

Stowe Energy Committee Minutes

October 22, 2020

Present: Liz Soper, Catherine Crawley, Rick Weinstein, Cap Chenowith, Marina Meerburg, Scott Weathers, Tom Jackman

Absent: Sarah Evans

Public: Ryan Thibault (Stowe Rec), Linda Gray (Norwich Energy Committee), Sandy Bender (Local Motion), Lynn Altadonna (Stowe Rec) Michael Lazorchak (Stowe Electric), Art Shiners/Lucas Moore (AJ's)

Minutes: Committee reviewed minutes from last meeting. Cap motioned to approve, Marina seconded, minutes approved

Updates:

Liz mentioned that Sarah Evans has been discussing a possible educational collaboration with Stowe Electric. Sarah is reaching out to SHS environmental club, science teachers and principal to start official conversation. See below for more info:

Stowe Electric Department wants to engage high school students by organizing remote learning lessons that can be shared with students at Stowe and in Lamoille County. Stowe Electric can collaborate with the Vermont Energy Education Program, www.veep.org, to allow students to conduct energy and environmental experiments that can serve as the starting point for discussions about energy and environmental issues. These experiments can get incorporated into current lesson plans, or can serve as stand alone videos to engage the Stowe community through Stowe Electric's website and social media platforms.

Tom Jackman informed the committee there may be an opportunity for net metering projects in Stowe. Working with Novus Energy to explore several sites (map). With Stowe spending over ½ million on electricity each year this would be great opportunity. Tom will provide more information at next meeting and send map to Catherine.

Catherine indicated that as part of our Education and Outreach – Rick's column was in both the Stowe Reporter and Waterbury Roundabout. Looking at weatherization next month and possibly highlighting Stonybrook.

Marina let Committee know that there was a broadband feasibility study in Lamoille county. Would be discussed at Lamoille planning Commission meeting November 4 at 7 pm.

Project Updates:

E-Bikes: Committee exploring with Stowe Electric incentives for E-Bikes in 2021. Other electric companies around state provide E-bike incentives (\$1-200). Paperwork for incentives need to be submitted by December, 2020.

Several guests provided case studies and information about E-bikes including Linda Gray from Norwich Energy Committee and Sandy Bender from Local Motion.

Local Motion has an E-Bike Lending Library. Introduces people to E-bikes and role they can play in alternative transportation for commuting, running errands, recreation. They have program in Burlington, as well as a travel Lending Library and have worked with Linda to establish program in Upper Valley. Allows people to try out bikes for 1-2 days, experience what they are like and goal is to get more people utilizing for alternative means of transportation.

Lynn from Stowe Recreation Committee gave some history of E-Bike conversations in Stowe. Stowe Select Board and Recreation Committee found no reason to regulate and thinks incentive a good idea. Art Shiners from AJ's discussed an article he read that E-bikes sales were up 200% this year, sells and rents at AJ's and particularly good for older people who still want to bike longer distances. Ryan Thibault commented how E-bikes are very popular in Europe, both road and mountain styles.

Michael from Stowe Electric indicated that they would be willing to do a pilot E-bike incentive program in Stowe since it appears there is excitement and less controversy. Stowe Electric will come up with estimate and set certain number for pilot – can always increase #'s of incentives if market exists.

Liz agreed to follow up with Sandy Bender about utilizing their traveling lending library next year (2021) for a 4-6 week period to allow Stowe residents the opportunity to try bikes – would be good marketing for businesses in Stowe trying to sell.

Next meeting scheduled for November 19th due to Thanksgiving. Adjourned at 6:40.