

## **Stowe Energy Committee: May 25, 2023 Minutes**

**DRAFT**

Present: Cap Chenoweth, Liz Soper, Rick Weinstein, Catherine Crawley, Marina Meerburg, Robi Artman-Hodge

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

### **Welcome & Introductions**

Catherine welcomed new member, Robi Artman-Hodge, to the committee. The other Committee members then introduced themselves. It was noted that the committee is still looking for a student representative as Kenan is graduating. Catherine noted that there has been some interest with several candidates.

### **Review & Approve Minutes**

The Committee reviewed the minutes of March 23 and April 27.

On a motion by Marina, seconded by Cap, the Committee approved the minutes as written for March 23 and April 27, 2023.

### **Committee Officers**

Catherine indicated that the committee was due to elect officers in May. Catherine indicated that she was comfortable remaining the chair for another year.

On a motion by Liz, seconded by Marina, the Committee appointed Catherine Crawley to serve as chair for the 2023-2024 year.

On a motion by Marina, seconded by Catherine, the Committee appointed Liz to serve as the vice chair for the 2023-2024 year.

### **Town Priorities & Committee Plan for Year**

This document was discussed at the April meeting, with some minor adjustments made. The work plan is to outline priorities, which will be sent to the Selectboard for their consideration for inclusion in their overall Town priorities.

The committee reviewed the latest version and suggested that the plan include language indicated that the committee would support the initiatives of the Stowe Electric Department, including their Designated Village Center project.

On a motion by Marina, seconded by Cap, the Committee approved the work plan for submission to the Selectboard with the additional information related to Stowe Electric Department.

### **Municipal Energy Resilience Program**

Catherine reported that the Town had applied for and received a \$4,000 mini-grant, which should hopefully put them in a good position to apply for the larger grant. These grant monies can be used for weatherization, thermal efficiency and replacement of fossil fuels. The Committee will work with Stowe Public Works and LCPC on how to spend those funds. The Town will also apply for free energy assessments when that program comes online.

## **Community Outreach**

The survey is now ready to be submitted to Charles Safford, Town Manager, so that he can send it on to the Selectboard. Cap suggested that the committee do a banner over the road like Stowe Electric recently did for their customer survey. The cost of a banner could be funded through the Committee's budget of \$3,000. Additional promotion will be done through Front Porch Forum and the Stowe Reporter.

On a motion by Cap, seconded by Marina, the Committee approved the wording of the introduction to the survey and instructed Catherine to send the survey and intro on to Charles Safford to put before the Selectboard.

## **Stowe Electric Department Updates**

Michael Lazorchak from Stowe Electric Department provided updates on a number of their initiatives.

*Equity and Low-Income Targets:* Stowe Electric needs assistance identifying low income residents regarding weatherization and electrification upgrades, as part of their federal funding this is required. He asked the Committee to help get the word out.

*Energy Plans:* Lamoille County Planning Commission is working on draft edits to their plan, which includes an energy section. The committee and SED would like the opportunity to review and comment on any drafts. Marina reported that she is on the committee working on this and could look at bringing it to the committee or inviting the committee to public informational meetings. Catherine also noted that the committee had previously submitted an energy plan to the Stowe Planning Commission for consideration in their Town Plan updates.

*WindowDressers:* Wendy is organizing; set for October 27 – November 1 at the former St. Teresas Parish in Hyde Park. Currently they have 30 households signed up, primarily from Stowe, for a nearly 300 inserts. They also have several volunteers committed, including Americorps and Stowe High School students. Wendy noted she is looking for people trained to measure the windows in advance of the build.

*Moscow Village Project:* Wendy has received a grant to help get the Moscow Village designated as a village center. This would help with smart-growth development and planning for the village and Stowe Electric as they pursue hydro and solar energy projects. Catherine asked that Michael continue to keep the committee updated as this project advances. Michael has asked that the committee sign a letter of support for the Northern Border Regional Commission grant fund, which will assist in restoration of the Moscow Mill building and installation of hydro and solar projects.

*EV Chargers:* Stowe Electric uses PlugIn Stations Online to manage the charging stations they currently own. Wendy is working on a grant to develop a map of preferred sites for EV chargers to be owned by the Town, School or workplaces. He noted that SED cannot be the applicant for these grants, it would need to be other entities. He also shared that SED has no plans to expand their current amount of EV chargers, but rather look for others to own them and SED would facilitate management with PlugIn.

*Integrated Resource Plan:* Michael reported that he is currently working on SEDs 2023 IRP, and suggested he might present the sections on power supply and forecasting to the committee.

*Ballfield Groomer:* Stowe Elementary has decided on the name Lightning Bolt. SED would like to work with the committee on promotion, which will include SED decals for the device.

*Capital Plan:* Michael reported that there are a number of proposed system upgrades identified in the 5-year capital plan for SED. He offered to present these to the committee at a future meeting.

On a motion by Marina, seconded by Robi, the Committee approved the letter of support for the Moscow Mills project and authorized Catherine Crawley to sign it on the committees behalf.

### **Other Business**

Catherine noted that the VECAN Spring Summit is June 3<sup>rd</sup> in Middlebury if anyone was interested in carpooling.

The June meeting is scheduled for June 22<sup>nd</sup>, Catherine and Rick will be away, and Cap is also not available. The committee decided to keep the date but understand there will not be a quorum so no actions will be taken.

On a motion by Marina, seconded by Liz, the meeting was adjourned at 6:35 p.m.