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**Town of Middlebury
Energy Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 15, 2019**

Present: Ross Conrad, Lindsey Fuentes-George, Diane Munroe, Steve Maier, Van Barth, Richard Hopkins, Lisa Bernardin, Liv Herdman, Howard Widelitz

Absent: John Snyder-White

Ross convened the meeting at 8:45 am. (Note: all votes are unanimous unless otherwise indicated.)

The Middlebury Selectboard approved the appointment of Lisa Bernardin, Richard Hopkins and Liv Herdman to the Energy Committee and the reappointment of Steve Maier and Diane Munroe to the committee. As this was Liv's first time attending the meeting, she introduced herself followed by other members introducing themselves to her. Liv moved to Middlebury two years ago and works remotely for the United States Geological Survey (USGS).

Ross reviewed the agenda. All agreed to proceed with the agenda as provided.

Minutes from April 17 were approved as written. Motion by Howard, seconded by Diane. Six approved, three abstained.

Election of officers: Ross noted he has been very busy and was looking to step down as the Chair of the committee. Howard offered to take over as the Chair with no one else expressing interest in filling that position. Both Lindsey and Steve expressed interest in the Vice Chair role with them agreeing to have Steve assume the Vice Chair and Lindsey assume the position of treasurer. With no one else expressing interest to be the secretary, Liv offered to assume this role. These positions are for one year and will be re-addressed following the Selectboard meeting in April of 2020.

Ross clarified for Liv the minimum set of information needing to be included in the minutes as contained in the bylaws. The minutes need to include those in attendance and the results of votes taken on decisions that are made. A draft version of the minutes needs all motions made to be posted within five days of the meeting. They are sent to Chris English who will post them for us on the Energy Committee website and are approved by the committee at the following meeting.

The following officers were approved for the upcoming year:

Chair - Howard Widelitz

Vice Chair - Steve Maier

Treasurer - Lindsey Fuentes-George

Secretary - Liv Herdman

Purchasing policy: Howard provided an update on the ongoing work of the Equipment Replacement Subcommittee regarding the purchasing policy and department Request for Proposals (RFPs).

The subcommittee met to refine the criteria to be used in support of RFPs provided to vendors and the decisions made on purchases. As part of the refinement, Diane developed equations to factor in the cost of carbon (and other greenhouse gases) by determining the amount of carbon produced when consuming various types of fossil fuels and translating it into a cost based on dollars per metric ton of carbon dioxide. The calculations used \$50/metric ton of CO₂, but Richard identified \$100/metric ton as the standard used by the state in their calculations. Diane noted that CO₂ makes up a large percentage (almost 99% based on her calculations) of the greenhouse gases when consuming fossil fuels. Richard said he will find the document providing the \$100 figure.

Ross asked if we have the questions to include in the RFPs and if they can be brought to the Energy Committee for review and approval before taking them to the Selectboard for approval. The goal was to have these come to the next committee meeting. Lindsey suggested including visuals when presenting this at the Selectboard.

On a related topic, Diane mentioned there is a “fleet transition workshop” being provided by the Vermont Clean Cities Coalition (VTCCC) in September. Lindsey agreed to share this information with Nick Artim who chairs the Public Safety committee and suggested it should be mandatory for the town to send someone. It may also be of interest to Chief Hanley as he has been tracking the New York city police fleet and their effort to transition to greener alternatives with their fleet.

Revolving Loan Fund: Steve put the “Revolving Loan Fund” discussion into context for those new to the committee by saying that it was one of four initiatives the committee voted on at the beginning of the year to pursue in 2019. Ross, Steve and Lindsey met several times to discuss how to implement the fund although further investigation is needed. Steve explained the Revolving Loan Fund is part of the Billion Dollar Green Challenge to encourage cities, schools and other institutions to invest money into energy efficiency and have the savings go toward paying off the loans and/or reinvesting them in additional energy efficiency projects. This would require tracking municipal energy efficient projects to determine the savings. Currently, there hasn't been a good mechanism to track the savings in Middlebury.

