

Montague Energy Committee

By Zoom, 4:30-6 PM Tuesday February 22, 2022.

Meeting being taped.

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

Chris facilitating; Jason taking minutes.

Approved minutes from January 25, 2022

State-level energy-related policies & legislation

- Municipal sign-on letter for Green Future Act: Selectboard had questions that committee members could not answer, they did not yet approve the letter. Rich Kuklewicz did not expect we'd get much money from carbon pricing initiative. 40% of Montague is in moderate or low income, these people would see money back from that program. 60% or above would see 20 dollar increase in their fossil fuel bills. Originally needed to be voted out "favorably" to progress, this bill got an extension until May 2. (passing seems not likely even though there is public support) This will be brought to the next selectboard meeting. Matt Lord may get behind it with enough information and convince other selectboard members. Matt Lord is willing to take a deep dive into the topic, but was looking at senator Barret's bill which was not progressive. The new bill, based on the Benson bill, is more progressive.
- Letter from Sally on 100% Clean Act. She suggests we should focus on the Green Futures bill, rather than diluting our efforts.
- Sally also notes anti biomass bill was voted out of TUE (telephone and utility committee) and we need to have it not have the loophole allowing existing biomass plants to be deserving of credits.
- Stretch codes were discussed. The existing one, to be updated, and the net zero stretch code which was vetoed by Baker. That could be opted into. Chris suggests we should support this.

Update on gas industry seeking to prolong the use of methane fuel.

- Ariel notes there is a new push by natural gas suppliers to portray their gas as green. The pipeline awareness newsletter has the most succinct summary. Gas companies are intending to preserve existing pipelines because they are going

to supply hydrogen into the natural gas stream. Ariel suggests we should look at her info and take this up at our next meeting.

Energy-related Facility Updates:

- Outdoor lighting upgrades to LED
 - Tim says we could use green communities grant funding to pay for the purchase of the eversource lights and upgrade them to led's. George Woodbury has had them shut off a number of Montague center lights. Some question if Eversource is offering lamps that are too bright... Chris would suggest against this... Tim also notes that "dark skies compliant" lighting has been installed at the Discovery Center and Second Street parking area.
- Ventilation

plus Jason will contact Chris Sawyer Laucanno about European ventilation filtration standards for general health. tabled

Possible Uses to Recommend for ARPA Funding :

- Massachusetts got 5 billion, first 2 billion already passed, second round could perhaps have earmarks. Ariel notes selectboard and CIC have been working on applying ARPA funding, Ariel had forwarded articles applying to this, Sally had suggestions for ARPA funds, PV and battery storage on Safety Complex PV and battery storage at DPW Vehicle chargers at town hall, Geothermal and district heating. Chris suggests electric school buses Reuse of the Farren... nothing in sight Staff funding at FRCOG to help coordinate sustainability projects

Examine the role of the Committee in educating the public:

- Bob suggests Mass Save should do their own outreach.
- Chris notes that the COG had hired a full time person, they knocked on each door twice, and increased participation by 6%. This was considered "massively effective".
- Sally and Chris discuss: you can give them info and give them money but its not enough.

- Sally notes there may be large incentives for air source heat pump, after implementing Mass Save efficiency measures, \$15k total, 1250/ton for the minisplits,
- Sally is considering a letter to the Montague Reporter,
- Chris is organizing a meeting with National Grid and Eversource around 4:15 on Wednesday, on their energy opportunities.
- Bob notes Leverett has suggested “no idling” signs at their library and other locations.

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Plan agenda for next meeting:

- Continuation of most item and include net zero stretch code.

Other topics not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance of the meeting.

Votes may be taken.

- No other topics were discussed.

Action items:

- Jason will call Heath Cummings about management of ventilation in the school buildings.
- Jason will contact Chris Sawyer Laucanno about European ventilation plus filtration standards for general health.

Next meeting: Tuesday March. 22, 2022, 4:30-6pm

We close at 6:00 pm