

Cape Elizabeth Alternative Energy Committee
Minutes: May 20, 2008

Present: Wyman Briggs, Ted Hawkes, Peter Ingraham, Alan Lishness, Ernie MacVane

Absent: Sara Lennon, Bill Slack, David Whitten

Guests: Anne Holland, Steve Linnell, and Bob Malley

Wymann Briggs presided over the meeting because Bill Slack was unable to attend.

I. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Minutes for April 30, 2008 meeting were unanimously approved

II. Municipal Vehicles and Public Works Expenses

- Director of Public Works for Cape Elizabeth, Bob Malley was introduced and reviewed the main tasks of the public works department including winter and summer road maintenance, park and landscape maintenance (they mow over 150 acres of grounds), fleet operations, etc. He stressed that the amount of fuel consumption for his department is highly dependent on the severity and longevity of winter.
- Bob said the public works department uses diesel and unleaded gas. Last year they switched to B5 biodiesel for all their vehicles (including school busses) and equipment that runs on diesel. They have had no problems so far with B5 but would not be comfortable going to B20 because of potential problems and possible warranty invalidations.
- The Public Works department also has an informal no-idling policy that Bob would like to make more formal in the future. He estimates that an idling vehicle burns between two and three gallons per hour.
- He also noted that the high school and middle/elementary schools now start close to the same time so busses can pick up all ages of kids at once. They no longer have to do the same route twice.
- Bob said they are also looking for ways to conserve energy by limiting the number of unnecessary trips. The shift of the Public Works Department away from the Town Center has advantages (closer to sand and salt piles) and disadvantages (not as central—have to drive more).
- Bob suggested that Cape Elizabeth's location away from major roadways often forces Cape Elizabeth to pay a premium for paving, etc. He said a lot of contractors are now factoring a fuel surcharge into their bids.
- Bob will get Steve a report on fuel consumption by the gallon and vehicle type for Cape Elizabeth.

II. Template

- Wyman spoke about the report template he put together and suggested that the report for the City Council should be 5 to 10 pages in length with more descriptive appendices.
- Wyman suggested the Committee use Chris' report as a starting point and come up with more detailed, Cape-specific information for their report. It was suggested that the Committee look at local case studies including the windmill in Saco and Westbrook's geothermal heating system.
- It was suggested that the Committee members are getting stuck on the "divide and conquer" approach which requires people to do homework before each meeting. With summer coming up, it may be hard to get people to do 5 to 10 hours of work and report to the committee.
- It is possible the biggest impact the Committee could make may be to get behind the recommendations that professionals like Ernie make. It would be harder for the City Council to push aside efficiency upgrades if a citizen committee backed them.

III. Reports and Proposals

- Ernie presented the proposal he got from Harriman's to do an energy audit. He said it represents a lot of the low hanging fruit (including CO2 sensors that would save 200 gallons per classroom per year while the cost of each sensor is only \$400).
- Ernie reported that the new lighting for the pool and other areas has been ordered. He got a grant from Efficiency Maine that will cover half of the \$13,000 cost. It was suggested that there is a story for the Courier in the pool lights alone. The ceiling height of the pool area was discussed.
- Ernie reported that it would cost \$15,000 to convert from oil to propane and the first year would save \$40,000.
- Ernie is working on getting a full cost appraisal to convert from oil to natural gas. There was discussion about the piping to get the natural gas to the school and municipal buildings. It was suggested that piping is preferable to fuels that need to be delivered.
- There was discussion about how the community may react to natural gas or propane.
- A woodchip burner and cogeneration were mentioned again as good options for efficiency and cost-savings.
- Alan suggested having a diversity of heating systems in the town. Perhaps woodchips at the largest building and prototyping geothermal under the athletic fields.
- Ernie said he is skeptical of geothermal.

IV. Grants

- Wyman reported that Efficiency Maine is collecting proposals to subsidize or fully cover the cost of one or more anemometers. The deadline is June 30. He was uncertain whether the location of the anemometers had to be determined by that date. Alan suggested the Committee do a survey to find out where the community would want to put an anemometer (and potentially a windmill). It has been recommended that Cape Elizabeth do a test windmill at the high school and perhaps the transfer station. Wyman will take a first crack at the proposal and ask for funding for two to three anemometers.

V. Next Meeting

- Steve will send around a meeting request for the week of June 16. The meeting will most likely be held on the Tuesday (17) or Wednesday (18) of that week.