gantick, Director of Public Works
                    Patrick Hankard, Board of Education
                    Athena Loukellis, Resident
                    Councilor Janice Snyder, Town Council
                    Stephen Wagner, Resident

   Members Absent:  Hank Cullinane, Resident
                    Councilor Mary Justine Hockenberry, Town Council
                    Councilor Cesar Lopez, Town Council
                    Sherman Tarr, Resident

3. Approval of Minutes (July 9, 2019)
   Mrs. Loukellis made a motion to approve the July 9, 2019, Regular Meeting
   Minutes. Councilor Snyder seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved
   with Mr. Hankard abstaining.

4. Next Meeting
   Regular Meeting – October 15, 2019, 4:30 p.m., Madden Room

5. Business
   A. Farmers Market Tabling
      Mrs. Loukellis stated that she felt it was a successful day. There were
      approximately twelve people that signed the survey.

      (Discussion Continued on Next Page)
ITEM:

5. Business (Continued)

A. Farmers Market Tabling (Continued)

Chairman Wagner added that one resident did sign up to have a representative from PosiGen come to their home to discuss solar. PosiGen has a unique way of marketing solar. They don’t require a credit rating from anyone. As long as an individual is paying their electric bill, the bill will come in on their electric bill. PosiGen also does not custom design your house for solar; they have three different sizes for installations.

B. Municipal Energy Plan

a. Council Adoption July 15, 2019

The Town Council approved the Municipal Energy Plan at their July 15, 2019, meeting.

b. Energy Committee Commitments

Chairman Wagner reviewed the Energy Committee Commitments as shown in attached Exhibit A:

- Incentives: By the end of 2020, the Energy Committee has to come up with ways to incentivize the use of renewable energy and designs that exceed the energy efficiency requirements of current building codes. Hank Cullinane is our expert regarding this item and is not in attendance tonight. This item will be brought up again in the future to see if anyone is interested in establishing a Committee.

- Advise and educate residents and businesses on existing incentives and rebates available to reduce energy use and participate in renewable energy: The Energy Committee has run residential energy efficiency or renewable energy education programs every calendar year, and will decide on the next program that will be run. The Committee has agreed to give a presentation to a local business organization every calendar year. Councilor Snyder volunteered to contact the Rotary Club to see if the Energy Committee can get on their agenda to discuss an OEEB project.

(Continue on Next Page)
ITEM:

5. B. (Continued)

- Identifying new energy savings projects to be funded by reinvesting the savings from previous energy projects will be discussed last on the agenda, under Item F.

- The Energy Committee should survey various managers to report on progress in various goals in the plan, which can be reported on in February for the preceding calendar year and September for the preceding fiscal year.

- Advise the Town Council and relevant boards and commissions on possible incentives for adopting renewable energy and exceeding building code requirements for energy efficiency and renewable energy in new construction by December 31, 2020. This item has led to discussions about trying to get a zero net energy design for the schools. Anyone who would like to research this item and come up with a program is welcome. Mr. Dickinson stated that he would send an email to State Representative Delnicki. Chairman Wagner will contact South Windsor’s Federal Representatives to find out if there are any initiatives that are being worked on at the federal level.

*Board of Education Solar Project*

Mr. Hankard explained that there are a number of projects in the process. All of them are awaiting ZREC approval. Three schools (Orchard Hill Elementary School, Wapping, and Philip R. Smith Elementary School) are scheduled in the first phase, and Timothy Edward and the High School are in the second phase. Titan is the contractor that is being used as the consultant but will not be the solar installer. A report will be given at the next Board of Education meeting.

Chairman Wagner explained to the Committee that ZREC is zero renewable energy credits and the credit is one per one on the electricity, which equates to money. Mr. Hankard informed the Committee that the ZREC would be given to the successful bidder because governments are not allowed to hold ZREC.

(Discussion Continued on Next Page)
ITEM:

5. B. (Continued)

Chairman Wagner then stated that the other solar item that is coming up is a Virtual Net Metering project, which will be split between two communities. One of the communities is Enfield, and he has not been informed of the other community. Chairman Wagner informed the Committee that the combined virtual net metering and generation services allows South Windsor to receive 46% of our electricity demand from renewable energy.

