

IREC Steering Committee Minutes — Draft 2

12/03/20

Participating via Zoom: Erica Ko (Thetford), Neal Leitner (Woodstock), Ryan Haac (Strafford), Elizabeth Ferry (Barnard), Doug Fraser (Fairlee), Geoff Martin (IREC/TRORC).

Agenda:

1. Additions/Changes to the agenda
 2. Comments/Questions/Suggestions from the Steering Committee
 3. Updates on Shared Priorities and Opportunities
 4. Budget Planning
 5. Final Thoughts
1. **Addition to the agenda:** (a) discussion of how to report on the IREC position and progress in Town Meeting Reports (typically due late December/early January and (b) introduce new member.
 2. **Comments from the Steering Committee:** everyone is pleased with how things are going.

Welcome: We welcome Erica Ko as the new representative from the Thetford Energy Committee. Erica is an architect by trade and has a particular interest in public outreach.

Suggestion: revisit the conversation about postings for our list-servs

* **Erica** has some materials on current programs, such as Mileage Smart, that have gotten a good response in Thetford. She finds it valuable to let people know “that it’s coming from someone in your town and it applies to you.” She will send it out to the rest of us FYI and to adapt if we like.

* **We agreed each of us** to take responsibility for posting materials to our town list-servs. We agreed that 1-2 times/month seems reasonable.

Related Topic: three towns — Thetford, Sharon, and Woodstock — are participating in Vital Communities’ mobile home weatherization program.

* **Neal** offered to find and send an on-line map that indicates mobile homes in our local communities and send it to us.

3. **Shared Opportunities:**

1. ESPC

Background: All towns except Barnard are participating in the ESPC process. Five companies attended the pre-proposal conference and one more expressed interested later.

Geoff reviews the selection process: Bids from ESPCs due 12/04/20 (day after this meeting). He offers to Zoom the process of opening the bids if anyone would like. He will scan the bids, then send them and a scoring rubric to participating Steering Committee members. We agree that **scoring rubrics will be sent back to Geoff by 3:00pm on Wednesday 12/9/20.*** He will make a recommendation based on that information; if needed, Geoff will arrange interviews between Steering Committee and bidders to make sure all towns are comfortable with the selection.

2. Building Energy Codes and Stretch Codes

Since our last meeting, Geoff has met with Thetford Energy Committee on the topic of Stretch (enhanced) energy codes for new buildings. Erica, drawing on her professional experience, sees that many builders may not know about the current standards expressed in the VT Energy Base Code.

It seems more effective to publicize the VT Energy Base Code (a state-mandated energy code that achieves a good level) rather than creating higher standards at this time.

Geoff has discussed this with his contacts Efficiency VT and Vital Communities. They on board with this approach and looking for back-up in local communities. We can look to this developing further.

3. Charging Stations, GMP

GMP is submitting its leased EV charging station proposal to the Public Service Board. They hope to launch it in January.

Geoff describes what they are offering as “pretty phenomenal.” Terms include: \$45-55/month for a 5 or 7 year lease contract for one port. Includes installation, hook-up, hardware, software, and maintenance. Town would be responsible for the cost of electricity.

Geoff recommends that each town consider this seriously. Will follow up Steering Committee members before approaching selectboards.

4. Solar

Kevin Grady of Strafford posted to the town list-serv a general question to see if any landowners might be interested in hosting a solar array. Four people responded! A group from Strafford has met with VLS to see how to move forward. Geoff presents this as a low-effort but effective way to learn where there is interest in other communities.

Question from Neal: Solar companies inquire about the wind speed in Woodstock. This is so they can calculate appropriate footings or ballasts for solar panels. Where can he get that information?

Responses: Doug (engineer by training): varies a lot by location. Geoff: maybe look at TRORC Wind Energy Potential maps. Erica and Ryan: ask Norwich Solar Technologies due to the volume of local installations.

5. Purchasing Policies

Geoff reported that students at the Vermont Law School clinic have sent him a draft proposal. He has made suggestions: (a) to increase the focus specifically on energy and (b) include procedural steps. He will have more to report by the end of December.

3.6. Future of Rural Transit and 3.7. Fuel Purchasing Collaborative and 3.8. Public Outreach and Agenda Item 4. Budget Planning

Skipped 3.6 and 3.7 and Agenda Item 4 due to time constraints.

Covered 3.8 in other parts of the meeting.

4. Added Item: Reporting about IREC in the Town Report

In Barnard, Elizabeth is thinking of including these elements in the Town Report: energy committee report, report from Geoff, maybe visuals (recalling that Miller was producing charts or graphs of each towns' energy use from Energy Star Portfolio Manager data?), and maybe a page to follow the town budget specifically devoted to energy baselines. Discussion. Visuals a good idea. **Geoff asked us all to send him the deadline for inclusion in our town reports.**

Geoff thanks us for the time and thought we put in on a weekly basis.

Respectfully submitted on 12/08/20
Elizabeth Ferry
Barnard

* **Wisdom of the Day:** in response to Geoff's offer to postpone a date
“We need deadlines, Geoff. Deadlines are good.” :) — Ryan