

**Town of Middlebury  
Energy Committee Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, September 21, 2016**

Present: Heather Seeley, Diane Munroe, Jason Kaye, Ross Conrad, Howard WidELITZ

Absent: Chris Robbins, R.J. Adler

Guests: Laura Asermily, Nadine Barnicle, Fran Putnam

Review minutes of the August 17, 2016 meeting

Ross suggested modifying the first sentence under "Additional Notes" to say "...can't attend the meeting to let the other committee members or the chair know." Ross made a motion to approve the minutes as amended and Diane seconded. Approved with 5 in favor, none opposed, and two absent.

Updates

Jason received an email - originally sent to former Energy Committee chair Laura Asermily - from Ben Bolaski at SunCommon requesting time at an upcoming Energy Committee meeting to provide information on new products offered by SunCommon. Jason wanted input from the Committee on how to proceed. There was some interest in learning about new solar options, but there was also concern because an Energy Committee meeting is not the place for a sales pitch. One idea was to limit Ben's presentation to 15 minutes. Another idea - and one that garnered more support - was to ask Ben to let us know if and when he would be giving a presentation to the general public, and we could attend in that manner instead.

Diane mentioned the Energy Action Network (EAN) has been providing webinars for use of the Community Energy Dashboard. They will be providing a deeper dive webinar in October. There was some question as to how solar projects were entered into the Dashboard. Diane said anyone should be able to enter these into the Dashboard but will confirm this with the program administrators.

Transportation Hub Grant: Trip Diaries workshop

Nadine Barnicle and Fran Putnam, both of the Weybridge Energy Committee, joined the meeting to provide training on the implementation of the Trip Diaries component of their Transportation Hub Grant. Nadine mentioned the first part of this project is education for which the trip diaries will play an important role. She also noted that only Middlebury and Monkton will be participating in this study in addition to Weybridge which had already started this work. The goals will vary with each community since each may have unique needs to reduce car ridership. For example, Weybridge Elementary is looking to develop a ride-sharing network since there are fewer options for transportation to the school than what would be available in Middlebury.

Another objective is to create better connectivity among the Addison County Regional Planning Commission, the Energy Committees (and respective communities) and Addison County Transit Resources (ACTR). Nadine and Fran are planning a summit in late January or early February to put together a regional plan for transportation. It was noted that the information related to this work will be disseminated through the Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network (VECAN).

*Trip Diary Training*

A trip diary template was passed out to each of the Energy Committee members to track their transportation behavior over a few days. Nadine noted the trip diary should be used to track every trip taken, including by car, bus, bike and walking. Trips can be linked in the event there are multiple destinations on a single outing. The committee was asked to complete the diary for three days, preferably consecutive days. Fran suggested one of the days be a weekend day.

Heather suggested the use of a smartphone app to make it easier to log the information. It was suggested Google Docs could be used to do this. Nadine thought this would be a good idea and will look into how to implement this.

Jason asked for a clarification on whether our car trips should include personal trips and/or business trips. Nadine clarified that we should track all car trips made using a personal vehicle, whether or not these car trips are for personal or business use.

Nadine will create the Google Docs version of the Trip Diary by the weekend of September 24, 2016.

Diane made one last suggestion to add changes in behavior resulting from this work to the Community Dashboard.

### Energy Section of the Town Plan

We discussed Heather's reportback from the Planning Commission meeting on September 1, 2016, during which the Planning Commission discussed the Energy Section of the Middlebury Town Plan as well as the Energy Committee's memo regarding the Energy Section. Jennifer Murray is preparing a memo to the Energy Committee with information from the Planning Commission's meeting and possible next steps, which might include a request to write a Town Energy Plan. We had not yet received this memo by the time of our meeting, so our discussion remained hypothetical.

We brainstormed some next steps in the event that we would be tasked with writing a Town Energy Plan:

- Heather would research other towns' energy plans.
- Diane would research the Regional Energy Plans created by three Regional Planning Commissions and the Department of Public Service.
- Ross would research the forthcoming Town Energy Plan guidelines to be released by the Department of Public Service.

All in all, we decided to pause on the above next steps until we can review Jennifer Murray's memo and the guidance therein. *Jason will contact Jennifer Murray regarding the status of her memo.*

We discussed that the Energy Committee would continue to participate in the broader Town Plan review process.

### Check-in regarding MEC members' capacity between meetings

Jason started off the discussion saying we meet only eighteen hours a year as a committee, resulting in our capacity not aligning with our objectives and goals. The question asked of the committee is if we can provide greater capacity or do we need to adjust our goals to the current capacity.

Each member in attendance provided a response to whether or not he or she has greater capacity. Everyone agreed they can provide additional time to the work of the committee but this will vary for some due to seasonal workloads of some of the members. There was also discussion of the need to increase the membership of the committee since we currently have two empty seats to fill. This would help increase the capacity of the committee to take on more work.

Heather asked if we should look into changing the meeting time to accommodate those having difficulty meeting at the current time. *Howard took the action to check with R.J. Adler and Chris Robbins on a different time to meet.*

Regarding increasing the membership, *Heather took the action to check with Kathleen Ramsey to understand how these positions can be advertised.*

Check-in regarding loose ends

*Budget Procedures*

Jason reminded the committee that there is a \$2,000 budget approved for our use in support of committee work. We need to come up with procedures for identifying and evaluating possible expenditures. This will be an agenda item for the October 19, 2016 meeting.

*Website*

Jason started the discussion noting that he and Howard had met to discuss updating the existing website used by the committee. There was some question as to how much time do we invest in updating the website given the lack of people accessing the site. We discussed steps (e.g. Front Porch Forum) that can be taken to draw people to the site. Heather mentioned the benefit of having all Energy Committee documents and "meeting packets" on the website.

There was also the suggestion to use Front Porch Forum to communicate Energy Committee information to the community on a monthly basis. Diane mentioned the importance of using the website for outreach. Jason suggested that he and Howard meet again to discuss how to proceed with the website. We will add "outreach" as agenda item for the October 19, 2016 meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:47am on a motion by Ross, seconded by Howard. Next meeting: October 19, 2016 at 8:15am.

Respectfully submitted,  
Howard Widelitz