Montpelier has done this for some time and Steve has reached out to them to understand how they manage the fund. There is software the Billion Dollar Challenge provides to help track the use and savings. Montpelier has someone, Kate Stevenson, who manages the software for them. The software comes with a nominal subscription fee. They have begun to see results from their effort. Efficiency Vermont (EVT) provided Montpelier \$5000 in startup money and pledged \$5000 once they see results. Steve was planning to set up meetings with the

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Montpelier contacts and have Kathleen Ramsey and Jackie Sullivan participate in the discussions. Although they [Montpelier] didn't have a roadmap to start, they now have a list of 70 or more municipal projects to pursue and established a goal of achieving net zero for the city by 2030 and the community as a whole by 2050.

Liv asked if there have been any energy audits conducted in Middlebury. In addition to the energy audits on the Teen Center and Police Department buildings funded by the Energy Committee budget, there was also an earlier audit conducted at the Water Waste Treatment plant.

It was understood that a baseline needs to be established to understand savings which is not always straightforward. Van had done this for the police station and the committee will work to broaden the baseline.

Enhanced Energy Plan (EEP): Richard believes there are two levels of analysis to determine if the EEP is working. One is to determine if it is working for the individuals and one for the population in total. Putting it into perspective for new members of the committee, it was explained that an EEP is needed to allow towns to have more say over inclusion and location of wind turbines and solar farms with the latter being more relevant to Middlebury. There has been controversy in citing these projects with the towns having little say in the process. The Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC) is interested but currently has no capacity for being able to support this effort, so the committee is assuming responsibility for this.

Richard believes the focus should be on how we produce Carbon Dioxide (CO₂). Not on how much energy we use but how much CO₂ we produce. Getting to zero CO₂ production is a three-fold process: Decarbonization of the electric supply, Moving everything onto electricity, along with Conservation and efficiency. Conservation alone will not get us there.

Richard is building on the energy plan developed by the ACRPC for the towns within Addison County. Given the unique demographics of Middlebury (i.e. Hospital, College, Industrial Park), applying state averages to Middlebury doesn't work. Richard passed out a two-page document (included in meeting packet) highlighting this uniqueness. The numbers are five-year averages from the American Community Survey completed by Vermonters as part of a broader national survey. He will continue to develop an approach given the unique characteristics of Middlebury and will look to find data that can be used to better understand current consumption of fossil fuels within Middlebury. His focus will be on top consumers.

In a closing remark, Richard said because the town Enhanced Energy plan is under the jurisdiction of the ACRPC, its completion is limited until they have the bandwidth to support the effort.

With respect to understanding our current consumption, Liv suggested developing a database for monitoring energy use. Smart sensors can be installed to automate the process of collecting data and aggregate the source(s) of fuel consumption. It was noted the town office building

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already monitors energy use. Liv will look into this further. Lindsey offered to help Liv get the information needed for this and Van will provide the data he has already collected.

Town meeting resolutions: Ross provided the feedback from the Selectboard that the town won't take on the development of a response to the resolutions but will approve proposals coming from various town department heads and committees. If we want the town to enact any initiatives stemming from the resolutions, the Energy Committee will need to provide the Selectboard with concrete ideas and plans for them to approve.

Policy/Process discussion (Purchasing policy for town): Lindsey spoke about there not being a process for how things are brought to the table, meaning the process doesn't provide a way to include additional information in the decision making. There is not time in the process to consider alternatives when making a decision. It is not clear if alternatives are considered. She suggests including services along with equipment when exploring what alternatives exist to factor into the decisions for purchases. Although the Energy Committee can offer support with the effort to explore alternatives, it should be the department heads' responsibility to assume responsibility for this in the long-term.

Committee member issues/updates: There was no remaining time to discuss member issues and updates.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:18 on a motion by Lindsey, seconded by Diane. Next meeting will be June 19th at 8:45 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Howard Widelitz