

**Brandon Energy Committee (BEC) Meeting - Draft
September 6, 2022**

Committee Members Present: Jim Emerson, Jack Schneider, Robert Black, Lollie Hoxie

Committee Members via Zoom: Jeff Haylon

Others Present: Tim Guiles, Nate Doty, Claire Shick, Mike Shick, Eve Baglarian, Bill Moore, Dave Atherton

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 4:33PM by Jim Emerson – Chair.

2. Education Working Group Presentation

Darrell Greene of BROCC was not able to attend the meeting as scheduled.

3. Inspirational Thoughts

Inspiration Moment – What can we commit to doing in our personal lives to further our ‘walking the talk’ as energy committee proponents?

Lollie Hoxie reported she is researching an electric snow blower. Eve Baglarian just purchased an electric lawn mower and suggested it would be nice to have shared information on these types of equipment. Robert Black had started a program in another town called “Mow with Less” that had shared equipment and suggested it would be good to start a formal program in Brandon. Jack Schneider suggested talking with Crosby’s about a program and Solarfest also has indicated they want to do a lending program. Jim Emerson suggested this would be a good topic for the Conservation Group to take up. Jack Schneider has been speaking to a solar DIY person. Jeff Haylon has been considering changes to his E-bike to be able to use into the fall.

4. Agenda Adoption

A motion was made by Lollie Hoxie and seconded by Jack Schneider to approve the agenda as amended. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Move BROCC discussion following approval of minutes.

5. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Jack Schneider and seconded by Lollie Hoxie to approve the minutes of the August 1, 2022, BEC meeting. **The motion passed unanimously.**

6. BROCC Discussion

Jim Emerson reported BROCC has a program to assist people with energy saving items based on income status. Mr. Emerson requested a volunteer to study what BROCC is about and provide the BEC a presentation at a subsequent meeting. Jack Schneider stated BROCC may attend Solarfest, but they will not be doing a workshop. Mr. Emerson will reach out to Darrell Greene to request information for Solarfest. Heat Squad will be present at the October BEC meeting and Efficiency Vermont will be attending the BEC meeting in November. The State provides funds to Efficiency Vermont who in turn provides funding to BROCC and Neighborworks of Western Vermont. One of Neighborworks divisions is the Heat Squad. Mr. Emerson reported there is a Tier 3 program that was implemented to encourage businesses to use more efficient forms of power. Mr. Emerson stated there are some very innovative programs available to assist people and businesses in this area. Eve Baglarian suggested creating a flow chart of the various programs and volunteers could be assigned to research the details of the programs. Mr. Emerson advised

Barbara Noyes-Pulling of the RRPC had volunteered to develop this listing but it will not be available until sometime in the fall. Ms. Baglarian suggested scheduling a working meeting to define the flow chart. Mr. Emerson stated the BEC should have a point of contact for each of the programs that include BROCC, Heat Squad, Efficiency Vermont, GMP's Tier 3 Law and the Federal Tax Law. Robert Black volunteered to do a listing of the groups. Jeff Haylon is working on the IRA and volunteered to do research and bring information to the Committee. Eve Baglarian volunteered to research Efficiency Vermont and Lollie Hoxie volunteered to do BROCC. Jim Emerson will research the Tier 3 Law and Mr. Black will research the Heat Squad. Mr. Emerson will forward the information that he has available to Ms. Baglarian regarding Efficiency Vermont.

7. Working Group Reports

Conservation Group - Jim Emerson (Jeff Cohen, Lollie Hoxie, Joanne Coons, Wyatt, Mike Shick):

. Button Up Program

Efficiency Vermont has a "Button-Up" program and the BEC is looking to be trained on various button up options like the installation of door sweeps and caulking. The BEC would then plan an event to train people on these types of energy saving processes. There will be promotion through FPF and The Reporter and it will be a free event. The BEC will work in concert with Solarfest as they have grants to fund this type of program and have a supplier who works with non-profits for supplies for this program. Jack Schneider advised Efficiency Vermont provided light bulbs last year. Jim Emerson reported Efficiency Vermont offers a kit that includes light bulbs, an aerator and a showerhead that is free to any GMP customer. Mr. Emerson will provide a link for requesting these items and suggested the supplies could be pooled from the BEC members for use at the events. Details will be worked out on this program. Window Dressers is another program that takes a year to get the program going. There will be additional discussion on this program at a subsequent meeting.

A motion was made by Lollie Hoxie and seconded by Jack Schneider to authorize the Conservation Working Group to work with Solarfest to create a "Button Up" program in Brandon. **The motion passed unanimously.**

. HarvestFest Preparations

Jack Schneider advised there is a goal of having these programs represented at HarvestFest on October 2nd at Estabrook Park, with information on Efficiency Vermont's Button Up program available.

