

Town of Coventry

Energy Conservation/Alternative Energy Committee

Meeting May 4, 2016 6:30 PM

Members Present: Jennifer Reilly, Danielle Kloster, Mark Kiefer, Tim Sadler, Andy DePalma

Members Absent: Brandon Bradley

Audience of Citizens: Kate Donnelly

Call to Order: Jenn Reilly called the meeting to order at 6:34 PM.

Approval of Minutes: Jenn Reilly moved to approve the minutes from April 6th, there was no discussion, all were in favor.

Old Business:

Kate Donnelly from Smart Power spoke to the committee about the Solarize program. There will be a Request for Proposals from solar installers around the state. Companies will propose the equipment and price per watt and a town selection committee will choose the installer that they believe best fits the needs of Coventry. The program uses a fixed rate for homeowners regardless of how many residents sign up for the program, with additional charges for optional system components. The program will run for 18 weeks, with a launch event at the beginning and workshops every 4-6 weeks for interested homeowners. Once the program starts, residents can go to SolarizeCT.com/Coventry to sign up for a free site evaluation, ask questions, get testimonials, and see upcoming events. The committee plans for the first event to be held in mid-June. The committee will contact residents who currently have solar power who may be interested in volunteering at the promotional events. Smart Power will develop flyers and press releases, provide a banner, and help with developing strategy for the campaign. John Elsesser, Jenn Reilly and other town staff will have a bi-weekly phone call with Smart Power to gauge progress throughout the length of the program.

Mark Kiefer reported that the LED lights in the park are fully functional.

Jenn Reilly reported that the report on LEDs at Town Hall is complete and the cost will be \$30,600 for all lights, \$23,000 with utility subsidies. John said that conference rooms are not used much, if the committee decides to switch high-traffic room lighting first. The committee has a grant for \$5000 that could contribute to this. Tim Sadler will look into whether the town qualifies for Small Business On-Bill Financing through the utility, or something similar but Mark Kiefer thinks the town charter may not allow this.

Jenn Reilly reported that John Elsesser is working with Eversource to resolve issues with the LED streetlights.

Jenn Reilly worked with town staff and Eversource to draft a letter for residents about Home Energy Solutions Audits. Eversource plans to mail the letters in mid-May. If any resident wants to participate in Solarize and get incentives from CT Green Bank, they will need to get an audit.

Jenn Reilly reported that the issue with rainfall coming through the solar carports at the police station has been resolved and there have been no leaks.

Jenn Reilly reported that Coventry High School is still having problems with their solar panel system. The panels are generating just below anticipated generation but electricity consumption only down by 3%. Tim Sadler said that this issue is not due to the solar panels. Andy DePalma suggested looking into load balancing at the school, which may account for the lack of reduction in electricity consumption.

Jenn Reilly informed the committee that John Elsesser is interested in other places in town that might be compatible with solar generation. Mark Kiefer suggested that Creaser Park may be an option.

Jenn Reilly updated the committee that the town is moving forward on the decision of a natural gas pipeline coming to Town Hall. The committee was pleased that the Town Council decided to move forward on this proposal because natural gas is a cleaner option than oil.

Mark Kiefer reported that they have not started negotiations yet for trash pick-ups and are waiting on the Town Council.

The committee discussed the possibility of tabling at the Coventry Farmer's Market and will re-evaluate June 1st when there is more information about the Solarize program.

Jenn Reilly reported that the committee is a finalist for the DEEP Green Circle Award. Jenn will go to the awards ceremony on May 23 on behalf of the committee.

Jenn Reilly updated that Matt Mullen has officially resigned from the committee. The committee was sad to see him go but wishes him well as he and his family moves to MA.

New Business

The committee is looking for new members. Members must be 18 years or older and registered to vote in Coventry.

The committee is waiting for comments from John Elsesser on the Energy Policy.

The next meeting is June 1st at 6:30.

Jenn Reilly called the meeting to a close at 8:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Danielle Kloster
Secretary