

BENNINGTON ENERGY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, June 1st, 2022

Minutes

In attendance: Committee -- Bill Karis, Bruce Lierman, Bill Christian Bruce Lee-Clark

Guests – Annie Bourdon, Marsh Hudson-Knapp

- Review minutes from May 4th meeting
 - BLC moved to accept. BL 2nd. Passed.
- CarShare VT Executive Director, Annie Bourdon, to share how the organization began and the pieces that make it work
 - History: Annie is founder 2008. Organized in 2006. Spent time in Bay with CityCarShare, was a model – environmental and social services. Car sharing as means to access vehicles. Local Motion/UVM/VTrans/etc were all interested and hoped to attract big operators. For profit companies expanded fast and ate up nonprofit companies. Nonprofit operators used to be more numerous, but for-profits absorbed them and now no longer want to serve smaller cities.

Annie was between careers, and started a grass roots, community based car sharing. City supported with prime parking. Colleges buy and own vehicles and lease them for nominal fee. Marketing support. And Annie volunteered and fund raised and built out business plan while in grad school.

Raised \$200k for 8 vehicles & no members. Within months couple hundred members

- Business today: 22 vehicles, business model is self-sufficient. But limited capital to grow and can't afford to overly subsidize them. Need diverse users – personal & business use. Lost a chunk of members during covid, university affiliates were not around. Core members are residential, not students, who turn over. 87% belong to zero or one car households. Modest growth plan. But lobbying state to provide public funding for car sharing programs. Is it possible in Bennington?

What does a model look like outside of Bennington? Population density/walkability/alternatives/sufficient demand and usage

Pilot project in Montpelier. Grants for designs/VTrans – many members but not ready to live the model. Used but unsustainable.

Requires 24/7 on call staffer.

- Questions:
 - EV Car Share at low/moderate income house complexes
 - EVs are expensive upfront cost
 - They require 4 hr of charging limiting their time on the road
 - Hardware was CitiShare spinoff. Software providers are Canadian, 1st co bought by Enterprised and dropped. 2nd co getting out of industry. 3rd co Austrian and transitioning in Nov.
 - Commutato – honor system.
 - CarShare VT – keyless access. FAB or key car. System tracks battery low/not return/unlocked. System automatically charges user.
 - Avg trip of members: 3.5hrs, but some take it 24hrs. Avg length of trip 20miles.
 - All peers have similar systems (Ithaca one example). \$2000/month to operate a vehicle. Insurance/depreciation/repairs/technology. Budget under \$1M.
 - Will be leasing the hardware from now on to always to be up to date.
 - State has mobility and transit(?) grant program of \$100k. VLITE also added funding. State has now reduced \$50k – Vtrans said no, there are other sources.
 - Transportation research center – Clean Cities Coalition – Peggy coordinator. Now working with UVM phds
 - Peers in Buffalo – majority of members are low income and were supported to get patients to Drs.
 - Low income car share members do find value in it, but it still a burden – CarShareVT on YouTube.
 - Truro – insurance is not comprehensive. Add umbrella policy.
 - EverySoOften Newsletter.
- Bike Hub Update
 - Looking for donations & becoming more effective. Goal \$200k, would like \$300k to be self funding.
- Energy Opportunities w/ the Town's Newly Acquired Properties
 - BennHigh project – possession of property – lease to own. TBD when it will be purchase – Goldstone doing an analysis & feasibility for portion. Shires will fit up the rest and do so with high efficiency. Market housing will also be Shires & efficient.
 - EC should put forth recommendations before design process has begun.
 - Armory – 2 to 3 years to transfer that property.
 - \$20k lawn mower the town is buying is getting a GMP rebate of \$2.5k
- Data Subcommittee Update
- PR Subcommittee Update
- Distribution of Energy Efficiency Materials Update
 - EVT – tracking of Bennington Residents.
 -
- Action Items Matrix
- Public comment
 - Met with BROCC. Agreed Wx is under-subscribed in Bennington County.
 - Window Dresser Special Orders will request permission to share contact with BROCC for free Wx.
 - Analysis of house also includes lighting and appliances that may be upgraded for FREE
- Confirm agenda for first Wednesday of month, July 6th, 2022 meeting