

Stowe Energy Committee: August 25, 2022 Minutes **DRAFT**

Present: Elizabeth Soper, Cap Chenoweth, Marina Meerburg, Michael Lazorchak, Catherine Crawley, Scott Weathers

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

Review & Approve Minutes

The Committee reviewed the minutes of July 28, 2022. There were no changes.

On a motion by Marina Meerburg, seconded by Scott Weathers, the Committee approved the minutes as presented.

Transportation

Electric School Bus Program – Catherine updated the committee on her efforts to promote the e-Bus program to the Lamoille South Supervisory Union Superintendent and Lamoille Valley Transportation, who has the busing contract for Stowe Schools. She indicated that she gave a presentation to the School Board and offered assistance with the program. There were concerns about cold weather and repair contracts, and at this time the deadline for the grant has passed so it does not seem that Lamoille Valley Transportation will apply at this point, but the Committee did the work of getting the information out there. It was discussed that perhaps having the students and/or parents continue to push for electric buses would be a good tactic, as well as looking at what other school districts in the state are doing.

Lamoille County Planning Commission – Marina updated that she had spoken with Rob Moore who is working on applying for a grant to study transportation and parking needs for Stowe, and that Marina had committed to helping with the study if the grant is approved. She will follow up and report back to the committee. She also noted that Green Mountain Transit recently held a public forum to discuss their plans to increase bussing on Route 108 this winter with weekends and holidays having bus pick up times of every 15 minutes during peak windows.

Municipal Energy Usage

Catherine and Cap reported that they had recently met with Town Manager Charles Safford to discuss municipal energy usage and ways the Town can set examples of energy conservation. The Town recently committed to purchasing one e-mower in the 2025 budget year, but they were hoping the Town might consider purchasing one sooner. Cap indicated that he spoke with a dealer who would send more information to Charles. It was also noted that the Town has hired a new Parks Superintendent, David Danforth and that he is quite busy getting acclimated to the new job but that the committee would like to meet with him to discuss energy issues. Cap and Catherine also asked Charles to consider requiring contracted mowing companies to use electric mowers, which he was open to exploring but indicated cost may be a barrier.

Catherine also stated that a recent Mechanical Systems Study was conducted on municipal buildings including the Ski Museum, Library and Akeley Building. The draft report was received by the committee recently, with Cap stating that he had reviewed the report. Cap stated that many of the proposed mechanical costs were too expensive to be realistically considered, as they will never pay for themselves. He suggested looking at air to water heat pumps or mini-splits rather than ground heat pumps. He also noted that it would simply be too much to

convert to new boilers and pumps due to re-piping and having to dig up parking lots, etc. The committee discussed providing more information to the Town on mini-splits, and Cap stated that he would speak with the person who submitted the study and report back to the committee.

Energy Committee Outreach

At the last meeting, Liz had requested that the committee discuss how to get more community outreach done to bring in more people, particularly younger people. Catherine noted that the committee has a budget of \$2,000 that can be used towards education and outreach. Liz suggested using facebook or a committee website to get more information out. The committee also discussed ideas such as articles in the Stowe Reporter, hosting public forums or a survey. The committee will continue to discuss at future meetings how best to move forward.

Other Business

Catherine reported that there would be an informational session on the State's Button Up Campaign on Wednesday from 12-1 that she would be attending and report back on.

The Committee thanked Scott Weathers for his work on the final report for a recent grant.

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