D. Guest Speaker from PACE – Local Energy Aggregation

Mr. Peter Milliman from PACE came before the Committee and explained that he provided the Committee with a handout which explains Community Choice Aggregation by Connecticut League of Conservation Voters (Exhibit B), with an attachment of a resolution (Exhibit C) that he is hoping the Energy Committee will consider. Community Choice Aggregation is a means by which a Town, and even better a group of Towns can form a community choice aggregation and then choose its own electricity supplier for all of the Town residents and small businesses. Mr. Milliman discussed the program in-depth and explained to the Committee how the program would work and the steps that would need to be taken.

Mrs. Loukellis stated that she feels this is an interesting concept but felt it would be easier to go to CCM for something like this. Mr. Milliman explained that the cost savings do not come from a bigger population.

Mr. Gantick also stated that this is an interesting concept, but the Town already has a broker for its energy on the municipal side without adding more layers of bureaucracy.

Answering further questions, Mr. Milliman explained that Eversource gets paid for distributing electricity, not for selling electricity.

Mr. Brown told Mr. Milliman that in the Committee’s experience with Eversource with streetlights, they found ways to get around whatever the Committee tried to put into place.

(Discussion Continued on Next Page)
ITEM:

5. Business (Continued)

C. Sustainable CT Update (Steve and Athena)

Chairman Wager informed the Committee that under the energy category, the Town is responsible for about 75 points. There are enough points to quality for the solar, but the Town does not have three equity projects.

E. Zero Net Energy School

Chairman Wagner stated that the Town is not going to get a zero-energy school unless it can be done with no extra cost than the cost that is anticipated to do the school.

Mr. Hankard explained that the two schools being built now are almost identical to the new Orchard Hill Elementary School. These schools are expected to have the same types of energy efficiencies. Mr. Hankard told the Committee that it would be a challenge to get zero net energy into Pleasant Valley Elementary School because the plan has increased. The Town will be fortunate if Pleasant Valley Elementary School is as energy efficient as the other three schools. At this time, nothing can be added to the base cost of building the school.

Committee members discussed in length how to go about implementing zero net energy into Pleasant Valley Elementary School. Chairman Wagner stated that the Energy Committee might be able to work with the Public Building Commission and architects to see what can be done.

F. Energy Savings Account
   a. Meeting report (Steve)
   b. Possible Council resolution for use of energy cost savings to fund energy-related capital improvement projects

This item will be discussed at the next Energy Committee meeting.
ITEM:

6. **Miscellaneous**

   Chairman Wagner announced that on Saturday, September 28, 2019, there will be a meeting at the EnergizeCT Center, 122 Universal Drive North, North Haven called Carpool from your Region, from 10:00 a.m. to about 2:30 p.m., if anyone is interested. One agenda item is Energy Efficiency for Hard-to-Reach Households, which has been an issue for South Windsor.

   Chairman Wagner also informed the Committee that The Solar Energy Association of Connecticut would hold a seminar and discussion regarding Solar & Renewable Energy in Connecticut on Saturday, September 28, 2019, at 2:00 p.m. at Glastonbury Public Library.

   Chairman Wagner told the Committee that Jan Ellen Spiegel from The CT Mirror wrote an article called CT’s Small Solutions to Climate Change: South Windsor goes Solar. In the article, she was very complimentary of South Windsor’s Energy Plan.

7. **Adjournment**

   At 6:02 p.m., Councilor Snyder made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Brown seconded the motion; and it was approved, unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

Deborah W. Reid
Clerk of the Council
Municipal Energy Plan Implementation

Energy Committee Commitments

- Incentives: In addition, the Committee will report by December 31, 2020 to Town Officials (encompassing the Town Council, Board of Education, Economic Development Commission and Planning and Zoning Commission) regarding ways to incentivize the use of renewable energy and designs that exceed the energy efficiency requirements of then-current building codes.

- The Energy Committee will advise and educate residents and businesses on existing incentives and rebates available to reduce energy use and participate in renewable energy. See also Section 3.4 for information on the DSIRE database and other programs that may be applicable to residential and business entities.
  - Run a residential energy efficiency or renewable energy education program every calendar year.
  - Give a business energy presentation to a local business organization every calendar year.
  - Another OEEB project?
  - Identify new energy saving projects to be funded by reinvesting the savings from previous energy projects.

