

## 6/20/16 Westport Energy Committee Meeting Minutes

The Monday 6/20/16 meeting of the Energy Committee in the Selectmen's Conference Room was called to order by Chairman Tony Connors at 7:03 PM. Other members present were Mike Sullivan, Karl Daxland, Max Kohlenberg, and Walter Barnes.

Chairman Connors noted the recent passing of member, Leo Brooks. He went on to say that Leo was a good friend who enjoyed an interesting life, was in the air force, and traveled the world.

The minutes of the Energy Committee held on 12/7/15 were approved by the members.

Chairman Connors pointed out that the Committee is now down 3 members. The Committee has been approved by the Board of Selectmen for 7 members plus a representative from the Board of Selectmen. The Chairman asked all members to look for people to fill these vacancies.

The first order of business on the agenda was a review of the SRPEDD Energy Aggregation program. This electricity program was approved by Town Meeting in the Spring of 2015 and is currently in effect for all homeowners in Westport unless they opted out of it. Chairman Connors went on to say he has received phone calls from citizens reporting that Eversource recently announced that they will soon be pricing their electricity at a lower rate than the program rate. However, it should be noted that homeowners can opt out of the program at any time without penalty during the time of the contract.

Chairman Connors then gave an update on the Borrego Solar program. Through discussion between the involved parties, including Borrego and the town, it has been discovered that the town has not been receiving full credit for their energy use because the application has to be made to individual energy accounts and not to a single aggregate account. This situation is currently being redressed. Meanwhile any unused credits are being banked up. The town receives its net metering credits as a result of the output of two Borrego solar farms, one in Freetown and the other in Carver. If the town does not use the equivalent amount of electricity produced by these two farms, then the town would sell the excess credits. The program to date has resulted in a considerable savings for electricity use for the town.

The next agenda item presented to the Committee by Chairman Connors was the landfill solar update. This project has been stalled as the SREC II program is over and the legislature has not yet passed a bill for SREC III (solar renewable energy credits). It could be that SREC will have lower value and thus lower appeal.

Chairman Connors next reported on the status of the usage of the town electric vehicle. The car is just short of 7000 miles close to a year. The savings to the town has been determined to be a little over \$3700. This savings would not have been possible without the state grant for the project.

New business included a discussion of LED streetlights. The Committee previously decided to encourage the town to purchase the present street lights which are leased from Eversource and National Grid. All information to date indicates the purchase would be very cheap. Thus, the major cost would be the purchase of the new LED lights which over time would be much more efficient and cost effective.

Mr. Barnes stated that it had recently been reported in the media that fire departments had concerns fighting house fires where there were solar panels on the roof because of the fear of electrocution. Mr Connors said he would seek an opinion from the town fire department regarding this matter.

Chairman Connors said that there was a company interested in introducing community solar projects in Westport and that he would invite this firm to make a presentation at a future meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:14 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Walter Barnes