

Belmont Energy Committee Meeting Minutes

September 27th, 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
- James Booth - Chair
- John Kolterman
- Greg Piotrowicz
- Marty Bitner
- Brian Kopperl
- Ellie Lesser
- Roger Wrubel

Absent

Ben Thivierge

Approval of June Minutes

The June minutes were approved with minor changes. Claus Becker abstained since he was absent at that meeting.

Open Issues

1. Next Steps For EVs For Town Fleet

Marty Bitner reported on meeting with town employees to discuss EV adoption.

Two main obstacles were noted by town representatives:

- a. Fire chief suggested building might not be suitable for wiring for EVs.
The validity of that conclusion will depend on the number of EVs and if battery storage is available

- b. Availability of specialty vehicles (e.g. snow plows) could be limited
Roger W has asked Glenn Clancy (Office of Planning and Building) if it would be possible to park school buses at the transfer station. Answer should be forthcoming.

2. Belmont Green House Gas Inventory Update

Committee wants to track progress towards the climate road map. James Booth discussed his analysis of CO2 emissions from Belmont during the period 2014 – 2021.

Cars: total number of cars and miles/day driven constant at ~17,500 cars and ~25 miles/day (US average is ~39 miles per day). There are now approx. 500 battery-only vehicles in Belmont (~3% of total) and ~250 plug-in vehicles.

Fuel oil consumption is down by 30% from 2014. Electricity and gas use is approximately constant.

On the current track, Belmont will be zero emission come 2050 only if fossil gas use is reduced.

Belmont Light is buying New England renewable energy certificates to cover Belmont's consumption of electricity, so the town's draw is non-emitting.

3. Specialized Building Code

Roger W. and Marty B. met with Chris Ryan, Sr Planner, from Belmont town. Public Select Board hearing on Oct 23rd or Oct 30th. Roger will present to this committee as a test run. Twenty-one MA towns have adopted the specialized code. The improved building code will be discussed at Town Meeting in the fall.

4. Hanscom Expansion

Committee agreed that expansion of airport is not covered by Committee's charge.

5. Reports

a. BMHS Solar

Brian Kopperl reported that panels are being laid down starting now. Expected operational in February 2024. Approximately one megawatt capacity with annual production of ~1.15MWh/yr.

b. Belmont Light Municipal Light Board

No update

c. Library Building Committee

Bitner discussed possibility of getting a grant to offset cost of electrification. Green Communities (an MA initiative to help municipalities reduce energy use in public buildings) no longer provide grants for new construction and neither do CPA funds.

d. Structural Change Committee

No update

e. Comprehensive Capital Budget Committee

Claus B. updated committee on effort to prepare budgets for spring Town Meeting.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 21 o'clock. Next Meeting will be on Wednesday, October 25, 19:00 o'clock.