

Hamilton Environmental Impact Committee (HEIC)

Minutes of meeting, October 12, 2023

Location: Zoom call

Meeting called to order at 5:02 pm by Jeanne Maurand, who called the roll.

Members present: Jeanne Maurand; Jack Simons, Kim Strovink, Emmett Holt (Don Perkins - Absent)

Invited visitor: Vicky Masone, Energy Manager for the town and for Wenham and the H/W Regional Sch District

Also attending: Heather Ryan, from H/W Climate Action Team.

This is the 14th meeting of the HEIC.

Issues discussed and votes taken:

- Report of Energy Manager (Vicky Masone):
 - Summarized a 10/6 conference call with National Grid entitled 'Future of Heat - Listening Session' attended by members of both HEIC and HWCAT. The focus of the NG team was on transitioning from Natural Gas heat to electric heat pumps. NG is installing new Natural Gas pipelines on Bridge St. Our HEIC committee discussed recommending that the town may want to stop further expansion of natural gas service to force future adoption of electric Heat Pumps. The NG team envisioned a heating transition in existing structures focused on improved weatherization & insulation then a phased transition to heat pumps with the legacy fossil fuel furnace as a back-up for more extreme heating conditions.
 - Town Hall Building Project update - the '[Buildings Up](#)' grant application was not accepted. Vicky plans to apply for a Green Communities grant in early 2024 to help fund the weatherization and the HVAC transition to electric heat pump technology.
 - energy upgrade has been separated from the renovation, the town meeting warrant will focus on the building renovation.
 - The electrical work will be done as a separate project that is being developed in parallel.
 - EV Chargers installation Update - (1) at the High School and (2) at Buker School are in the scheduling queue for installation.
 - Hamilton's municipal electricity supply contract is expiring in December. Vicky is recommending the upgrading from the current 'Brown' electricity to 'NewWindMix' (100% renewable, non-local). The annual cost differential (for a 36-month contract) for brown electricity @ \$139.7K vs. 100% renewable

\$143.3K, an additional cost of \$3.5 or 2.5% annually. (Vicky expressed concern that proposing 100% MA Class 1 Renewable would be too expensive with an annual cost increase of \$43.5K or .31% of budget) 100% renewable electricity will eliminate 574.3K lbs of CO2 annually and will increase 'Hamilton's Green Community - Green House Gas' reduction from 31% to 58% from our 2009 baseline of 2,143,081 lbs/yr to 897,307 lbs/yr

- HEIC voted unanimously to recommend to the Select Board that the Town Manager negotiate a new electricity supply contract for municipal accounts from the current "standard National Grid 'Brown' electricity" to "NewWindMix 100% renewable, non-local". Emmett will attend the 10/16 Select Board meeting to deliver the recommendation.
- PFAS Water quality: No further update since the GAC filtration system at the WTP plant is not on-line yet. Monthly Water Quality tests are run throughout the year and reported annually in April at the WTP per MassDEP testing guidelines.
- Vehicle fleet transition: No Updates
- HWRSU Update: Kim provided an update on a "Visioning" session she attended for the new elementary school. Goals for the project included a Sustainable facility that would be a learning tool bringing the outside-in and the inside-out. The next mtg is scheduled for 10/18 at 5pm.
 - Discussed engaging with the high school [Environmental Club](#): Advisor - Ms. Johanna Wilson (j.wilson@hwschools.net) and Student Leaders - Sydney Mason, Laynee Wilkins, Marlee Flanagan, Grace Roebuck, Kaitlyn Menegoni, Lily Russo Instagram: @hwenvironmental
- Community Engagement: Kim said that the HEIC Dogwood tree provided for our table at the H/W Local Fall Festival event was planted by Tim Olson's DPW team at Miles River Middle School.
 - Jeanne reported that Christ Church has to get diocese approval to approve install solar, so the project is on hold.
- Community Choice Aggregation: Emmett discussed a CCA marketing concept to promote the program starting with a Thank You letter, stickers and lawn signs to the current list of 38 subscribers to 100% renewable. The draft Thank You letter provided now needs to be re-drafted since GoodEnergy sent an update the day after our meeting (10/13) that included renewal materials for the next contract starting 12/2023.
 - On 10/13 Good Energy provided drafts of the renewal letters that will be sent out to all program participants. Early next week we'll follow up with the remaining outreach materials: Press release, social media posts, and a blurb update for your municipal website. Additionally, we've scheduled two public information sessions for anyone with questions to attend. These are

scheduled for October 26th: <https://meet.google.com/ucj-dxgg-zzm> and
November 9th: <https://meet.google.com/wat-qttj-xyx>.

- Community Engagement: The committee had a general discussion about communications and posing information on the [HEIC webpage](#), similar to the [Energy Commission webpage](#). Emmett has talked to Laurie Wilson who will help the HEIC, once the committee identifies documents it would like to link to the HEIC page.

Next meeting will be 2 November at 5:00 pm. (Emmett will be absent)

Mr Holt moved to adjourn the meeting, 2nd Mr Simons, adjourned 6:47 pm.

Prepared by:

E. Holt and J. Simons, clerk

Respectfully submitted as approved at the November 2, 2023 meeting by Jack Simons,
clerk