

October 5, 2022

Present: DPW Director Wayne Amaral, DPW Project Manager Christine Wallace, Rick Parker, Chip Wallace, Camden Holland, Elisa Grammer.

Solar feasibility study. Wayne, as chief procurement officer for the town, and Christine need to be involved in the hiring of a consultant to do the feasibility study. The Housing Authority has expressed interest in doing a solar project on its building and property. They were glad to hear we are considering a townwide project that they can participate in.

The federal Inflation Reduction Act provides new options for nonprofit organizations to benefit from tax breaks for renewable energy projects. The legislation provides other potential benefits as well, related to community development. Camden will put together and distribute a summary of the benefits to a municipality like West Newbury.

Cadmus was previously identified as a consultant that could perform the feasibility study and has been helpful in providing preliminary information. Ameresco is another service provider the town has worked with and is also highly qualified. We will send the proposed scope of work to both companies.

Chip will update the scope of work document based on the discussion and circulate it for comment, including to Wayne and Christine.

Green Communities grant application. Rick provided an update on a project to improve space and water heating controls in the Council on Aging and 1910 Building. The town meeting article asks for \$16,500. We recently realized that applications are scored in part based on metrics including tons of CO2 reduced per grant dollar. On that basis, the select board decided to use \$8500 in unspent funds from a previous related project to raise the local match to \$25,000. The application will be submitted this week.

National Grid recently announced significant electricity rate increases for the next six months. Higher electricity costs increase the calculated economic benefits of the project and reduce the simple payback period to less than 10 years.

Elisa recommended posting information on the committee website on what residents can do to save energy and money. She will draft some website content for committee review and approval.

Municipal aggregation. The committee approved Elisa's draft pamphlet for use at town meeting with one change. The pamphlet will be distributed on the committee website and a Facebook page. Elisa will check with the Town Clerk on additional email and website options to distribute the pamphlet.

Net Zero at home. How can we get homeowners in town to think more about moving toward net zero at home? Ideas: highlight indoor air issues associated with gas stoves in the home. Raise awareness of available programs and incentives, like Mass Save. Provide useful ideas about managing costs when energy prices are high. Consider changes to town building permit fees to encourage solar and efficiency, discuss with Building Inspector Sam Joslin.

Rick will look into data available from National Grid on penetration of solar in West Newbury.