

IREC Steering Committee Meeting

August 5, 2021

Present: Doc Bagley, Elizabeth Ferry, Linda Gray, Erica Ko, Geoff Martin, Neal Leitner, Ryan Haac. **Regrets:** Nancy Jones, Bradford;

1. **Additions/changes to agenda:** Books we are reading/recommend. See endnote.
2. **High Impact Projects:** Geoff noted that in Year I of the IREC collaboration, many projects that he worked on were town-specific. He and Erica raise the question: In Year II, what can we do to leverage the fact that we have seven towns? Discussion:
 - * **Ideas:** 1. Look at EAN report with its action impact assessment by sector. Each of us send our “votes” to Geoff to tabulate. 2. Green Procurement Policy: adapt Geoff’s document for municipalities for use by residents and businesses.
 - * **Concerns:** Is our focus residential or municipal? Doc sees solar as being his main focus in Strafford, but since conversion to solar/renewables is doing well, should consider giving more attention to transportation and weatherization? Erica: wood heating being promoted as a positive goal. Elizabeth: forests, carbon sinking capacity, rapid increase in opportunity to enroll in carbon certificate market (similar issues to RECs). General: accuracy of data offered for the Enhanced Energy Plan process by TRORC.
 - * **Questions:** If we chose transportation as a focus, possibly do a survey to get accurate data?

Action: Geoff will send out an email to solicit feedback from us.

3. **VLITE** — Vermont Low-Income Trust for Electricity. This group awards grants that lessen energy burden and further the goals of the Comprehensive Energy Plan. Geoff raises the question of putting together a proposal: as people need to replace heating systems, vehicles, etc, we would have a pool of funds to cover the incremental difference between the climate choice and the conventional choice. This would be a 0% loan.

Discussion: We agreed that EVT has a role to play. Doc advocates for their sharpening their focus on getting people off fossil fuels. No clear action decided upon.
4. **HERS:** how to move forward most effectively?

Discussion/ideas: Involve energy committees *and* planning commissions? Try to move ahead in all IREC towns, or all interested ones, simultaneously? Make this a workshop at the annual VECAN conference?

Actions: 1. Each person find a good central contact in town. 2. Create a FAQ sheet. 3. Geoff will pursue further in 1:1 meetings.

5. **Net Metering:** Geoff let us know about an opportunity to comment on a low-income community solar program that CEDF is developing. The straw proposal includes 3rd party financing, selling RECs, giving a discount to participants. We have some serious concerns.

Note deadline: August 18.

Actions: 1. Geoff will check with Peter to see if he can comment on behalf of our group; if so, he will draft and circulate a response. 2. Any of us can also submit comments.

https://publicservice.vermont.gov/sites/dps/files/documents/Renewable_Energy/CEDF/

[CSREP RFI 7-19-21.pdf](#)

6. Endnote: What we are reading and/or recommend:

Landmarks and The Wild Places by Robert MacFarlane

The Ministry of the Future by Kim Stanley Robinson

Limits to Growth by Dennis and Donella Meadows

Caste by Isabel Wilkerson

Blood and Treasure: Daniel Boone and the Fight for America's First Frontier by Robert Drury and Tom Clavin

The Magic Treehouse (read aloud with son Sol) by Mary Pope Osborne