

Minutes MEC Meeting Aug. 26, 2014

Present – Members, Richard Adams, Jason Burbank, Pam Hanold, Chris Mason, Sally Pick, Tim Van Egmond. Guest Bart Bales.

1. Chris moved Minutes for Aug. 12 meeting be approved, with revisions. Tim seconded, vote carried.
2. Chris introduced Bart Bales as provider of Sapphire program, addressing question of heating systems in Montague Schools. He went over for Bart the extent of school system's review for heating system, and feasibility study for windows (MSBA). Possibility of Green Community funds, school system's stabilization fund. Sense that MEC may have to take lead in gaining most energy efficiency.

Bart said Bales Energy Assoc. 1 of 4 Sapphire providers in state. Sunderland, Petersham. Max. amount can get for Pellet fired boiler \$350,000. Feasibility study amount now \$15,000.

Solar thermal for hot water, pellet boiler (also ground source heat pump at Ptrshm). Air source not allowed, DOER getting some data before funding that approach.

Need to pair efficiency effort with boiler effort, goal of 20% improvement.

2 bldgs they've worked with used Gr Communities. Sunderland, doing envelope eval after doing boiler changeover. In our case, easy to save 20% by getting rid of steam. Would they let us convert oil fired system to hybrid system of pellet and gas fired?

Move schools under town, or both towns work as district?

How interact with Mass SBA on boilers?

Possibility of dovetailing utility money for implementation.

Need to ask if we can convert administration side of school under Sapphire, or need to use Green Communities.

Chris: steps would be

- get town to bring 2 bldgs into Gr Commnties
- Apply for technical asstnc grant from Gr. Commnties for assessment of efficiency and heat conversion options.
- Decide if we want to go for renewable, conventional or hybrid system.

Bart recommends using OTAT Tech Asstnc grant (limited to \$10,000 per building, or \$12,500 per applicant?) concurrent with applying for Sapphire \$.

Need to know heated square footage of buildings. Bart will do walk-through.

Action items –

Follow up with Walter, Frank and Michael on idea of schools being brought into Green Communities piece. Chris will follow up w/DOER on grant questions.

Chris will work with Michael Sullivan to do followup question w/MSBA.

Pam will do heads up to Walter about getting schools into baseline for Gr. Communities, invite Frank to

next mtg., communicate with Mike Naughton of Fin Com & Greg Garrison, CIC.

3. FRCOG Strategic Planning Implementation Grant – announcement on grant expected soon.

4. Proposed Natural Gas Pipeline – we sent letter, got extensive reply from Anne Berwick, Chair Dept. of Public Utilities, Stan Rosenberg also issued open letter.

Questions from Anne Berwick ltr (notes from Chris):

She implies that we are requesting the state do without any fossil fuels. We should be clear that that is not what we are advocating. Instead, we are advocating for MA to continue the transition away from fossil fuels. And we should demand that the other NE states join that transition before MA lets them off the hook by siting a new gas pipeline.

We should review what the B&V report's low demand scenario is based on with regard to plant closings and research what other organizations have said about alternative replacements (to new gas pipelines) to these plants. I.e., is new gas supply the ONLY way to supplant loss of generating plants, or are there increased efficiencies in delivery, both economic and logistical, available.

We have heard that a new pipeline is being considered primarily due to short term price spikes. Is general generating reliability really an issue?

We should be clear on what power the DPU holds given we read her last paragraph as disingenuously shifting responsibility to the Feds.

One other less pressing question, more an item of interest: who is the DPU leak consultant?

Stan Rosenberg's letter – summarized dilemma governors face. Points out that figures are New England figures. Maine, NH, RI, CT – efficiency measures.

5. Agenda for next meeting.