

**Brandon Energy Committee Meeting  
February 3, 2020**

**Committee Members Present:** Michael Shank, Jack Schneider, Matt Orchard, Edna Sutton

**Members Absent:** Lowell Rasmussen

**1. Call to order**

Michael Shank, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:05PM.

**2. Agenda Approval**

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

**3. Approval of Minutes**

*January 6, 2020 Meeting:*

A motion was made by Matthew Orchard to approve the minutes of the January 6, 2020 Energy Committee meeting. **The motion passed.**

**4. EV Festival Planning**

Michael Shank, Jack Schneider and Matt Orchard met with Emily Eckert regarding the EV Festival scheduled for July. Ms. Eckert is an employee of GMP and previously worked for Tesla. Ms. Eckert has been directing the efforts of the EV Festival. Bill Moore has been assisting with the efforts and has been the liaison with the high school. Edna Sutton volunteered to assist with any tasks that needed to be done. Mr. Shank stated it was not known how many volunteers will be needed. Mr. Shank suggested it would be good to get the artist community involved in the event. Ms. Sutton also suggested involving students from the art side. Mr. Shank advised there will be activities, such as a bouncy castle and water slide, at the event for children. It was noted the Basin Blue Grass Festival is the same weekend. Ms. Sutton suggested contacting the organizer of that event to potentially coordinate some activities between the two events with possibly having blue grass performances on site and having an EV at the Blue Grass Festival. Mr. Shank reported Caleb will be taking photos at the event. Ms. Sutton suggested a joint effort between the EV Festival and the Blue Grass Festival could potentially be developed for the Addison Independent. Mr. Shank reported Bill Moore and Kevin Thornton did a PEG-TV segment on the EV Festival.

**8. Old/New Business**

Michael Shank has talked with the McKernon Group and Tim Fisher regarding heat pump workshops. McKernon Group can provide an on-site workshop and Mr. Fisher will be considering this type of event in the future. Mr. Shank will work with both parties to arrange the on-site workshops to provide local awareness for this type of energy option. Matt Orchard advised that Mr. Fisher has offered their space to the Energy Committee for other types of workshops. It was suggested to have one air conditioning and one heat-oriented workshop, however, Mr. Shank noted one of the benefits of the heat pump is that it offers both.

Matt Orchard advised that he has had a discussion with Tim Guiles concerning the subject of an Emergency Declaration. Ms. Sutton noted it is important to bring awareness to the public concerning the environmental changes. It was noted the Energy Committee has seen strong community support with the attendance at the Committee's various workshops. The commitment at the State level has heightened and it is important to be proactive and show leadership in this area. With regard to conversations about a possible Town declaration about climate emergency, it was suggested the document that has been drafted could be sent as a letter to the editor to be inserted in the local newspapers. Mr. Orchard advised that the process of bringing a declaration

to the Select Board would require a petition of the voters to be included as an Article on voting day, however the deadline has passed for this year.

Michael Shank reported he has received a very good submission from the students at the Stafford Technical Center for the Energy Video Competition. He has been advised that he will also be receiving several videos from Neshobe School. Mr. Shank has had a discussion with Dennis Marden concerning the viewing of some of the videos during the Segment 6 Celebration. Mr. Shank is working on an award for the winner of the event, in addition to the cash prize that will be awarded.

Edna Sutton reported an architect has checked the Compass roof and has advised that it would be possible to place a commercial solar project on the roof. Ms. Sutton was advised the cost of a commercial project would be \$279,000. Mr. Shank will contact the owner of the Walgreens building to determine their interest as a commercial solar project site.

Michael Shank reported the Free Appliance Program through Efficiency Vermont ended in 2019. There are still many rebates available for energy improvements through them.

Matt Orchard has discussed the possibility of a composting workshop with Rutland County Waste. It was suggested the workshop would work well at a private home to enable the participants to see how the compost is going to be used. It was noted that the Park would be the other alternative. It was suggested Lynn Desmarais could be asked if she would be interested in hosting a workshop. Michael Shank noted when talking about food waste, it is important to connect the dots between food waste and energy, as this is an inexpensive way to conserve energy.

Jack Schneider reported the Brandon Chamber has scheduled a meeting to discuss the details of the upcoming Segment 6 Celebration. They would like details on what the various groups will be doing. Mr. Schneider asked if Rutland County Waste or Efficiency Vermont will be planning anything for the event. He advised the Energy Committee can get a space in the parking area near the new charging stations. Matt Orchard noted he has offered a space to the composting people during the event and they were interested in participating. Mr. Schneider reported most of the activities will be held on the 30<sup>th</sup>. Michael Shank will email Efficiency Vermont and GMP to see if they would provide a sampling of what can be done to green people's homes to save energy with potentially providing some samplings of items. Edna Sutton suggested developing a tri-fold handout providing information on what Brandon has achieved as far as energy efficiency and what the Energy Committee is planning to do regarding energy efforts. It was suggested that an Energy Committee button could be created for one of the handouts.

Jack Schneider asked if there are any other updates regarding community solar. Michael Shank advised that Sun Commons has reviewed the Compass Point roof. Mr. Shank will ask Wade Davis to draft a letter for The Report regarding community solar. Mr. Schneider noted the Fire District spends \$40,000 per year for electricity and Bernie Carr suggested it would be good to find space for solar for the Fire District to reduce their energy costs. Mr. Shank will discuss this concept with the Fire District.

## **9. Next Meeting**

Next meeting – March 16, 2020 at 5:00PM at the Town Office.

## **12. Adjournment**

A motion was made by Edna Sutton to adjourn the meeting at 5:56PM. **The motion passed.**

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bryant  
Recording Secretary

Brandon Energy Committee  
February 3, 2020