

Tuesday, November 17, 2020

## Montague Energy Committee

Zoom, 4-5PM

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**Present:** Chris Mason, Sally Pick, Ariel Elan, Tim Van Egmond, Jason Burbank, Pam Hanold.

**Chris facilitating; Sally taking minutes.**

**Approve minutes from 10.14.20:** Approved.

### **Report on C-PACE discussion and vote at Oct. 19 Select board meeting**

- Chris reported that select board had a constructive discussion, listening to feedback from various perspectives on MEC on the pros and cons of C-PACE, and voted to approve it.
- One business in town has approached the town about the possibility of financing renewable energy using C-PACE.

### **Status Reports:**

- **Renewable energy heating system for Sheffield/Hillcrest school buildings:**
  - Future of the buildings is not known.
  - CIC had a thorough assessment of buildings performed, which was not focused on energy: report is posted on CIC website. Will be expensive to keep both buildings. If building changes are funded by MA, it requires that they continue to be used in some capacity for education.
- **Outdoor lighting upgrades to LED**
  - Montague Center Lighting district dropped out of effort after they learned that the town is not required to participate across all districts together. Wants to go forward on their own.
  - Other districts are moving forward as a group.
  - Turners Falls had a survey of all lights and have identified 15-20 lights to turn off. Will do it on trial basis and, if there's no pushback from residents, will have Eversource remove those lights. Other lights will be upgraded to LED. Using 2% interest bond and other funds to pay for project.
- **Status of adjustments to solar bylaws:** Tabled.
- **DPW Building**
  - Reaching completion of contract with general contractor.
  - Will need some finessing to make it more efficient by controlling electrical demand. It's using a lot of electricity.
  - Has Time-of-Day meter, but Eversource is not billing that way.
  - Probably demand charge between 12-8 pm is raising costs of electricity.

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- Jason recommends scheduling heat pump to be off during peak demand charge hours and running the boiler for heating during those times.
- Heating & cooling were running simultaneously; Jason may have fixed that problem today.
- Most of electricity is for the chiller that also heats building. Ventilation is also a significant portion of electricity. Jason is working on getting ventilation to run only when necessary.
- MEC discussed the question of the minimum temperature setting for radiant heat in vehicle storage bays: what's most efficient, and what the town is willing to do.
- Jason will monitor building controls over time to achieve more efficiency.

#### **Letter to MA legislature's climate conference committee**

- Sally reported on draft letter that she sent out to MEC. She worked to flesh out some of the reasoning behind the bullet points in the letter that Climate Action Now sent to the conference committee (that MEC received last month, along with a letter that the City of Newton submitted to the conference committee). Sally used some of the Newton letter's reasoning and main points in the revised draft.
- MEC members are asked to review the revisions and send comments only to Sally. Letter will be discussed again at next meeting, to see if MEC comes to agreement on asking the select board to sign on to the letter and send it to the legislature's climate conference committee.

#### **Announcements (no discussion)**

- Pam: The way one needs to look at ventilation has changed with Covid-19, so ventilation recommendations as they relate to energy efficiency are changing. This will be added to the next agenda for discussion.

#### **Planned agenda for next meeting**

**Other topics not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance of the meeting. Votes may be taken.**

#### **Action items:**

- Chris will reach out to Montague Center Light District about how they plan to move forward with LEDs.
- MEC members are invited to read CIC assessment of school buildings.
- MEC members will review letter that Sally drafted to MA climate conference committee for input at next meeting.
- Sally will send approved Oct. 14 minutes to town for posting online.

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**Next meeting:** [3rd Tuesdays of the month going forward](#)—Tuesday, Dec. 15th, 4-5:30pm.