

Energy Committee Meeting  
Tuesday, February 28, 2023  
Conference room or online @ 4:30 pm

Present: Yvette Meunier, Victor Langelo, Nancy Chandler, and John Berry, Nick Whatley, Jared Wildwhistle

Staff: Julie Erdman

Absent:

Invitation for public comment - none

Approval of [12-22-22](#) meeting minutes. Minutes were reviewed. Nancy made a motion to approve and Victor seconded. All in Favor.

Old Business

1. Tax Rebates for Energy Upgrade Webinar

We will be hosting the IRA webinar on Wednesday, March 22 at 6pm via zoom. Jared is hosting, and John is running tech. Jared has done a great job getting the Efficiency Maine speaker lined up and drafting the blurb. Nat Policy program manager at Efficiency Maine will speak for one hour, with 30 minutes for questions. There was a poster that went out and it is up on the Topsham Solar Advocates FB page, Yvette shared with the library, and it is up on the town's website and FB page. Jared also got the info out for inclusion in the March Cryer. The speaker is Nat Haslett, the Regulatory and Legislative Affairs Manager at Efficiency Maine. Please note that the Zoom link is not a registration link so you'll have to create your own calendar reminder to join. Shared on Facebook Topsham solar advocates and Town of Topsham page.

Nancy will share out poster with the Midcoast Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, People Plus and other organizations.

2. Community Resilience Partnership Community Action Grant (CAG) Spring 2023

a. EV Charging update

Community Action Grant - Yvette has started a draft grant application to cover remaining balance of the EV charger at the library. The 2-plug level 2 charger's current proposal from EVConnect is \$20,709.30 which was approved for a \$14,000 through at Efficiency Maine, and an additional \$4,000 from The Nature Conservancy. The remainder of \$2,709.30 will be requested in the next Climate Action Grant and we will need to add an additional dollar amount for painting the parking spot and setting up a sign indicating this is an EV parking spot. The library may have other sources as well.

Time frame is tight, but hopefully EM will make approval decisions faster than last time.

#### b. eLawn mower update

Several models of Mean Green mower, heavy duty, industrial quality, with 7 hours of mowing battery power at Chad Little in Brunswick. 52 inch Mower costs about \$30,000. Nick would go with right staff person who mows in Parks and Recreation or Public Works. Yvette has reached out to Cumberland to see if we can look at their prior grant application for their electric lawnmower. Nick is working on getting information on lawnmowers and find out a recommendation from Cumberland, which got an electric mower.. Jared suggests talking with another town which has bought an electric mower first. Yvette has suggested to the town that we invite the Parks and/or Public Works Dept. to review our grant application and present findings on the model we are considering. Julie will talk with Dennis Cox from Public Works to get his input.

We will need some help writing letters of support that come from organizations like their departments, the library, the selectboard, for this equipment.

c. Yvette would like to have dialogs with the Public Works and Parks departments during finance planning for capital investments. The Police Department is still looking for hybrid electric cruisers.

#### 3. Possible Intern (new item)

Yvette is continuing the conversation with the town about hiring an intern to assist with data gathering and drafting of our Climate Action Plan renewal. If this moves forward I would expect us to assist with a work plan and job description potentially. Interns are available through ReMaine and area colleges for a variable period of time. Hired consultants to screen candidates who are looking to work in this industry, focused on BIPOC community, for Feb thru June. Bowdoin fellows didn't choose Topsham for a summer internship. Develop scope of work with town managers. Intern collected data for Energy Audit and ran it though. Original Climate Action Plan took 6 months or longer to get it going. Brook Winters had worked with Bath and helped intern access the information. Seminar class at Bowdoin worked on data, fit their curriculum. Lots of leg work to get numbers from CMP, oil dealers volume delivered, survey of home heating sources. Putting together what we do next would included finding from EM the anticipated rate of change to Heat pumps.

#### New Business

##### 1. Energy Committee Opening

This opening has been listed on the website. I have asked Derek to share it in the town manager report at the next SelectBoard meeting. I have also reached out to the three residents that have expressed interest in the past. One of which no longer has capacity but please share out this EC opening with your networks.