Generation Group - Erin (Tim Guiles, Wade Davis, Nate Doty, Robert Black, Jeff Cohen, Claire Shick)

Robert Black reported Nate Doty, Claire Shick, Tim Guiles, Wade Davis, and he discussed the goals for the Generation Group. There are a number of examples of grass root efforts that are tied to the grid. It was discussed to work with the Town and Fire District for building integrated solar. There are maps that have markers where installations exist and the Generation Group will create a map that indicates all solar. It was suggested to contact solar installers to get a list of their installations. There was a discussion of educational information that could be placed on the website and a suggestion to document the process and create movie clips to display what Brandon is doing. Other public items like a solar fountain could be done to demonstrate micro-hydro as the Generation group is also talking about researching hydro. The next meeting is scheduled for September 28th. There will be an action item for this sub-committee in determining how the tax rebate law could affect how they move forward. Jeff Haylon will be researching the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

Transportation Group - Jeff Haylon (Jack Schneider, Wade Davis, Eve Baglarian):

The first meeting was held a few weeks ago with Jeff Haylon, Jack Schneider, and Wade Davis in attendance to discuss some initial ideas on short term and long-term goals. A regular meeting time is scheduled for the group. There was a discussion about over-arching goals. Electric vehicles are being encouraged as a stop gap with the intent to expand mass transit and public transit. It was suggested to obtain a couple of E-bikes to be housed at the Brandon Library and Molly Kennedy has volunteered to administer the program. This program could possibly have grant

opportunities. A Ride-Share program was also discussed. At a recent Select Board meeting, there was a discussion of researching a whistle stop for Amtrak and Mr. Haylon volunteered the BEC's assistance in this effort. There was also discussion of getting the Town to an electric fleet for vehicles. The Rec Department is in need of a new vehicle and Mr. Haylon is researching a 15-passenger van. There is a Lightening ZEV3 that would have a wheelchair lift and would cost around \$180,000. A standard gas-powered 15-passenger van would be in excess of \$100,000. Mr. Haylon stated Bill Moore is fully on board with this effort and Mr. Haylon will be meeting with the sales rep for this vehicle. The benefit of the van is that by getting a town shuttle, it could assist with a Ride-Share program. There was also discussion of encouraging the Town's Green Fleet policy. The Town has this policy but there is not this type of policy for the Fire Department or the Rescue Squad. There was also a discussion of a Revolving Fund for small capital improvements.

Education Group - All BEC members (Nate Doty):

. Canvas/Survey Subgroup

Jim Emerson reported Jeff Cohen, Jeff Haylon and Tim Guiles are working on canvassing for the survey. Jeff Haylon hopes to have more details on this subject and do practice runs in the next month with a full launch in the spring. It is the intent to do this survey concurrently with the business survey.

. Web and Electronic BEC Presence

Erin Ballantine was working with Bill Moore on the BEC's web presence on the Town's website. Bill Moore has provided a username and log-in that now enables Ms. Ballantine to do updates. This item will be deferred to the next meeting when Ms. Ballantine is present. Nate Doty reported there was a discussion about adding links for the programs available.

. Future EWG Trainings – Efficiency VT, Heat Squad, IRA Energy Incentives

October – Heat Squad presentation

November – Eve Baglarian's presentation on Efficiency Vermont

December – Jeff Haylon's presentation on Inflation Reduction Act

Dave Atherton would like to be a little more informed on items as he wants to make sure the Town has funding. There is a Local Options Tax fund that is more for capital projects and the more he knows about items, the sooner he can start conversations with the Select Board. Jeff Haylon advised that he has not received a formal quote from the company regarding the van and he will link Mr. Atherton in on this item. Mr. Atherton advised the Town usually has to get three competitive quotes for larger purchases. Mr. Haylon noted he can also research a hybrid and gas efficient model. Mr. Atherton advised that Stephanie Jerome and he have had conversations about a whistle stop in Brandon. He also has spoken to someone connected with Amtrak and was advised that they want to get their train into Burlington earlier and the whistle stops are all about time schedules.

7. Grant Ideas of Catalyst Innovation Fund

Mr. Emerson reported this grant is for innovative projects that will be used as examples for other communities and groups to take up. The application has to be filed by September 18th and Solarfest suggested having the Conservation Group work on it. This is a grant for \$20,000 and it could be helpful for promoting what the BEC is trying to accomplish. There is also a grant program that supports any efforts of this nature and Mr. Emerson was not sure of the timing for this submission, but Solarfest is doing the application at this point. Jim Emerson and Lollie Hoxie will assist with this effort.

8. Other business

Solarfest is scheduled for Saturday from Noon until 10PM. Volunteers can sign up to assist with the event. The Energy Committee, Town Staff and Select Board are invited to attend this program at no charge. The event will include many

activities, vendors, and workshops. The BEC will have a tent and will have information on programs available through Heat Squad, Efficiency Vermont, BROOC and will have a sign up for the weatherization effort. Robert Black suggested using the signs that had been used in the July 4th parade and have a clip board for people to sign up to be volunteers to the BEC. Eve Baglarian volunteered her E-bike for display. Jack Schneider will provide a tent, table and chairs and volunteers will be needed to staff the tent.

Dave Atherton reported the Town is researching a quote for heat pumps for the Town Hall and the Police Department. The Town receives 15% of the total output from its solar array and just received a true-up check for \$9,000. Mr. Emerson stated for community solar, there are some State regulations that are not as advantageous. Tim Guiles, Jack Schneider, and Jim Emerson had previously researched a possible community solar. Solarfest had wanted to do a community solar but their land is primarily wetlands and a possible program could be a couple of years away.

9. Review of Committee Members Agreements for Follow-up Actions

Eve Baglarian – Research Efficiency Vermont

Hollie Loxie – Research BROOC

Jeff Haylon– Research Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and research of a mini-van for the Town Rec Department

Jim Emerson – Research Tier 3 Law

Robert Black - Research Heat Squad

Jim Emerson – Send Eve Baglarian contact information for Efficiency Vermont

Conservation Group – Consider “Mow with Less” program for Brandon

Solarfest Prep – Jack Schneider to provide table, tent, and banners, Lollie Hoxie and Jim Emerson to staff the tent and sell T-shirts

October 3, 2022 @ 4:30PM at the Brandon Town Hall

13. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned by consensus at 5:50PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bryant
Recording Secretary