

**Belmont Energy Committee Meeting Minutes
March 14, 2018**

2018 APR 12 AM 9:26

Present: Marty Bitner, James Booth, Roger Colton, Jenny Marusiak, Don Mercier

Chair Colton called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

1. **Power Supply Policy.** The committee went through the draft Power Supply Policy from LBAC. The only alteration that was suggested was to add the specification that it should be reviewed *"by the Light Board."* Don Mercier noted that the reviewed policy should be initialed and dated annually.

It was noted that the policy commits Belmont Light to meeting Clean Energy Standards each year and also revisiting whether more aggressive action is needed. It was noted that the Energy Committee could have an ongoing role in advocating for aggressive action. Roger Colton noted that there are two questions to be addressed in gauging public sentiment: what percentage of renewables do we want, and what cost are we willing to pay?

2. **Climate Action Plan Roadmap.** Jenny Marusiak spoke about developing a public engagement plan for a strategic roadmap for meeting the goals of the Climate Action Plan, a roadmap that she and Travis Franck and James Booth are working on. The engagement plan has three stages:
 1. Develop a draft Roadmap plan.
 - a. Consult with key stakeholders; these could include the Vision 21 committee; Sustainable Belmont; Town Administrator, Belmont Tariff Group, Facilities Manager.
 - b. Consult with town committees (Possible committees that were suggested included: Warrant Committee, Planning Committee, Housing Trust, Housing Authority, Traffic Advisory Committee, Community Path, School Committee.)
 2. Public campaign, open houses, inviting town meeting members
 3. Asking for approval from Town Meeting

Other possible groups to consult were suggested:

Green PTO/PTA group; Recreation Commission; Safe Routes to Schools; Historic District Commission (since it's more environmentally friendly to preserve existing buildings than to build new ones); Farmer's Market; Belmont Center and Cushing Square Business Associations; Belmont/Watertown Chamber of Commerce; Friends of various Park Groups (e.g. Friends of Grove Street Park)

Marusiak noted that one outcome of this consultation should be to establish the understanding that carbon impacts should be integrated into all town decisions. Marty Bitner noted that education could be facilitated at the same time as soliciting input. E.g. Belmont Café has a heat pump; perhaps they could present about their experience to fellow businesses.

It was noted that in light of limited Energy Committee resources, it will be important to think of people within each committee to approach to act as champions for putting the plan together.

It was noted that Selectman Paolillo has said on multiple occasions that he would welcome the Energy Committee coming to talk to the Selectmen more often.

The Energy Committee would need a webpage for this initiative and would want control of its content. The BHS Building Committee has a website that can be linked to from the town site; we could inquire of them how this was achieved. Marusiak noted that in the interest of transparency, we would want to get a draft roadmap plan posted on a website as soon as possible. The group will attempt to have a draft plan for the committee in time for the next meeting.

Engaging Town Meeting:

The question was raised as to whether an aim is to get the plan approved by Town Meeting (TM). Colton noted that the CAP was approved by TM, but the Housing Production plan is not going to TM. Taking a report to TM would give access to the Town Clerk to disseminate information to TM members. Also, since Belmont Light has indicated it will follow the will of the town on procurement, it will be important to have TM endorsement of policy choices. It was felt that TM itself may, however, not be the best venue for extensive discussion due to time constraints, and that instead we should have open consultation sessions before that to which TM members are invited. The goal, then, would be to aim for TM next year, taking this year to do outreach and education. TM should however be given a heads-up *this* year about what we are working on, in particular noting strategic electrification as a key component of the plan. Colton will email Mike Widmer, Adam Dash, and the Town Clerk about doing a short (5 minute) presentation to TM (5 minutes). Presenters will plan to run such a presentation by the Energy Committee in advance. Colton suggested also maybe assembling a one-pager to insert in the materials that go to Town Meeting; Marusiak said she could prepare this.

3. **Plastic bags:** Don Mercier noted that there is discussion in town about a plastic bag ban and expressed his view that the Energy Committee should take a position on this, since replacement of plastic bags with paper bags actually increases carbon emissions. He will send an article on this point to Chair Colton for distribution.
4. **Composting:** Massachusetts has a new grant program that will provide local governments \$10-100,000 grants to operate curbside composting pickup. There was discussion about whether Belmont should plan for something like a 500-household pilot project and put out to bid. The idea would be that this might ignite interest from a contractor after the pilot. Marusiak expressed concern that this doesn't address the upstream trash (non-food waste)-related emissions, and suggested coupling compost pick up to reduced trash pickup (to every two weeks). Colton will contact Priya Narasimhan to inquire where efforts at composting in schools stand and will report back.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM

Minutes written and submitted by James Booth