

Stowe Energy Committee: December 22, 2022 Minutes

Present: Cap Chenoweth, Catherine Crawley, Rick Weinstein, Scott Weathers, Kenan Griffith, Liz Soper

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

Review & Approve Minutes

The Committee reviewed the minutes of November 17, 2022. There were no changes.

On a motion by Liz Soper, seconded by Rick Weinstein, the Committee approved the minutes as presented.

Annual Report

The Board discussed the Annual Report as prepared and sent out by Chair Catherine Crawley. It was noted that adding in more information on the presentation to the Selectboard that the Committee made on moving to e-mowers for the Town. There were also minor grammatical corrections and a note to add the names of the bike shops that participated in e-bike day demos.

On a motion by Rick Weinstein, seconded by Cap Chenoweth, the Committee approved the Annual Report with the changes discussed.

Energy Committee Outreach

Survey – Liz Soper has sent out a draft survey via email to the Committee members. The Committee members reviewed the survey and noted that it was thorough, hit all the points they wanted and was not too long. Liz asked that any other questions be sent to her.

The committee discussed reaching out to the Planning Commission to see how they were getting results from their housing study. Ideas for promoting the survey included an ad in the newspaper, posting on Front Porch Forum, promoting at Town Meeting, having participants enter to win gift cards to incentivize them and possibly including in electric bills. It was also noted that they could work with Stowe High School to send out through their newsletter.

It was noted that the Committee has an annual budget of \$2,000, which they have not yet spent for FY'23. The Committee would like to purchase 5 \$50 gift cards to be raffled off to participants in the survey. They would also use some of those funds to purchase an ad in the Stowe Reporter.

On a motion by Liz Soper, seconded by Kenan Griffith, the Energy Committee approved spending up to \$1,000 total on the survey project, to include the purchase of 5 gift cards and ad(s) in the Stowe Reporter.

On a motion by Cap Chenoweth, seconded by Rick Weinstein, the Committee approved the survey as written as well as other written and/or verbal promotions necessary to promote the survey.

Liz Soper and Catherine Crawley will work on how to communicate the survey and will bring to the January 27th meeting. At that point, the Committee will take the survey to the Selectboard so they will be aware.

Municipal Energy Usage

Town Building HVAC Assessment – Town Manager Charles Safford has postponed the presentation to the Selectboard on the HVAC Systems assessment until the report has been finalized by the consultant.

Electric Mowing Equipment – The Parks Department feels they can extend the life of the existing mowers until FY'26, with one e-mower being purchased in FY'25. The Committee accepted this change, but noted that if any of the mowers should fail prior to FY'26 then they would advocate for it to be replaced with an e-mower sooner.

It was noted that the Town had recently agreed to purchase an electric ball field groomer, however this is not as frequently used as an e-mower.

School Energy Usage

Kenan Griffith reported that there is a project at the school to plant more trees in the spring. He noted the LED light project needs more investigating to fully understand the scope before they can go forward with it. They did recently do an energy audit with Efficiency Vermont.

Other Business

2023 Projects – Catherine recapped the projects the Committee has planned for 2023, which includes the Survey, ongoing work on Municipal Energy Usage and transportation, possible EV day, and working with the Planning Commission to incorporate changes to the Energy Chapter of the Town Plan. The Committee also discussed holding a “tour” of electric houses in Stowe, similar to the Garden Tours.

Webinar – Catherine reported that there is a webinar being held on January 9th about the 2023 legislative session items related to Climate & Energy. She will send out the link and more information to the committee.

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