

Brandon Energy Committee Meeting
May 4, 2020

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

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

February 3, 2020 Meeting:

A motion was made by Jack Schneider to approve the minutes of the February 3, 2020 Energy Committee meeting. **The motion passed.**

4. EV Festival Update

Michael Shank reported Emily Eckert had checked with Bill Moore concerning the EV Festival that is scheduled for July. Mr. Moore has indicated that decisions will be made in May. Mr. Shank does not see big groups gathering soon. The Committee will likely need to reschedule but Mr. Shank is not up to making the decision yet and will check with Mr. Moore on what the Town would like to do this summer.

Edna Sutton stated since it is scheduled to be at the high school, there could be some controls put in place to manage movement, such as one-way movement similar to what is being done in stores. Ms. Sutton stated we have to start thinking differently and determine how to get back to doing things sensibly. Jack Schneider was concerned about doing an event and felt it would be difficult to hold an event scheduled for July 11th. Mr. Shank suggested maybe a Fall Festival could be held if the sponsors are available. Ms. Sutton thought there needs to be an accountable way to do things in a way to help people back to doing things. Matt Orchard agreed with Ms. Sutton's thought due the Event being outdoors, but if the Town is cautious about events, the Committee needs to take that in mind. He does not think it would be a huge thing to change it to a fall event. Mr. Shank stated since this would be a Town-sponsored event, the Committee needs to take the cue from the Town. Mr. Shank will check with Bill Moore to determine if the Town has decided and will advise the Committee.

5. Heat Pump Workshop Review and Next Steps on Virtual Workshops

Michael Shank reported the Heat Pump workshop was very well attended and suggested later this year another workshop will be done with Tim Fisher on their heat pumps.

Michael Shank requested suggestions for virtual workshops moving forward. Mr. Shank will check with Fisher Electric to determine if he would be agreeable to hosting a virtual workshop. Lowell Rasmussen stated in doing things for the near-term, they will have to be held on that type of platform. Matthew Orchard suggested the workshop could be recorded that would allow people to go to a link and watch it. Edna Sutton suggested doing something on managing how to keep cool with the upcoming warmer weather. Michael Shank was aware of a "Shift Campaign" that another town did to encourage use of alternatives like fans rather than AC. Mr. Shank suggested there could be something given as an incentive for people to engage with the Energy Committee. It could possibly be a website or media site for people to show how they are staying cool. Jack Schneider agreed this is a good opportunity for people to move to push mowers, fans, etc. Mr. Schneider also noted there is a lot of transportation happening due to deliveries for people buying more on Amazon. Matthew Orchard suggested an

incentive to promote people buying more local to save in this area. Mr. Shank suggested a program could be developed to help people shop for products that could also be found locally rather than purchasing on-line with possibly offering free delivery of the products. Lowell Rasmussen suggested a program could also be developed for people to share over abundance of vegetables from their gardens.

Lowell Rasmussen noted it would be well to look at what next fall is going to look like, with the economy struggling and fuel prices low, it will deter people from making renewable energy changes. Ms. Sutton suggested messaging about the difference that has been made to the climate during this crisis. Mr. Shank stated there are communities where natural viewscapes have opened up but there is not a lot of new nature in Vermont that was covered by pollution level. There are behaviors that have changed that are valuable to the community and to the environment that could be affirmed. Mr. Shank suggested the Energy Committee could be the storytellers of the new activities and behaviors that he hopes the community members will continue to do to maintain the things that are good for health and the environment. Mr. Rasmussen suggested putting a guide out about the local walking trails. Mr. Shank noted the Greenways Project would have that type of information. Mr. Rasmussen stated from the local business aspect, it needs to be stressed that the businesses that were here for us during the crisis and people will need to be there for them. Mr. Shank suggested helping businesses get product to people with offering to assist in providing a delivery service that would also save on transportation miles of ordering items on-line. Jack Schneider stated the Brandon Chamber puts out a letter every Thursday that provides information on what local businesses are open and how they are working. Mr. Shank suggested doing a public announcement of some of the top trending items being purchased on Amazon that are also offered by local businesses with the offer to assist with home delivery. Mr. Rasmussen stated with Amazon delivery dates becoming very long, if there are local businesses that have the same products, people may be more willing to purchase from local businesses.

Michael Shank summarized that he will check with Efficiency Vermont to determine if they have any donatable items for an incentive program. He will be in contact with Fisher Electric regarding a virtual workshop. Mr. Shank also suggested the Energy Committee could provide information on how we are being better with energy at home during this time.

6. Old/New Business

Michael Shank reported there was a lot of interest in the Environmental Film Competition from the elementary students and students at Stafford. Mr. Shank is glad to see there is a lot of conversations happening in schools about the environment. He noted some of the elementary schools' films were around plastics. Mr. Shank encouraged Committee members check out the films and requested members forward him suggestions they have for next year's competition. Lowell Rasmussen thanked Mr. Shank for being creative in developing this event.

Jack Schneider questioned the status of the July 1st Composting law and noted it would be a good opportunity for a virtual workshop. Michael Shank will reach out to Carl to see if he is agreeable to doing a virtual compost workshop.

7. Next Meeting

Next meeting – June 1, 2020 via Zoom meeting.

12. Adjournment

A motion was made by Lowell Rasmussen to adjourn the meeting at 5:46PM. **The motion passed.**

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bryant
Recording Secretary