

Energy Action Committee
Zoom Meeting, 02/23/2021, 19:37

Present: Paul Heanue (PH), Mike Kacherovich (MK), Mark LeBel (ML), Brad Moyer (BM), and Michael Reive (MR)

Absent: Beth Porter (BP)

The meeting began with a review of the minutes from the previous meeting. The minutes were unanimously approved.

BM began by providing an update on the Climate Action Planning Task Force. He discussed how the task force was currently working on finalizing a proposed budget for the climate action planning process, and that the task force would be meeting with representatives from Concord to discuss their plan and budget. MR asked whether the task force was aware of any opposition to the warrant articles to date, and BM responded that he was not aware of any, and that reception so far from the Selectmen and public has been positive. PH agreed, stating that he thought the Selectmen were very supportive.

MK noted that the warrant article is to fund a study the result of which is a plan that could recommend the Town expend a great deal of funds in the future. This is where the world is going and what other communities in Massachusetts and beyond are doing, and so it is important to get ahead of it. Further to that, BM indicated the need to work out messaging with the Massachusetts Roadmap Bill likely heading to passage. The task force will need to message the planning process properly so that citizens understand that the Roadmap Bill doesn't alleviate the need for local action. Lastly, MR expressed view that the Town needs a dedicated person on staff to move the climate planning effort forward.

Following the Roadmap Bill point, discussion ensued about working with Hingham's elected representatives. PH asked if he knew whether State Representative James Murphy was supportive of these efforts. ML mentioned that Rep. Murphy is supportive, perhaps not as vocal or in front of the issue as is Rep. Meschino, but supportive nonetheless.

Conversation then pivoted to the Green Communities program. BM gave an overview of the Green Communities grants program. PH noted that the South Shore Country Club (SSCC) approached the citizens group Hingham Net Zero HNZ and PH regarding a new maintenance facility building and making it green. Heating is a concern, and the desire is for air source heat pumps. MK mentioned that grants only apply to efficiency of existing structures, but perhaps there would be an opportunity here. MR proposed a ground-source heat pump for a retaining pond at SSCC as a possible project that could receive grant funding. MK and MR agreed to continue work on exploring Green Communities grant opportunities.

BM next discussed the work of the Public Safety Facility Building Committee (PSFBC), and whether there was an opportunity for the Committee to work collaboratively with the PSFBC on incorporating energy efficient and green designs to any new structure that may result from their

work. ML agreed that he would assist with that effort. BM indicated that he would reach out to the chair of the PSFBC and offer the Committee's assistance.

MR then asked for an update on electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in the town. PH indicated that there are multiple grant opportunities from the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) available for EVs generally, and that HMLP is applying for grants. PH indicated that there will be no EV charging stations at Town Hall because parking options are limited, and EV chargers would take up needed spots. Station Street is able to support two EV chargers. HMLP applied for Level 3 chargers there. Additional locations that could support chargers include by Stop & Shop, the SSCC, and by HMLP at Bare Cove Park Drive. Grants likely will not be awarded until the fall of 2021. MR raised the possibility of including EV chargers at the new Public Safety Facility Building in the event police cruisers go electric at some point. Derby Street was also raised as a possibility, but PH noted that, while HMLP has an easement by Derby Street, the easement doesn't allow for an EV charger.

The next meeting was scheduled for March 15th at 7:30pm. The meeting adjourned at 20:35.