

COMMUNITY POWER COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 30. 2021

Paul Looney, Chair, called the meeting to order June 30, 2021 at approximately 6:30 pm in Walpole Town Hall.

Present: Paul Looney, Dennis Marcom, Rod Bouchard, Peggy Pschirrer, Selectboard Liaison and new members Patrick Kiniry, and Andrew Dey. Absent: Steve Grenier.

Mr. Looney reported that the Joint Power Agreement had been reviewed by Town Counsel, Jeremy Hockensmith who indicated the only issue he found that might be a challenge is the "opt out" provision. The document was written with assistance from the NH Bar Association.

Mr. Bouchard stated this is a working document which will go into effect when more towns have signed on. Currently, Lebanon, Hanover, Nashua and Harrisville are members. This is a document we would take to Town Meeting for approval.

If Walpole were to approve joining the Community Power Coalition, all town residents would automatically be part of the coalition who will use their combined authority to buy electric power for all users with the intent to eventually lower costs and offer users an option of solar and or wind power or combinations of wind and solar. Residents who do not wish to be a member of the coalition may opt out.

Liberty Utilities is the current supplier of electricity for the town of Walpole. Liberty Utilities does not generate power but rather delivers it from other sources.

The group discussed net metering and Mr. Bouchard discussed the unrealized plan to build a solar farm near Maplewood Circle which could supply Maplewood Circle with electricity. Any excess power generated would go into the electric grid.

Utilities are unlikely to give up control of meters.

Mr. Kiniry ask if there were smart meters in use in New Hampshire. Mr. Bouchard answered maybe some. There are snapshots of usage and some measurements of time.

Recent legislation will lead to more discussions about metering and data collection. All utilities will be required to provide data in a common manner.

The committee agreed to move with continuing to educate themselves, then planning public meetings in the fall and as frequently as necessary to build understanding toward the next Annual Town meeting in March 2022.

Rod Bouchard will send the video link to Mr. Kiniry and Mr. Dey of a meeting held May 26 with Henry Herndon and Dori Drachman. Mr. Herndon and Ms. Drachman will be asked to meet with the committee on July 7. If they are not available, then we will seek a convenient date. We are seeking advice and guidance on how to best educate the public.

Our documents will be available on the Town website, and we will try to put them in a goggle drive as well. Jodi Daigle is our contract in Town Hall.

Peggy Pschirrer