

Stowe Energy Committee: June 22, 2023 Minutes **DRAFT**

Present: Liz Soper, Marina Meerburg, Robi Artman-Hodge

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

Review & Approve Minutes

There was not a quorum so no motion to approve could be made at this time.

Student Members

Liz reported that there are 2 or 3 candidates for the Student Representative position on the Committee. Interviews will be held on June 28th, and Liz will be there to participate.

Municipal Energy Resilience Program

Liz noted that the Town has received the \$4,000 mini-grant, but is waiting on paperwork to move forward. Chris Jolly, Assistant Town Engineer, has reached out to the Committee and Lamoille County Planning Commission on how and what they can spend these funds on, which can be any sort of consulting. There is also an on-ground energy audit as part of that grant program, although the Town has expressed concern over who would be doing the audit and if they would be qualified to assess historic buildings such as the Akeley Building. It was discussed that the Town may be hesitant to do much with the Akeley Building at this time due to the historic nature and the estimated large cost (the main grant would cover \$500,000 which is not likely to cover the costs of upgrading the Akeley Building). The Committee is still committed to making the Akeley Building energy efficient and will continue to follow and push the Town to complete this project. The Town is also looking at audits and improvements to the Library Building and the Ski Museum, which may be easier and cheaper to complete.

Community Outreach

The survey has been sent to the Selectboard, who will review and approve on June 28th. Liz will be present if there are any questions. The Committee has also requested a banner for over the road to promote the survey. An ad will go in the Stowe Reporter and will push it on Front Porch Forum as well.

Stowe Electric Department Updates

Michael Lazorchak from Stowe Electric Department was not present to provide an update. Liz did report that on August 10th at 4:30pm there will be an event at Stowe Electric regarding Renewable Energy and Decarbonization.

EV Day

Robi has been reaching out to organize an EV day to showcase Electric Vehicles. She reported that Stowe Electric and other energy organizations throughout the State are on board, however she was hoping to get Stowe Vibrancy to sponsor the event and make it a family/community event. At this time Stowe Vibrancy has indicated that they are not taking on any new events. Robi will continue to work with them to try to get an EV Day included for next summer. Stowe Area Association has indicated that they would provide free advertising for the event.

The Committee discussed that there is some pushback in the community related to EVs and the rebates/free charging stations provided by Stowe Electric. Marina indicated that it would be good to hear from Michael what exactly the cost is to the ratepayers to provide those services.

Window Dressers

Liz reported that she and Catherine participated in a training session to learn how to measure windows, they are still looking for volunteers to complete this work in July and August. Robi asked if it was anticipated that this program would continue in future years, Liz indicated that this is the first year it has been offered, but if it is successful they will likely offer it again. She also reported that they have capped the participation at this time, with 269 inserts ordered. They are also looking for area businesses to donate food for the build.

Other Business

Marina was unable to attend the Municipal Climate Change Vulnerability Planning program, but does have slides from the presentation she will forward to the committee. The Town would likely need to participate in any resiliency planning. The Committee indicated they would like to push the Town to look into Climate Action Plans for Stowe.

The Committee discussed the ongoing push by the State for geothermal heat pumps and how effective they may or may not be in Vermont winters. It was noted this could be discussed further in the future with more information.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:02pm.