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**Town of La Pointe
Alternative Energy Committee
March 6, 2015**

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

Members absent:

Also present: Pete Clark, Town Administrator (10:10am)

Public present:

1. Call to order.

The Alternative Energy Committee meeting called to order by Vice Chair B. Henry on Friday, March 6, 2015 at 10:03 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. September 22, 2014.

Motion by G. Carlson to approve the September 22, 2014 Alternative Energy Committee (AEC) minutes as presented, second, T. Banner. All in favor, all aye, motion carried.

B. October 3, 2014: Mid Term Progress Report with Chippewa Valley Alternative Energy.

Motion by G. Carlson, second by B. Henry to approve the October 3, 2014 AEC minutes as presented. All in favor, all aye, motion carried.

C. February 6, 2015 Final Presentation by Chippewa Valley Alternative Energy.

Motion by T. Banner, second by G. Carlson to approve the February 6, 2015 AEC minutes as presented. All in favor, all aye, motion carried.

3. Review database supplied by Contractor.

G. Carlson said the data we have received from Chippewa Valley Alternative Energy (CVAE) is very adequate. The AEC now needs to focus on the final recommendation to the Town Board. T. Banner agrees with G. Carlson and said the role of a microgrid needs more discussion. Carl Frederickson questions the flexibility of the microgrid.

B. Henry said the study performed by CVAE was satisfied, and their statement of work requirements as given to CVAE by us have been adequately filled. CVAE has given us a lot of data and now it is up to the AEC and others to take that data to the next level in order to give a final recommendation to the Town Board.

B. Henry said he does not fully understand the role of a microgrid and does not understand what a microgrid would provide to the Town for the money a microgrid would cost. There has not been an adequate definition of what an emergency is to this Island. The cost of this type of system to provide solar power to the Town's government needs is high. CVAE has indicated that there would not be a breakeven point at many of the locations for up to 16 years. How much of the money would be from other people's money rather than from the taxpayers of Madeline Island. Even if funding came from other people's money a fraction of that money would be paid for by Madeline Island taxpayers so we need to understand if a microgrid is a benefit or not.

L. Bean said this committee needs to get a review from some professionals. Will discuss this under agenda item:

5. Plan Next Steps for the Alternative Energy Committee.

L. Bean said John Carroll, an expert on microgrids, will come to the Island for free, do a site visit, look at the data and give us a recommendation.

The State Energy Office in Madison is also interested in our project and is eager to see the executive summary and summary report. L. Bean said some of the diagrams need to be reviewed by engineers at the UW-Madison.

L. Bean said the question about emergency preparedness is a good question. You cannot measure the return on an investment of being prepared for an emergency unless an emergency occurs. Based on history, does the Island need to be prepared for an emergency? You cannot build a system to mitigate an emergency until you have defined what an emergency is. This discussion needs to include everyone involved with emergencies; not just this committee. As G. Carlson has to leave soon, move to agenda item:

4. Recommendation to the Town Board that the Town Board Pay the Contractor.

The Alternative Energy Committee is satisfied that the database supplied by the contractor meets the requirements of the statement of work.

Motion by B. Henry that the AEC recommends to the Town Board that the Town Board pay Chippewa Valley Alternative Energy for their work as contracted. Second, G. Carlson. All in favor, all aye, motion carried.

Return to the posted agenda:

5. Plan Next Steps for the Alternative Energy Committee.

L. Bean said CVAE has talked to John Carroll, microgrid expert. John Carroll has also emailed committee members in regards to optimizing the project for utility costs, scalability and where we would have autonomous loads vs. competing with the generation from Xcel. This was an offer tendered by CVAE and John Carroll has followed through.

L. Bean said he reviewed our project with a project director in Phoenix who said the cost of installation is somewhat realistic; and thinks the prices per kWh is too low.

Discussion of a microgrid. Initially the committee was looking at solar feasibility, not a microgrid. The thought was a microgrid would be a second phase or could be designed so that a microgrid could be added later without too many problems. If an expert on microgrids would like to do a site visit, is that premature since we are still wrestling with the idea of whether or not solar itself is feasible? L. Bean said John Carroll could answer those questions in terms of solar development

G. Carlson said he would prefer to become more knowledgeable about what is in the CVAE report. The committee needs to have a discussion about what is in the report before we bring in others whose opinions might be totally different than CVAE's opinion. That would be confusing.

B. Henry agrees. He said what he does not know what percentage of the cost projected by CVAE would have to be paid by the MI taxpayers. Right now we have to find grants and find out how much the Town would have to invest in the grant in order to satisfy grant requirements. That information is required before the committee can make a recommendation to the Town Board.

We need to define what an emergency is and what a microgrid could provide to mitigate that emergency. That needs to be done right away. A discussion about the definition of an emergency seems to play into a microgrid. The Town needs to open up, in a different group, this issue of emergency and the benefit of a microgrid for an emergency.

Agreement to wait until L. Bean is on the Island before scheduling a visit by John Carroll.

T. Banner said a microgrid might be more acceptable to grantors. L. Bean said this is true and that is why we need to send the Summary and Executive Summary to the State Energy Office as they would tell us exactly that.

L. Bean will email Waggie a cover letter and addresses to send the data from CVAE. L. Bean will also email John Carroll to let John know the committee would like to schedule a visit when L. Bean is on the Island.

G. Carlson leaves at 10:30am.

L. Bean will help Lisa Potswald, Planning and Zoning Administrator and Grant Writer find grants. There is a grant with Focus on Energy for limited funds with a deadline this month. He will talk a close look at the Focus grant and if the grant looks good, he will email Lisa.

To be noted is that the first thoughts of doing a microgrid with the solar installation came from Lauren Azar, former public utility commission chair and former policy advisor to the Secretary of Energy. She met with the committee and suggested we do the project as a demonstration. She is in Madison and has her own law firm. We might look for a grant to retain her on our behalf.

Need to have the Town define an emergency and prioritize the items from most important to least important in regards to Town operations. We had asked for that information 6-8 months ago.

6. Set next meeting and agenda.

No meeting scheduled at this time.

7. Adjourn.

Motion by B. Henry to adjourn, second, T. Banner. All in favor, all aye, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 10:45.

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

Minutes approved as presented May 15, 2015

