

**Alternative Energy Committee
June 24, 2014**

Members present: Larry Bean, Chair; Burke Henry, Vice Chair; Carl Frederickson, Glenn Carlson and Tom Banner

Members absent:

Town Staff Present: Pete Clark, Town Administrator (10:20am)

Public present:

1. Call to order.

The Alternative Energy Committee meeting called to order by Chair L. Bean on Tuesday, June 24, 2014 at 10:08 am at the Town Hall. A quorum of the committee is present as reflected in the members listed above.

2. Minutes of the following meetings to be considered for approval:

A. October 8, 2013.

Correction noted: G. Carlson made the motion to adjourn and also seconded the motion; in reality B. Henry seconded the motion to adjourn.

Motion by B. Henry to approve the October 8, 2013 Alternative Energy Committee minutes as corrected, second, T. Banner. All in favor, all aye, motion carried.

Short discussion that the committee is overdrawn by \$51.00 for a site assessment. Interested party now makes a payment and the site assessment balance is \$0.00.

3. Review of the AEC recommendations to the Town Board.

In 2013

- Make recommendations to the Town Board for cost effective energy efficiency improvements including suggestions for funding assistance.
- Assist property owners with solar PV planning and acquisition including assessments, technical, and financial support.
- Investigate solar development that would cost –effectively provide the Town’s electricity on an annual basis. Pursue grant opportunities.
- Assist the Town library in the planning and acquisition of cooling equipment that would be solar powered and also provide solar electricity for the library’s annual need as well as the adjacent medical clinic.
- Investigate the opportunities for increased Island energy security and independence with “micro-grid” development.

Also recommended were the following budget items:

- Outdoor lighting replacement (\$21,000 in budget)
- Town Hall retrofit (\$13,100)
- Library retrofit (\$6,000)
- Outdoor Wood Fired Boiler (\$0)
- Also included planning and design study for a solar installation that would meet all of the Town’s electrical needs. (\$10,000)

4. Budget discussion

Budget items listed on the expenditure side of the budget printout shows an amount of \$40,100. L. Bean said Pete Clark, Town Administrator, (TA) talked to him about recapturing the budgeted items due to the harsh winter. The implication was that we would retain the money for the planning and design study.

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L. Bean had asked Connie Ross, Library Director to attend this meeting in order to ask for the Library's support to commit some of the Library funds to the planning and design study.

L. Bean received an unsolicited email from a lighting company in Florida that installs new outdoor LED lighting on a performance contracting basis. This company's estimate is a maximum of \$1,000 to \$2,000/pole which is quite a bit less than the estimate we received from a company in Waukesha.

Performance contracting means there is no capital costs to the community/purchaser because the installation costs are paid for out of the energy savings. The Town would receive a monthly bill for electric usage but the money saved from the energy efficient installation would be diverted from Xcel Energy to the lighting company until the installation, financing, and interest is paid for. To be noted - if the energy savings are not greater than the interest rate the project might go for a long time before being paid off. In that case, this would not be a good agreement to enter into. L. Bean would like to hear what the Town Board interest is on this and if we should move forward with the outdoor lighting project.

Performance contracting is also known as a Guaranteed Savings Program.

Information about the company is needed including interest rates. Included in the proposal is switching the lights on the ferry dock to LEDs. The control is wireless so you could shut off one, some, or all of the lights. Concerns expressed of shutting the lights off because of the tragic snowmobile accident two years ago.

L. Bean said the following items can be delayed: the Town Hall and Library retrofits and the outdoor wood fired boilers. This leaves the planning and feasibility study for a solar array at the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF). However, the retrofit of the Town Hall (replace doors, insulate crawl space) and the Library should be done before proceeding with a renewable solar energy system.

In the budget printout, \$40,100 is shown on the expenditure side which is composed of grants from the DNR, Island Association, Focus on Energy and Additional grants. The Town did not include revenue for these grants; the Town put just the expenditure side with the understanding that the committee would not spend the money unless the grants were awarded. L. Bean talked to Barb Nelson, Administrative Assistant, who said, basically, there is \$10,000 for a planning/design feasibility study; the Town is not waiting for a grant. Discussion if there is \$40,000 on the revenue side of the budget and if so, can that amount be recaptured.

Pete Clark, Town Administrator is now present. (10:20am)

L. Bean said the committee was just discussing our recommendations for Town efficiency and renewable energy investments beginning with the planning and design study for a solar installation at the landfill. There is an alternative way to acquire outdoor lighting called performance contracting where there is no capital cost to the town – the improvement is paid for by the savings realized from the installation which the committee would like to discuss with the Town Board. The committee realizes that Town Hall and Library retrofits that should be done can wait and that there is not much interest in the wood fired boiler.

