



## SUSTAINABLE ENERGY COMMITTEE

TOWN HALL • 525 WASHINGTON STREET • WELLESLEY, MA 02482-5992

Sustainable Energy Director: Marybeth Martello

[SEC@wellesleyma.gov](mailto:SEC@wellesleyma.gov)

SEC Assistant: Janet Mosley

[jmosley@wellesleyma.gov](mailto:jmosley@wellesleyma.gov)

Laura Olton, Chair

Fred Bunger, Vice Chair

Cindy Mahr

Ellen Korpi

Richard Lee

Susan Morris

Lise Olney

### SEC Monthly Meeting

Kingsbury Room

Wellesley Police Station

485 Washington Street

Wellesley, MA 02482

January 29, 2020

### Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 8:33 am by Laura Olton. Present were Sustainable Energy Committee (SEC) members: Laura Olton (SEC Chair), Fred Bunger (SEC Vice Chair), Ellen Korpi, Lise Olney, Cindy Mahr, and Susan Morris. Also present were Marybeth Martello (Sustainable Energy Director), Deed McCollum (Advisory Committee Liaison). Martha Collins, Pamela Posey, Leanne Cowley, Scott Bender, Jim Gorman, Phyllis Theermann, Marjorie Freiman (Board of Selectmen).

**Absent:** Richard Lee

### Citizen Speak

Scott Bender discussed how buying unbundled renewable energy certificates (RECs) is perceived as making little or no difference in the renewable energy supply. Scott distributed a slide stating that RECs are the only way to fund and purchase renewable energy. RECs provide funding that makes renewable energy possible. For the average resident, the price premium for the Citizen's Petition proposal is \$8 per month, or 1% of an average resident's electricity cost.

### Minutes

Sue Morris moved to approve the SEC's January 10 and 17 meeting minutes. Ellen Korpi seconded the motion *and the Committee voted unanimously to accept the January 10 and 17 meeting minutes*. Cindy Mahr abstained because she was not present for the meetings.

## **Project Updates**

Ellen Korpi noted that the Wellesley Municipal Light Plant (WMLP) entered an agreement with AT&T to boost cell phone reception for the entire town. This project will provide additional cash flow for the WMLP. Don Newell, WMLP Director, will form a Working Group to re-design the Voluntary Renewable Energy Program (VREP).

## **Discussion of Citizen's Petition on the Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Goal**

At Laura Olton's request, Jim Gorman explained that the Citizen's Petition (CP) no longer includes the third item that the CP group presented to the SEC on January 17. This item proposed that the Board of Selectmen (BOS) work with the WMLP to allocate funds to meet the town's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions goal by closing any gap in emissions reductions that remain after the town claims emissions reductions resulting from an opt-out VREP.

The group discussed the CP and various aspects of the opt-out proposal, including its pros and cons, the possibility that ratepayers participate at different levels, likely participation by commercial customers and colleges, and the use of renewable energy credits (RECs) to meet the town's GHG goal and create more shared responsibility.

Jim Gorman, from the CP group, suggested that WMLP could decide how to spend the money from an opt-out VREP. An opt-out VREP would create a line item on electricity bills to fund sustainability measures. Ellen Korpi noted that the VREP is a temporary program and the electricity portion of the Climate Action Plan (CAP) to be developed in 2021 will identify programs for the WMLP to pursue.

The Committee agreed that the town and WMLP need to invest more resources in sustainability. Getting the town more engaged in reducing emissions is an important goal.

## **Annual Town Meeting Warrant Article 26 Regarding Climate Change**

The Board of Selectmen approved language for Article 26 of the 2020 Annual Town Meeting Warrant. The Article calls for climate change action by everyone in town government and signals the urgency of climate change. The Article will help us move from away from business as usual and reframe our thinking. The Article highlights the SEC and CAP and calls on town government to support CAP development. Laura Olton congratulated Lise Olney for proposing Article 26.

Fred Bunger made a motion to support Article 26, Ellen Korpi seconded *and the SEC voted unanimously to support Article 26*

Fred Bunger suggested that the Article 26 motions identify the town's next GHG emissions goals.

## **Green Communities Project Proposals for the 2020 Grant Round**

Marybeth Martello described the following projects to be proposed in the Green Communities 2020 Competitive Grant Round: a municipal parking lot light-emitting diode (LED) retrofit, an exterior and interior LED retrofit at Wellesley High School, hybrid and electric vehicles for the municipal fleet and (potentially) publicly-accessible charging stations. The SEC recommended considering new charging stations at the Library, Warren Building and Cameron Street Parking Lot.

### **Update on Brookline's Gas Ban Bylaw**

Lise provided an update on Brookline's Gas Ban Bylaw. The process for developing the Bylaw took one year and was similar to the process the SEC has pursued for Municipal Sustainable Building Guidelines. The next step is approval by the Attorney General's office. Many communities are considering similar bylaws.

The Sustainable Energy Committee decided to meet on Friday, February Feb 14 at 8:30am.

Sue Morris made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:22 am, seconded by Fred Bunger, *and the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn.*

### **Exhibits Used**

Minutes for January 10 and 17

Project Updates

Citizen's Petition on the Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Goal

Citizen's Petition Pros/Cons List

Warrant Article 26

Materials on Brookline's Gas Ban Bylaw