

Present: Cap Chenoweth, Catherine Crawley, Liz Soper, Marina Meerburg, Michael Lazorchak, Kenan Griffith

Meeting called to order at: 5:30 p.m.

Review & Approve Minutes

The Committee reviewed the minutes of February 23, 2023. Catherine Crawley noted a correction in the spelling of a name. Otherwise there were no changes.

On a motion by Marina Meerburg, seconded by Cap Chenoweth, the Committee approved the minutes with the corrected spelling.

Municipal Energy Resilience Program

Catherine explained that this program is through the Vermont Buildings & General Services Agency and offers grants and assessments for municipalities looking to make energy efficiencies in their buildings, such as weatherization or replacing mechanical systems with green options. Victoria and Rob Moore from LCPC spoke about the program, and explained that there are three parts to the Program – mini-grants for \$4,000; free energy assessments; Up to \$500,000 in grant funding for facilities projects.

Public Works Director Harry Shepard reported that the Town has already undertaken HVAC assessments on three Town Owned buildings, the Akeley Building, the Helen Day Art Center, and the Ski Museum. He indicated that while the consultant looked at the HVAC systems for all three buildings and offered proposed replacements including in-kind equipment and green equipment, it also identified issues with the Akeley Building envelope. He felt having these assessments already done gives the Town a “leg up” but would still require the MERP assessment as well. While Public Works would be involved with overseeing and helping the assessment, the consultant would be contracted through the State MERP program. He also asked the Energy Committee for assistance in applying for an administering the program. It was discussed that the application for the mini-grant is quite simple and the use of the funding fairly flexible. The application for the assessment is not yet open but should be soon. The Town would want to request a Level 2 assessment for the three above-messaged Applications for the larger project grant are not yet available but would likely be based on the completed State assessment. Victoria noted that one of the requirements of the grant would include that the building be ADA compliant by the end of the project, and that a portion of the funding could be used to bring the building into compliance. Harry indicated this was something he would have to look into further.

Public Works will continue to collaborate with the Energy Committee and LCPC to apply for this program.

Window Dressers

Wendy Crosier, a Fellow working with Stowe Electric Department, provided a brief update on the Window Dressers program she is coordinating. She noted that the program is ahead of schedule, with 121 requested window units from 22 families and businesses in Stowe. The goal will be to make 250. They have booked the build in the Saint Teresa’s Parish in Hyde Park and are working with the Hyde Park Energy Committee as well. The program has been promoted through newspaper and front porch forum but Wendy noted that they need additional PR targeting lower income families who could use these to lower energy burden.

Community Outreach

Liz has out the survey together in survey form and sent it out to the committee to test. She asked those who had not yet taken it to do it and let her know if they have any comments or concerns. The committee discussed the wording on a few questions, which Liz updated. Catherine explained that once approved by the committee, the survey will need approval from the Selectboard before going out to the public. She reiterated that the intent of the survey is to get out word about the committee and gauge interest in their work as well as starting community discussions regarding energy.

Ballfield Groomer

Catherine Crawley reported that she has been working with the Elementary School to name the equipment, and that they will be attending a “community meeting” at the school to present it soon.

School Energy Usage

Kenan Griffith reported that he has been working with the environmental club at school, and they have many projects in the works but most are long-term projects. He did ask for ideas for projects and fundraising ideas, and it was suggested possibly something with enhancing the habitat near the school for pollinators.

Other Business

Catherine reported that the vacancy on the committee from Scott Weathers resigning is now posted, so if there is anyone interested in joining they should reach out to the Town. She also noted that Kenan’s term would be up in May and so the committee would be looking for a new student representative.

On a motion by Liz Soper, seconded by Kenan Griffith, the meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.