P. Clark said it was his understanding, based on prior discussions, that the WI –DNR, (outdoor lighting), Island Association, (Town Hall retrofit) Focus on Energy (Library retrofit) and Additional Grants (wood fired boiler) were grant driven and the Town Board wanted the planning and design to go forward. Question if there is \$40,000 in the Alternative Energy Committee budget. P. Clark said there is \$40,000 in the budget; if the grants come through the grants would repay the Town.

L. Bean said in the committee packets are two articles on a microgrid that clearly explain what a microgrid is. To summarize, there are 42 facilities in the NYC area operating as a microgrid. When Hurricane Sandy hit people were without power for a long period of time but there was no interruption of service at all for the 42 facilities operating as a microgrid. This has some value in terms of emergency planning and the operation of the Island. The planning and design study is to put a solar array out at the MR, up to a 200KW system on the closed landfill. This project has the encouragement from the DNR who helped another community in Wisconsin with this type of project.

Discussion of the outdoor lighting project that includes the two Town parking lots and the ferry dock. There are 6 lights on the dock and 4 lights in the two parking lots which would be switched to LEDs. P. Clark said the Town Board approved using LEDs on the breakwall contingent on Coast Guard approval because there was some thought that the lack of lighting or the brightness contributed to people missing the ferry dock in the winter. Thank you to P. Clark who leaves the meeting at 10:50am.

5. Planning/Design Study

A. Funding: Has been covered.

B. Library Board: L. Bean will touch base with Connie Ross, Library Director.

C. Draft RFP: Timetable: The Town Board would have to approve our recommendation in regards to a contractor at the first Town Board meeting in August. Agreement to add to the timetable: Town Board approval of contractor August 12th. Agreement to add June 25th as the date when the proposals will be sent out.

L. Bean suggested adding to Goal: (2013 est. 230,000 Kwh hours) after “annual electricity needs” in order to give the contractors an idea of what the load is.

Item #3: Add “the plan would also accommodate the town’s existing emergency generators.”

Item #8 put the word “to” between the words “preparation” and “discuss”.

Also in #8 it says meet with AEC and selected advisors. L. Bean would like to propose at the next AEC meeting that the committee form an advisory team for this specific project to help us with funding as well as the project itself.

This advisory team could include the DNR (Robert Strauss - the engineer who did the solar project on a landfill in Wisconsin); Xcel Energy, the University of WI; and Dr Greg Mowry, University of St. Thomas, microgrid expert who works as a consultant for Xcel. L. Bean emailed everyone he and G. Carlson met in Madison and only heard back from Don Wicker, former head of Focus on Energy.

The committee needs to think of other names that would be on the advisory team. Question if these people serve gratis or perhaps paid traveling expenses? L. Bean does not anticipate paying for advisors at this point.

L. Bean will bring a Power Point presentation to the next AEC meeting he had shared with Dave Donovan, Xcel Energy. Dave said we should be funded from the Renewable Energy

Redevelopment Fund and to work closely with Michael BeBeau of Xcel Energy. Michael BeBeau said we need to get our project into the queue.

L. Bean said Focus on Energy did have a grant cycle but he did not see how we would qualify with our design study.

Short discussion of a project objective that addresses not only efficiency but effectiveness - what is the projected cost savings over a period of time? This was addressed in items 1 and 2 of the RFP. Question of how do you quantify the savings if you have an emergency and no one has power?

D. Communication to Town Board: We are on the Town Board agenda tonight for budget, planning and design study.

E. Solicitation/mailing.

We received about a dozen replies to the 40 letters sent out last year asking contractors if they would be interested in a project on the Island. This list will be used for the Request for Proposals. The committee also needs to find an engineer/geologist for the expedited exemption for the development on the landfill site.

6. Update on Bayfield County Wind interest.

L. Bean emailed Mark Abeles-Allison, Bayfield County Administrator and has not heard back.

7. Update of area renewable energy activities and initiatives.

There is a meeting set for Thursday night by Brian Driscoll, head of the Wisconsin Energy Conservation Corporation (WECC) formerly with the State Energy Office who was instrumental in getting us \$2500 for the meteorological work. The mayors of Bayfield and Washburn, Mark Abeles-Allison and Larry Bean are invited to talk about energy efficiency and renewable energy developments in the region.

In committee packets is information regarding the Bill Bailey greenhouse in Bayfield which produces about 60% of their electrical needs. There is a Slow Food tour at the Bailey greenhouse the last week in July.

Michael Brenna on the Island has augmented his solar system to include all appliances. There could be a Slow Food Tour at his farm also.

8. Communication and outreach.

The committee needs to let the community know what we are doing. Solar and wind assessments have been done and people who are interested in solar development can use the site assessments we have and plug in their own numbers.

Need to find out if the Town can order solar panels directly in bulk for town and property owners.

9. Other Business.

Agenda item for the next meeting is the advisory team.

Motion by B. Henry to adjourn, second, C. Frederickson, all in favor, all aye, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 11:10 am.

Minutes taken from recorder and respectfully submitted by Kathy Erickson, Clerical Assistant.

Minutes approved as presented July 29, 2014.

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