

IREC Steering Committee Meeting

Tuesday February 6, 2024

1:00 PM – 2:15 PM

Present: Harry Falconer, Linda Gray, Ryan Haac, Nancy Jones, Erica Ko, David Lutz, Jenevra Wetmore

MINUTES

1. Welcome

2. Introductions

Harry talked about his background and what interested him about the IREC program. Each of the steering committee members then gave a brief introduction of themselves. It was generally acknowledged that there is a diversity and wealth of experience among the committee members.

3. General updates on shared projects

a. Energy data tracking

Work is ongoing to update each town's Energy Star account. Other TRORC staff are helping Harry do data entry and track down heating fuel bills.

b. Net-metering reconciliation

Only Norwich's reconciliation is up to date. Woodstock's PPA is confusing, and Harry requires further context on the history of the array. Harry and Jenevra agreed to collaborate on getting that context and interpreting the PPA. Harry surveyed the SC members about the general terms of their net-metering agreements.

c. IREC contract renewal

Harry was still waiting on town reports to confirm that IREC made it into each town's budget request for renewal.

d. Schedule time at selectboard meetings for after Town Meeting Day

Harry has scheduled a visit to the Woodstock selectboard but is waiting until after Town Meeting Day to schedule the rest. Selectboards are busy going into TM Day and may have turnover.

4. Green Procurement

The group discussed the need for green procurement policies in each town and the history of trying to implement these policies. Harry noted the importance of integrating "green" language into towns' existing procurement policies, rather than creating a separate policy. The group agreed on a strategy of "greening your procurement policy" rather than pushing for separate additional policies. Harry has a meeting with Thetford Town Manager Brian Story next week to discuss Thetford's procurement policies and what he would like to see in future amendments to make them more usable for town staff.

William B Emmons III, Chair ~ Peter G. Gregory, AICP, Executive Director
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5. EVSE Level-3 Charger Applications

Harry checked in with the SC members from each of the four towns that are eligible for this program. Outreach is being conducted in Woodstock and Thetford to meet with possible landowners. Harry and Ryan agreed to coordinate on a unified strategy for Sharon's potential EVSE and NEVI sites. David and Harry agreed that Strafford is not a good candidate for this grant since it does not lie on any high-traffic corridors.

6. EEI Project Check-Ins

EEI has been poor at communicating their access needs for their work in Woodstock. Town Manager Eric Duffy has expressed frustration with the process. Harry has helped facilitate contractor access to the Town Welcome Center when needed. The Thetford Town Hall heat pumps continue to have issues. EEI assigned a new staff member to the project, and he has been more communicative, but they have been unable to resolve the problem. Erica noted that the town has lost a tremendous amount of buy-in for future energy retrofit projects.

7. Open Grant Opportunities

a. Sustainable Schools Grant

Harry noted that this program would likely award just four grants statewide and is mainly intended for shovel-ready projects in low-income areas. Bradford would be the best fit, but Nancy noted that the school district itself is in good financial health and she was unaware of any projects ready to break ground.

b. Libraries Capital Projects Grant

Harry and David agreed to coordinate on potentially putting together a last-minute application for the Strafford library, but they have done very little preliminary work to prepare for a grant application. Linda will reach out to the Norwich library director about a potential application there.

8. New business and/or discussion items

Harry asked about the process for reviewing draft minutes and the lead time for meeting agendas. The group agreed that responsibility for taking minutes should rotate in the future. Draft minutes will be reviewed and approved at the following meeting. Harry then asked about the frequency of written reports for each town. It was agreed that monthly reports may be needlessly time-consuming and may not show a tremendous amount of progress on certain projects with long timeframes. Ryan recommended a quarterly frequency.

Next Meeting: March 12th at 1:00pm via Zoom