

Belmont Energy Committee Meeting Minutes

February 15th, 2023

Opening

The regular meeting of the Belmont Energy Committee came to order at 19 o'clock as a virtual meeting led by James Booth.

Present

- Claus C Becker - Scribe
- Marty Bitner
- James Booth - Chair
- John Kolterman
- Brian Kopperl
- Ellie Lesser
- Greg Piotrowicz
- Ben Thivierge
- Alex Thurston
- Roger Wrubel

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TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA

DATE: April 26, 2023
TIME: 8:10 AM

Absent

Donald Mercier

Approval of January 18 Minutes

The January minutes were approved with minor changes. Alex Thurston abstained since he was absent at that meeting.

Open Issues

1. Approval of January minutes
Minutes approved as amended.
2. Discussion with Mike Macrae, Belmont Light Board
Mike Macrae is on the Municipal Lightboard. He spoke about cost-effective decarbonization strategies that meet goals of reliable electricity service, lowest possible cost, and reduction of CO₂ pollution. Options include reducing emissions in Belmont and boosting renewable energy across the Northeast. Belmont Light purchases RECs from New England suppliers so supply can be called *green*. As of January 2022, 30 GW of clean energy is proposed to be built in NE, so trajectory is for all electricity supplied in New England (NE) to be renewable.

Much of this power will be sold on long-term contracts which ensures supply. Commission discussed factors that influence optimal power-purchasing strategy in view of expectation of falling prices of renewables. Mike Macrae noted the tension between goal of purchasing green energy and goal of keeping electricity rates low so heat pumps and EVs are the lowest cost options.

3. Warrant article: Adoption of Opt-In Specialized Stretch Code

Roger, James and Brian went to Select Board to present the warrant for adoption of Specialized Opt-In energy code. Two-thirds of Select Board seemed favorably disposed. No news from Warrant Committee. Adoption of Opt-In code is not expected to add costs. Like all codes, including the current code, this would be enforced by building inspectors.

Stretch Code (Updated from previous Stretch Code)	Specialized Opt-In (New Code Option 12/2022)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Covers new buildings in towns and cities that adopted, including all green communities• 300 communities governed by this code• DOER updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local communities can adopt this more ambitious code• Only new construction impacted• Adds requirements for pre-wiring for electrification in mixed fuel use buildings and addition of roof-top solar

4. Warrant article: EV long-term leases

Committee unanimously authorized Brian Koppel to send amended letter to Select Board requesting specialized code and ten-year EV term contract warrants to be put before Town Meeting in spring 2023.

5. BEAM (Building Energy Analysis Manager) - possibility for Belmont

Ben Thivierge made the committee aware of BEAM, a software for helping communities achieve building energy policy goals. Ben Thivierge suggested that Belmont might be able to purchase this software using DoE funds. Unclear which department would be using the tool and reporting consumption of energy, water and so on. Obligation for town to report may exist in 2023.

<https://neep.org/solutions-low-carbon-states-and-communities/beam-building-energy-analysis-manager>

Committee agreed that this should be parked for now but has the potential to help the town meet goals for optimizing resource use.

6. Sherman Gardens redevelopment (Sycamore St)

Greg Piotrowicz reported that \$400k is being requested at Town Meeting for planning phase of renovation of 80 units owned by Belmont Housing Authority. Some new construction may also happen. Total cost may be around \$85M

7. Proposal for the Town hiring a contractor to work on Green Communities grants and other opportunities.

A contractor may have been identified who can help get grants for town. Next step is getting Select Board on board.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned 21:12 o'clock.

Next Meeting will be on Wed. March 15, 19:00 o'clock.