

**Brandon Energy Committee Meeting**  
**July 15, 2019**

**Committee Members Present:** Michael Shank, Lowell Rasmussen, Edna Sutton. Stephanie Jerome, Jack Schneider

**Others Present:** Brent Buehler, Jeff Biasuzzi, Barbara Noyes-Pulling

**1. Call to order**

Michael Shank, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:00PM.

**2. Agenda Approval**

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

**3. Approval of Minutes**

***June 3, 2019 Meeting:***

A motion was made by Lowell Rasmussen to approve the minutes of the June 3, 2019 Energy Committee meeting. **The motion passed.**

**4. Review of June Workshop by Grassroots Solar**

Michael Shank noted the Grassroots Solar workshop scheduled for June had been cancelled and Grassroots has suggested August 10<sup>th</sup> as a date for a workshop. Barbara Noyes-Pulling of the RRPC had suggested hosting this workshop that is designed to orient Vermonters to the details regarding assistance for those who want to pursue solar. It was determined that August 24<sup>th</sup> would be a better date and Mr. Shank will contact Grassroots Solar to confirm the date.

**5. Review Questionnaire for Community-wide Survey**

Michael Shank provided a draft of the questionnaire that was discussed at the last meeting. Edna Sutton suggested assigning headings and grouping the questions. Ms. Sutton also provided suggested wording that would be encouraging to businesses. Mr. Shank will integrate Ms. Sutton's recommendations and distribute to the Energy Committee members for final approval. Once approved, Mr. Shank will place the survey on Front Porch Forum and request Bill Moore and Dave Atherton post a link on the Town's Facebook to broaden the audience. Ms. Sutton suggested also obtaining face-to-face responses from people.

**6. Discussion of Wastewater and Recycling Opportunities**

Mr. Shank reported there has been prior discussion on this topic and suggested a workshop could potentially be hosted by the Energy Committee and the Brandon Chamber in either September or October. Mr. Shank noted Carl Diethelm of the Rutland County Solid Waste District and Ali Brieyer of the State of Vermont could be invited to provide a presentation. Brent Buehler suggested the Energy Committee also work with Tim Guiles of the Select Board.

**7. Old/New Business**

Lowell Rasmussen reported that at a recent Regional Planning Commission meeting he attended, the Town of Charlotte had provided a presentation and noted that their Energy Committee also included a high school student representative. Michael Shank advised he has been talking with teachers and students

at OV about an Environmental class. Mr. Shank has also sent a proposal to the RNESU Superintendent concerning an Environmental Film competition where students create a 2 to 4-minute video about an environmental-related subject in Brandon. The competition would be K through 12<sup>th</sup> grade and there would be 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place prizes to the winners. Stephanie Jerome recommended Mr. Shank also have discussions with the Art teachers, Joshua Harte who runs the Moosalamoo program and Kris Roberts that teachers a Film class at OVUHS. Mr. Shank will contact the Select Board to determine if a student representative can be appointed to the Energy Committee.

Mr. Shank advised there is a vacancy on the Energy Committee and will contact the Select Board regarding the vacant seat and determine the possibility of a student representative to the Committee. Mr. Shank noted once the Energy Plan is approved, the Committee's charge would likely be workshops and providing the public information going forward.

Jack Schneider advised that Brad Long of Efficiency Vermont has volunteered to talk with Dave Atherton about the Town's energy inventory. It was the consensus of the Committee to put Mr. Long in touch with the Town Manager. Stephanie Jerome suggested Mr. Long could also meet with the Rutland County legislators during one of their caucus meetings next year. It was noted that Efficiency Vermont is currently offering energy audits to households in Rutland County. Mr. Shank will talk with Dave Atherton about meeting with Brad Long concerning the town's inventory.

Michael Shank provided the Committee a preview of the Energy Plan PowerPoint for the upcoming Energy Plan hearing. Mr. Shank stated the two primary potential energy sources would be solar and some small-scale wind. The Plan shows potential for wind, but not for hydro.

Jeff Biasuzzi provided information on the Mohan pit solar project near Town Farm Road that proposes a 250-kilowatt project. Mr. Biasuzzi advised the hearings will be coming up.

Brent Buehler questioned the disposal process of the solar projects. Mr. Shank stated much of the material will be repurposed, as well as shipments out of country.

Barbara Noyes-Pulling stated Efficiency Vermont is working to give the regional planning commissions the resources to provide assistance to local energy committees.

Stephanie Jerome advised there was a grant released today regarding school safety grants that could be used for sidewalks. Ms. Jerome will provide the Energy Committee additional information on this subject.

Jack Schneider noted the Energy Committee has encouraged the Brandon Library to use the most energy efficient options that they can afford for their construction project and advised they have been very welcoming of the support and have a construction engineer that is energy conscious.

Mr. Shank summarized the actions discussed noting he would contact Grassroots Solar to propose August 24<sup>th</sup> for a workshop, revise and send the community survey to the Committee adding an EV question, organize a Waste workshop, contact the Select Board regarding the potential for a student representative to the Energy Committee, follow-up with Stephanie Jerome concerning the Environmental Film competition and connect Dave Atherton with Brad Long about the Town's environmental items.

Mr. Shank noted there have been two Efficiency Vermont workshops and suggested doing a workshop with Mr. Long around an October timeframe. Mr. Schneider suggested discussing the possibility of an energy workshop with Green Mountain Power. Ms. Jerome suggested another car manufacturer might be interested in doing an EV workshop and noted there is a \$2,500.00 legislative incentive for purchasing EVs. Ms. Jerome advised that Solarfest will be held in Manchester and suggested the Energy Committee could potentially obtain more information at this event.

## **9. Next Meeting**

Tuesday, September 3, 2019 @ 5:00PM at the Brandon Town Office

## **12. Adjournment**

The Committee adjourned by consensus at 5:57PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bryant  
Recording Secretary