

**Brandon Energy Committee Meeting
April 1, 2019**

Committee Members Present: Michael Shank, Jack Schneider, Lowell Rasmussen, Edna Sutton

Others Present: Jeff Biasuzzi – Zoning Administrator

1. Call to order

Michael Shank, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:02PM.

2. Agenda Approval

A motion was made by Edna Sutton to approve the agenda. **The motion passed.**

3. Approval of Minutes

March 7, 2019 Meeting:

A motion was made by Edna Sutton to approve the minutes of the March 7, 2019 Energy Committee meeting. **The motion passed.**

4. Green Fair Planning Update

Michael Shank sent a letter to Ned Houston concerning the Waterbury Energy event and requested a list of vendors that Mr. Shank could reach out to see if they would be interested in doing an event in central or southern Vermont in the spring or summer. Jack Schneider noted he might attend this event. Mr. Shank advised that Colleen Wright has provided information on the Brandon Rec events that an energy event could potentially be included with. Mr. Shank will work with Ms. Wright to determine a date for the event once information is received from Mr. Houston. The Committee agreed.

5. Rebate Update

Mr. Shank reported he has posted some rebate information on the Brandon Front Porch Forum and will continue to post ongoing rebate information on FPF when he receives it.

6. EV Grant Cycle Update

Michael Shank reported there was discussion about the EV grant at the Brandon Chamber of Commerce meeting. Bernie Carr has had a discussion with Dave Atherton concerning where the Town stands on the permitting process and was advised that the Town will be moving forward with the EV grant application. The Town will take the lead in applying for the grant for EV stations in the municipal parking lot behind the Mobil station, as there is currently not an interest in placing a charger on Main Street. Mr. Carr's recommendation is to assure that there is proper signage noting where the EV stations are located. Mr. Shank would like to have something in the downtown district. Edna Sutton suggested perhaps other locations, like the new flower shop, or other locations along Route 7 could be places to install stations. Lowell Rasmussen expressed concern with abuse of parking in a spot for a lengthy time in adding stations on Main Street. Mr. Shank stated as long as there is good signage, the municipal parking lot should be acceptable. Mr. Rasmussen stated more charging stations could be added in the future when the need increases. Mr. Shank will contact the Town of Middlebury to determine how the process is handled for their stations. Ms. Sutton suggested asking other businesses along Route 7 to see if there would be interest in placing more charging stations along this route. Mr. Shank noted the cost of a fast charging station is about \$10,000.00 and is assumed that the local entity is responsible for the maintenance. Mr. Shank will

follow-up with Walgreens and Hannafords to determine if there is any interest. Mr. Rasmussen requested clarification from the grant of who is responsible for the maintenance of the equipment once installed.

7. Update on Community-Wide Survey Plan (View shed Ranking, Energy Audit)

Michael Shank suggested the Energy Committee develop the two surveys and submit to the Town Manager for approval. The view shed survey would be a basic google doc that would include contact information for accountability. Mr. Shank stated the energy audit survey would be more involved. This survey would help the Energy Committee orient activities such as weatherization workshops or solar opportunities to meet the needs of the Town. Mr. Shank will ask Barbara Noyes-Pulling of the RRPC whether there is a template for this type of survey. The purpose of the audit would be to drive the agenda for the Energy Committee and get a sense of where the primary carbon footprints are. Lowell Rasmussen suggested determining the age of current energy infrastructures could be interesting information to know where people are in their energy use and to provide options for replacement. Mr. Rasmussen noted the state of the art vendors would be interested in knowing if there is a demand. Mr. Shank will contact the RRPC and Efficiency Vermont to determine if they have a formed questionnaire.

8. Update on Energy Plan

Mr. Shank advised the Energy Committee is waiting for the maps to be finalized by the GIS person at the RRPC for the Energy Plan. Mr. Shank, Barbara Noyes-Pulling and Dave Atherton have been discussing the preferred solar sites. Mr. Shank suggested that only sites that have been visited will be used at this point. Once this information is complete, the Energy Plan will be forwarded to the Select Board for their review.

9. Old/New Business

Michael Shank reported Phoebe from the Brandon Library has provided updates to the Energy Committee on the library upgrades. Jack Schneider reported they are working with Naylor/Breen who are hopefully considering energy improvements. Phoebe advised that Efficiency Vermont will be contacting VIA and Naylor/Breen. Mr. Schneider advised that Rick Shappy has done a number of energy audits for other libraries and Mr. Schneider will connect Mr. Shappy with the Brandon Library.

Mr. Shank advised that Grass Roots Solar has developed a workshop geared towards working Vermonters. Mr. Shank suggested he could contact the company to schedule a workshop at the Brandon Library and the Committee members agreed. Lowell Rasmussen stated some people have a hard time financing a solar installation and asked if there is a possibility of a solar permit process to allow people to add 2 panels per year as a way to incrementally fund a project. Mr. Shank advised that Green Energy has a program whereby they get a permit cleared and add panels based on the consumer's ability to pay, but this would require the contractor to be okay with that. Mr. Shank stated if this is related to the PUC process, he suggested Stephanie Jerome could potentially assist. Mr. Shank will speak with Ms. Jerome and Green Earth Energy on the possibility of this type of program. Mr. Rasmussen stated it is now the assumption that solar projects are all or nothing. Jack Schneider advised that he has been researching the possibility of an energy-related reverse mortgage to fund energy projects that would be an incentive for senior citizens to fund energy upgrades.

Mr. Shank has been speaking with Molly Kennedy at the Brandon Library concerning an environmental film series. Ms. Kennedy would like to collaborate with the Energy Committee. Mr. Shank provided information on some films and will work with Ms. Kennedy to determine an appropriate schedule for this series.

Jack Schneider asked if the Town had provided the information on what it is doing for energy efficiencies. Mr. Shank has not received information to date and encouraged other members to inquire

where the municipality stands on energy improvements. Mr. Shank would be glad to do a press release on this type of information.

8. Next Meeting

Monday, May 6, 2019 @ 5:00PM in the Brandon Town Office

9. Adjournment

The Committee Chair adjourned the meeting at 5:49PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bryant
Recording Secretary