

Topsham Energy Committee Meeting Notes

Date: November 24, 2020

Time: 4:30 PM

Location: Via Zoom

Committee Members in Attendance: N. Whatley, Y. Meunier, A. Elliot, V. Langelo, N. Chandler, J. Berry, J. Curtis

Staff: A. Deci, R. Melanson

Action: The Committee nominated and unanimously approved N. Whatley to preside as Committee Chair

Action: The Committee nominated and unanimously approved Y. Meunier to act as Vice-Chair

Action: The Committee accepted and unanimously approved a nomination for J. Curtis to serve as Recording Secretary

Transparency and public participation were discussed. It was noted that meetings are accessible to the public, and recorded.

The Committee discussed proposed priorities to incorporate into the mission and focus areas. The group agreed that transportation is the greatest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, and that it would be beneficial to guide the Town so that it can align with regional and state efforts, and be well-positioned to take advantage of funding mechanisms that may accompany the follow-up to the report from the Maine Climate Council.

The Mission and focus areas were edited slightly, and the Committee unanimously agreed to the following, **[Follow Up Item]**: to be posted on the public-facing Topsham Energy Committee web-page at <https://www.topshammaine.com/energy> :

Mission: The Topsham Energy Committee researches and informs the Topsham Select Board on matters relating to energy efficiency and other sustainability matters. Under their direction, this work includes:

1. Research and recommend strategies, policies, and projects to the Select Board that will achieve energy conservation and thus reduce Topsham's energy costs and greenhouse gas emissions.
2. Offer public information, education, and outreach on energy conservation and renewable energy.
3. Evaluate and employ energy conservation practices with our residents, schools, and business community to align with the goals and strategies of the Maine Climate Council.

Focus areas:

1. Promote renewable energy use and installation;
2. Sustainable design and construction;

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3. Weatherization;
4. Car chargers;
5. Beneficial electrification;
6. Transportation;
7. Regional collaboration and partnerships;
8. Green business development;
9. Carbon sequestration in forest and farms;
10. Climate adaptation; and
11. Others as identified by the Select Board.

The group discussed scope of influence. The group can propose ordinance changes to the Planning Board and Select Board. Planning staff noted that an effort to update the Commercial District ordinances may be coming in the next 6-9 months, and they would keep the Committee apprised of opportunities to comment.

Follow up item: A. Deci suggested that the Code Enforcement Officer might attend a committee meeting and help the Committee better understand the status of the State and Town building standards with regard to energy conservation and green energy use. The Committee was in favor of inviting the CEO to a future meeting.

Opportunities to collaborate with small woodlot owners in the community was discussed. Possible collaboration with Brunswick Topsham Land Trust was mentioned, as was the Topsham Public Forest.

The next meeting will take place on December 22nd at 4:30. **Follow up item:** A. Deci will present LED lighting proposals and talk about Solsmart.

The Meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 6PM.