

**Barre City Energy Committee
Meeting Minutes
August 26, 2019**

Committee Members Present: E. Wang, P. Cecchini, C. Teal

Absent: R. Palmer

Staff Present: J. Shatney

1. **Call to Order:** 5:32 pm by Co-Chair E. Wang
2. **Visitors and Communications:** None.
3. **Changes to the Agenda?** None.
4. **Approve meeting minutes for June 24, 2019:** Motion made by C. Teal and seconded by P. Cecchini to approve the minutes, motion carried.

Approve meeting minutes for July 22, 2019: Motion made by P. Cecchini and seconded by C. Teal to approve the minutes, motion carried.

5. **Discuss energy plan community engagement bidders:** Got ready for EcoStrategies at call on 5:45. E. Wang disclosed that she worked for EcoStrategies when she first came to Vermont.

Question 1: 2 references where she did energy related activities, like Colchester first draft of the energy plan, and Mplr 2030 design competition. Middlebury – not directly on energy plans, but work on.

Side discussion: she asked if we were doing anything on energy plan related activities. RPC did the bones of the data and plan, and what we have is compliant, but want her to flesh out what we are going to do based on community input. Will have to move its way back into plan format eventually. The work plan, a hybrid animal, there will be a process for that, and we don't have that in. Energy compliant plan – E. Wang explained we don't need substantial deference, as we don't have enough land. But having an enhanced energy plan recognized is a good thing.

Question 2: Encouraging greater buy in, and better creation, for example heat pumps, etc. really need the right people participating in it. Would the committee remain, it could be a subcommittee of the BCEC, needs connections with the community, has partners, can take on a whole lot of fun and participation in the community. Not the normal people you want to reach. Could be handpicked, or those that show what is going to focus on. Celebrate what we already have done. Her idea of the steering committee.

Follow-up would be the steering committee would plan, or EcoStrategies, or the BCEC. Middlesex did a community engagement, so they had a dinner that kicked off a day long

Saturday with the dinner before, and formed 4 subcommittees to focus on the specific things, fosters communication, rec and trails, etc. Pop ups and ways like survey notions...how do you survey people? Montpelier had proposed design visuals in storefronts with that committee's help that would volunteer to walk around and imagine what some of these would look like. If there was more solar, what would that look like and a vision?

E. Wang needs advice on how to best engage our community? Feels wrong because we are supposed to be doing this, how best do we survey this community? Are there questions to ask the BCEC? What about a community event, if relying on and get everyone there to get input, would the BCEC be the ones in getting people to the table? We have not been successful in getting people to attend, come and share ideas. EcoStrategies said that it's about being publicly visible. It might be a chalk board around town, or white boards where people can actually put their ideas out there. Like the sticky wall seen on commercials. Why would people come to a community event, what do you think, etc.? How do you engage the new Americans, those that are struggling to get food on the table, how do you get them to attention and give input? In the hallways at a school as they are dropping kids off at school.

Flexibility around an event, but is her perception that this is what we need, is the advice on the how. Is this going to increase hours, for her to do this part of the work? She asked if the January 2020 was a deadline, and E explained that there is no grant, there is no hard end date.

She's read some energy plans and said that some were discriminatory, and there is a lawsuit brewing that some towns are just not going to be able to be met. Policy changes and rule changes with the PUC (Public Utilities Commission) is going on right now.

Which sector is most important? Building efficiency, transportation, conservation, to encourage public and private partnerships. The energy committee can inspire people. Will have to write this all up in an energy plan, and meets the spirit and intent of the energy plan/

E asked about the number of hours to do this plan. We have this end goal, but not sure how to do it. Wants some parameters, and EcoStrategies should tell us what she expects. She is looking to leverage her time with her other projects in the transportation side, and paid by others.

EcoStrategies asks: if there is no transportation related work here, electric vehicles are not going to be that which affects the transportation portion. Having a good solid transportation corridor will help.

Charging stations and electric vehicles will not help the energy savings number. If it's about the public engagement process, that could chew up some of her hours, growing in a way that, what she brings to the table is her experience with partners and difference

stakeholders to bridge a gap, get them to the table. She said she could put 100 hours in at her billable rate, donated time.

Consideration of a mailing survey to get a larger amount of people to express their opinions. She just did a paper survey for Darn Tough Socks. Was very heartening to feel the pulse in the room that was very uplifting, for sustainably for the company. Workforce crisis in Vermont, Barre to Northfield, East Barre to Northfield. High enough return when doing so, how to collect that information. Survey on FPF, etc. to collect information. How to do it is the million dollar question. (Her surveys got good return, but she didn't share how well she did.) Her response rate, as E. Wang asked, she said 10-15% response is never good enough, she would want 40%, but took work and cheerleading and constant attention. Really value people's opinion, so went the extra line, filled it out for people.

J. Shatney is going to call references this week, and push the overall schedule back into February, will be flexible. Will award within the month, will make recommendation to City Council soon, with the ability to have City Council award soon.

She asked if we are looking at all 3 sectors, for the purpose of the plan, yes, but for implementation that will take more people to be on the committee and do the work.

C. Teal asked his thoughts on the interview: could have comment cards, could drop them off, have drop boxes, there are other ways she could help us. Seems to not be set on any one thing. Overall assessment, how does he feel she should get the award, likes that she would donate time, but is still comfy her being the first choice.

P. Cecchini – done this before, understands where we are and are not at, invested in energy efficiency. Has other resources in the community to network and bring in, above the other respondents.

J. Shatney gave her opinion and E. Wang said that with EcoStrategies, she gets that we need everyone to participate. Her main concern that she addressed is that she is too accommodating. So that tracking time will be on both our sides. More comfortable than ever.

J. Shatney to follow up with references just to have to touch base.

E. Wang will follow up with R. Palmer on this conversation. J. Shatney will email everyone what she finds out.

Phone meeting Thursday the 29th? P. Cecchini could do late in the day 3:30, 4 pm. Maybe 4 pm Thursday the 29th. Ask R. Palmer if 9 am works for her. P. Cecchini could do 8 am or 9, need to ask R. Palmer. 8 am or 9 am this Thursday.

Message from M Hood at Efficiency Vermont – is there anything we need of her assistance; nothing to ask of this moment.

6. **Button-Up:** P. Cecchini said it feeds into what we are trying to do. Having an expert led workshop is good. Expert led workshop, or a home energy tour. P. Cecchini moves that we do Button up 2019 and do the expert led workshop. Seconded by C. Teal. Discussion: never done a home tour, but could try it again, and we have a willing home already (Fred Pond). The expert led workshop is a good idea. P. Cecchini accepts friendly amendment to do both, C. Teal seconds. Unanimous to do both for Button Up 2019.
7. **Energy Committee Report submission:** Annual report tabled to September meeting.

ACTION ITEMS/To Do:

- a. **Sign up for Button-Up 2019: P. Cecchini did at meeting, all set.**
 - b. **Read for September meeting the Committee's submission draft for the annual report;**
 - c. **J. Shatney to call EcoStrategies references Tuesday August 26 and report back to the committee;**
 - d. **Secure a meeting time on Thursday, August 29 if possible, at 8 am or 9 am with R. Palmer. If not good for her, J. Shatney to send out Doodle Poll for date and times next week.**
8. **Transportation and Climate Initiative:** J. Shatney going, would anyone else like to attend? No one else can attend.
 9. **Roundtable:** P. Cecchini nothing, C. Teal nothing.
 10. **Motion to Adjourn:** Motion to adjourn at 7:55 pm by P. Cecchini, seconded by C. Teal, motion carried.