

Montague Energy Committee

May 19, 2015 6:15-8:15 PM

Town Hall 1st Floor Meeting Room (started in Break Room, due to another meeting in downstairs meeting room during first hour)

Present: Chris Mason, Sally Pick, Jeff Singleton, Pam Hanold. Guests: Jeff and Cindy White.

Approve minutes 5/12/15: tabled until next meeting.

Designate facilitator and scribe: Chris facilitated, Sally took minutes.

Letter to MA Department of Public Utilities about Northeast Energy Direct (NED) pipeline

- Chris reviewed other comments to DPU re pipeline; found that most were from individuals.
- Recommends rewriting letter to be short with key bullet points.
- Key points discussed by MEC:
 - Berkshire Gas (BG) has not engaged town before announcing moratorium.
 - Moratorium plays on fear of public.
 - BG has not looked at broader energy issues, relevant policies.
 - Capacity of pipeline way beyond town, regional need.
 - We are Green Community with GHG emission reduction goals.
 - Use same reasons that AG has asked for stay of proceedings for **Boston Gas**: because not enough info (we concur with them): [see 3 main points in Attorney General filing of May 15, 2015]
 - Berkshire Gas portfolio objectives related to energy efficiency not yet approved.
 - DPU has not finished own inquiry as to what's needed.
 - DPU must complete comprehensive review of avoided cost of carbon.
 - Private investment into energy efficiency, renewables haven't been explored and included in what's possible.
 - Precedent has been set to invest in natural gas in a way that lowers use over time.
 - Uncertainty argues for limiting commitment to natural gas, and instead incorporate short-term fixes.
 - FERC sees short-term fixes as lower cost.
 - Reference our first letter to DPU.
- Results of DPU review of requests for standing for Berkshire Gas Precedent Agreement process:
 - CLF given standing in DPU review process, including relevance of Global Warming Solutions Act.

- DPU not recognizing individuals, rather expertise.
- Public comment from meeting guest made that economic expansion is limited in Montague and that natural gas supply may not affect economic expansion.
- **Motion:** Sally, Chris and Rich will draft and deliver a statement to DPU by Friday, based on points discussed in the meeting. Approved.
- Question raised regarding if limits of natural gas are limiting potential business growth in town; talked about alternative energy sources for businesses such as solar, efficient combined heat and power with biomass such as wood pellets.

Town energy issues:

Sheffield boiler/burner:

- Chris emailed Frank, Walter, Joanne and Michael to follow up.
 - Joanne feels town should take lead.
 - Chris sent a copy of the technical assistant grant application to all of the above; first application can be submitted June 22nd.
 - Chris meeting with Walter and Frank May 20th.
 - Chris will ask how to move application forward and how MEC and school staff will be kept in communication about process.
 - Will ask if school committee needs to be involved.
- OATA application is out; now called Municipal Energy Technical Assistance Grant.
 - Chris recommends that town should solicit for work ASAP and sign a contract with an energy engineer, contingent on grant being accepted.

Comments regarding planning for future Mass Save utility-run efficiency programs due 5/28

- <http://ma-eeac.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2016-2018-DRAFT-Electric-Gas-Energy-Efficiency-Plan.pdf>
- <http://ma-eeac.org/event/eeac-meeting-11/>

Senior Center

- Pam attended presentation last Wednesday, May 13 at Safety Complex.
 - Plans presented from feasibility study are not solid.
 - Discussion re existing senior center's energy efficiency.
 - Energy committee may come up with a statement about the project.
- **Plan agenda for next meeting**
- **Other topics not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance of the meeting**
- **Votes may be taken**