

COMMUNITY POWER COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 18, 2021

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

Mr. Looney called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Selectboard office.

Both Mr. Looney and Mr. Bouchard attended a recent meeting of the Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire, Mr. Looney represented Walpole and Mr. Bouchard represented Cheshire County. The Board of CPCNH will meet virtually every other week. Members of the Walpole Power Committee were asked to forward questions to Mr. Looney or Mr. Bouchard.

CPCNH is being funded by federal grants, angle investors and \$70,000 earmarked by Senator Shaheen as startup funds. Each town who is a member of CPCNH will have its own account.

The group discussed power charges. The electric company charges at peak usage, some hours between 7 a.m. – 11 p.m. Liberty Utilities battery programs period of usage is 3 p.m. – 8 p.m. Someone asked the question, “what would power organizations do with excess earned funds”? Excess funds might fund lower income programs or enable local power generation.

Mr. Dey, who served on an Energy Committee in Walpole several years ago, was asked if Walpole had a written energy policy? The answer was no, the committee had a broad mandate. It did not write an energy policy but did focus on lowering energy costs by making buildings, such as Town Hall, mor energy efficient with insulation.

At least twenty towns do have energy policies. Walpole is currently amending its Master Plan.

Mr. Marcom asked if we (Walpole) could use excess funds to build a solar field for the Town.

What should we be doing long term? Should we be looking at other towns energy policies? Towns such as Harrisville/Community Power website? Should be look at the state supported programs in Massachusetts? The San Joaquin Valley in California, the State of Maine, Vermont Public Power Supply?

CPCNH will be incorporated October 1, 2021. Once CPCNH is incorporated, Cheshire County will be able to offer the program to towns within the county.

What will be the advantage of joining the County, it will be the same as local options.

Can we expect resistance from utility companies?

Brokers came into play some 8 to 10 years ago.

The PUC will be dissolved, it will have no rule making authority as an Energy Department emerges as the administrative authority.

Mr. Dey agreed to examine other towns master plans. Mr. Marcom agreed to look at the Vermont Public Power Supply Authority.

What will our savings be with community power? Is it possible, there will be low or no savings for individuals?

Small towns do have a voice on the Board of Directors of CPCNH.

The Board of CPCNH is meeting August 19, 2021, from 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. virtually.

The committee will meet August 25, 2021, at 6:30 p.m. in the Town Hall.

Ms. Pschirrer will write the Conservation Committee to ask that their next meeting agenda, September 13, 2021, include time for Mr. Looney to describe the CPCNH and Walpole's own Community Power Committee. A public meeting will be tentatively scheduled for October 13, 2021, at Town Hall.