



IREC Steering Committee Meeting

Minutes

March 14, 2023 via Zoom

Present: Ryan Haac, Nancy Jones, Jenevra Wetmore, Linda Gray, Erica Ko, Jeff Grout

1. **No changes or additions to the agenda.**
2. **Approved Dec 2022, Jan & Feb 2023 minutes**
3. **RBES Committee Update**
 - ZA day-long training (planning focused) tentatively scheduled for 4/27, invites will go out soon to ZAs and contacts at Town Offices & Steering Committee. Unsure whether online or in-person.
 - Met last week w/Rep. Rebecca Holcombe who introduced a bill covering the topics we discussed with her including: 1) HERS-only compliance pathway, 2) Useful data collection, 3) Not having renewal energy projects rejected based on aesthetics. RH plans to continue to discuss with Chair of Environment & Energy Committee – hopefully various parts of this bill will get rolled into other larger bills. Sen. Becca White is also aware of these actions.
 - If HERS Compliance-only passes, we will try to get our towns to exercise this option, and potentially others – Hartland sounds interested.
4. **CAP Website**
 - Is it too buried on TRORC site? Yes – website is being updated this month.
 - Is it the expectation that we will be tracking progress as stated in the CAP? Likely very difficult to do – we can work towards it. Drop first sentence under “Tracking Process” but keep the rest.
 - These are guidance not requirements.
 - **ACTION:**
 - **Review language in this document to ensure that this is clear.**
 - **Eliminate link to spreadsheet version of CAP – difficult to read.**
5. **Community Action Committee Update (Climate Action for You)**
 - Should we keep this webpage updated with events? Clarified that this webpage is supposed to serve as resource documents, events are separately advertised.
 - If we would like events advertised on the TRORC website send to Jeff. Where would those events show up – on main calendar or are those just TRORC events – **Jeff to confirm?** Probably don't need a separate calendar since that already exists with VECAN etc.
 - TRORC monthly e-newsletter – would they like to include our energy events in this? A section is for energy events – **let Jeff know, he will let us know when newsletter deadline goes out.**
6. **Updated Town Energy Inventory**
 - Track power (somewhat challenging as you have to track by individual meters) and fuel usage in buildings and ideally fleet (and eventually per vehicle). Useful to ensure projected savings in energy projects are realized. Bradford recently purchased hybrid cruiser so will be interesting to see fuel savings there.
 - Would like to track separately grounds maintenance equipment. Jeff has list of companies that use all-electric equipment that we could share with our towns – though many companies won't go all towns in our area. **Jeff will follow up to find which companies will work with which towns.**

- Norwich looked at purchasing electric mower last year, they didn't proceed but pledged to revisit in spring. Perhaps a group of towns could go to a demo and buy one. Hard to do a demo of multiple different brands/models unless a very large event – possibly a smaller event with one or two mowers. Would grounds crews be interested in traveling to Burlington to see demo? Might be difficult with travel time.
- Jeff has been talking to Sean Lawson (Lawson's Brewery) – they have solar on roof, solar canopy in parking – might be an interesting place for a demo/meeting.
- Bradford carries electric chainsaws in their plows and they're very happy with them. Bradford also has electric pole saws & leaf blowers. Challenge that their garage isn't large enough to house all their expensive equipment – a solar canopy might be a possibility.
- Additional TRORC staff will be assisting with data collection. **Identify who in our towns are the best contact for this.**

7. **MERP Update**

- 3 stages: 1) \$4K mini-grant for education/outreach – sounds almost guaranteed if applied for. Can this be used towards cost of IREC position? For a study Norwich is working on? **Send Jeff specifics on what we'd like to use grant for and Jeff can confirm if use is acceptable.**
- **Who would TRORC recommend to reach out to in Woodstock to do the application?** Likely sent in by Town Manager, but could be prepared by anyone.

8. **Town Meeting Energy Updates**

- Bradford – no questions regarding IREC cost. 3 new, young SB members will be open to energy work. More younger people also showed up for Town Meeting this year.
- Woodstock – prior to Town Meeting they got the IREC position into the budget, budget passed.
- Strafford – budget passed and no questions on IREC position.
- Sharon – IREC was warned article and passed with no “no” votes. Also had opportunity to point a resident to some of the resources that we've been working on like Climate Action For You.
- Norwich – Town budget had fairly large increase but passed fine. New SB members acknowledge something has to be done about Town Hall.
- Thetford – No changes to SB and budget passed. Town Manager is leaving at the end of this month so trying to determine new point of contact for town.

9. **Energy Committee/misc. Updates**

- Solaflect is developing an off-grid EV charger (~Level 2) through a tracker (no battery storage) for businesses (not so much for residents). Prototype at Fog's Hardware (need RFID card). Will either be bought outright or leased. No guarantee you'll get a charge (cloudy days) but no building permit, electrical interconnection, no excavation.
- Bradford is installing 4 chargers in May downtown (will plan event with EVs & e-bikes & live music – hope to use MERP mini-grant – hopefully a weekend in May). Norwich Technologies got grant from state so at no cost to Bradford they are proposing 4 add'l chargers in 2024, then 4 more in 2025 for a total of 12 charging stations in town – SB needs to approve.
- **TRORC is updating website – provide feedback.**
- Jeff will be reaching out to us to schedule monthly 1:1s. Still pretty buried so feel free to be in touch.

10. **Next meeting:** 4/11/23 at 1PM.

Respectfully submitted, Erica Ko