

Energy Committee Minutes
May 19, 2022

Meeting began at 4:36 PM via Zoom.

Present: Vance Bell, Dawn Bower, Bill Dunkel, Tom Johnson, Michael Simonds

Michael moved to adopt the minutes of our April 21 meeting; seconded by Dawn; unanimously adopted.

Bill confirmed that our Window Dressers community-build has been approved and scheduled for Nov. 10-17 at the Meeting House. Dawn will ask the Meeting House Committee if they think advertising the community-build at the Memorial Day weekend tag sale makes sense, and if they would support having Window Dresser materials on display. Michael offered to ask the pastor of the church in South Windham if he would be willing to mention the community-build to his congregation. Tom suggested that we check with the Wardsboro energy committee to find out how the student energy project went at the Wardsboro school. Bill will contact Ned O'Rourke about this. If the project seemed successful, we might suggest that Windham elementary school students try something similar. Our committee agreed that we should advertise the Window Dressers program and community-build at the WCO chicken barbeque on July 16.

Michael updated the committee on the postponement of the community solar installations on his land and in Wardsboro. Carter McCann told Michael and Bill that inflation and supply chain problems have driven up the price of solar panels and related equipment to the point that small-scale community solar projects are not profitable. Carter is hopeful that a year from now prices will have returned to a financially viable level and that the two projects will be able to be constructed. The committee was disappointed by this news and decided to suspend our evaluation of potential solar sites on the map we received from Ian Lund and the West River Valley 100% Renewables group. We will resume our analysis of potential sites when such projects seem to be economically feasible.

Bill updated the committee on a walkthrough of three community buildings he and Kord did recently with Meghan Chambers, of Efficiency VT. Meghan offered advice about weatherizing the Town Office, the Town Garage and the Meeting House, and provided information about Efficiency VT rebates. She especially emphasized the importance of better insulating the basement of the Town Office and finishing the installation of LED lights in the Town Garage and shed before the Efficiency VT rebate for LEDs is eliminated. Kord, Meghan and Bill also discussed several weatherization options for the Meeting House, depending upon how the town envisions the future use of the building.

Bill reported that he and Kord had talked informally about creating a broad-based committee to examine the future role of the Meeting House. The Energy Committee suggested that instead of creating a new committee the Meeting House Committee should perform this function. Tom and Dawn noted that prior to the pandemic the Meeting House Committee had discussed a number of creative ideas about how the Meeting House might be used. The MH Committee is in the process of resuming those discussions. Vance mentioned that Michael Pelton has been designated as the Select Board's liaison to the Meeting House Committee, but he has not attended their two most recent meetings. Bill will relay this information to Kord Scott. Vance also will check to see if the Meeting House is listed on the national registry of historic buildings because that might affect the kinds of renovations or improvements that may be done in order to retain that status.

Michael urged the Energy Committee to limit its role in relation to the Meeting House to gathering information about the scope and cost of possible weatherization improvements to the building. The committee agreed with this suggestion. Bill will contact VT Foam Insulation and ask them to do a cost estimate for various possible projects, such as insulating the foundation, weatherizing the first floor (including the space between the ceiling and the sanctuary floor) and/or insulating the attic. Tom mentioned that Farnum Insulators had provided a cost estimate to the Meeting House Committee within the past two years. He will send the estimate to Bill. The committee also discussed the possibility of constructing Window Dressers storm window inserts for the sanctuary during next November's community-build. Tom will send Bill the window measurements and Bill will try to get a cost estimate from Window Dressers for ten inserts. Once the Energy

Committee has assembled all pertinent information and cost estimates we will present it to the Select Board and other pertinent groups.

Vance moved to adjourn; Michael seconded. The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:42 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bill Dunkel