- Report on progress to [the various goals in the plan] in February for the preceding calendar year and September for the preceding fiscal year.
  - Measured progress (Portfolio Manager)
  - Measured progress (Eversource aggregated data)
  - Project progress (See Appendix A)

- Advise the Town Council and relevant boards and commissions on possible incentives for adopting renewable energy and exceeding building code requirements for energy efficiency and renewable energy in new construction by December 31, 2020.
  - Zero net energy Pleasant Valley school?
  - Commercial construction
  - Residential construction
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The Problem
Clean energy is becoming more and more affordable, but Connecticut towns are not currently authorized to purchase it for their residents and businesses. Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) would allow municipalities to choose their electricity provider, allowing them to purchase from cleaner, cheaper sources. Power continues to be delivered to the existing utility, and any ratepayer is free to opt out.

Unfortunately, CCA is not currently authorized in Connecticut, though there is a provision allowing individual electric customers to choose their provider.

A Comprehensive Solution
Connecticut should allow CCA so that a town’s residents and businesses can join together as power-purchasing entities. This would grow the amount of renewable energy used in towns while reducing costs.

CCA requires no state or ratepayer funds. It could also be modified to allow aggregation units to develop their own clean energy and energy efficiency projects.

CCA can be a powerful tool to ensure Connecticut meets its clean energy goals.

More Information
To learn more, contact:

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Peoples Actions for Renewable Energy
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ConservationEducation.org  @ChispaCT  @CTLCVI

Nationwide, CCA electric rate savings average between 20-25% depending on market conditions and power resources.

All of our neighboring states allow for CCA, including Massachusetts, New York, and Rhode Island. California, Illinois, New Jersey, and Ohio also allow for CCA.

Newtown, MA recently signed a contract where ratepayers will purchase 60% of electricity from renewable sources.
Resolution of Interest in Community Choice Energy (CCE) for Local Governments in the State of Connecticut

Whereas, a local energy model called Community Choice Energy is a proven strategy to expand consumer choice, lower electric rates, and meet state and local environmental goals;

Whereas, Community Choice Energy currently exists in eight states (CA, IL, OH, VA, RI, NJ, NY and MA) and is a mechanism by which local governments use aggregate buying power to procure electrical power for municipal, residential and commercial customers in their jurisdictions.

Whereas Community Choice Energy work in partnership with the utility, which continues to provide power delivery, grid maintenance, and consolidated customer billing;

Whereas, Community Choice Energy currently serves millions of customers around the Country, and consistently exceeds utility performance in the areas of local choice, electric rates, renewable content and greenhouse gas reductions;

Whereas the Connecticut Office of Consumer Counsel has condemned the behavior of some individual retail suppliers marketing to individuals and that CCE is an alternative that can protect consumer interests;

Whereas the benefits of lower electric rates, energy efficiency programs, and economic development that can result from Community Choice Energy are of particular value to low and moderate income ratepayers;

Whereas, HB 6241 and HB 7015, two Community Choice Energy bills, were introduced in the Energy and Technology Committee during the 2019 session of the General Assembly and are expected to be reintroduced in 2020;

Whereas Community Choice Energy legislation would have no significant negative fiscal impacts on Connecticut or municipalities and provide significant local and regional economic development benefits;

Whereas, Community Choice Energy also provides the opportunity to fund and implement a wide variety of local energy programs tailored to the needs of a community; and,

Whereas, Community Choice Energy, if determined to be technically and financially feasible for Connecticut cities and towns, could provide substantial environmental and economic benefits to the residents and businesses in [Name of City/County];

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of [Name of Municipality] that:

[Name of Municipality] indicates its interest in the potential for Community Choice Energy in the State of Connecticut and would support the State’s efforts in that regard.
[Name of Municipality] further indicates that state enabling legislation should at a minimum allow a Community Choice Energy municipality or group of municipalities to do the following:

- Procure electricity on behalf of the CCE's residents, businesses, and municipal accounts;
- Automatically enroll residents and businesses that have not already chosen a third-party supplier, but with ample opportunities to opt out;
- Obtain all customer usage information from the utility that the CCE requires to fulfill its purposes;
- Administer all energy efficiency funds paid by customers located within their jurisdictional boundaries for purposes of promoting and funding local energy efficiency programs;
- Obtain funding and develop local renewable energy projects;

Adoption of this Resolution in no way obligates [Name of Municipality] to participate in Community Choice Energy, unless it so chooses by adoption of ordinance if authorized by the State.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of [Name of Municipality], State of Connecticut, this ___ day of ____, 2019 by the following vote: