

## 8/12/13 Westport Energy Committee Meeting Minutes

The Monday 8/12/13 meeting of the Energy Committee in the Westport Town Hall was called to order at 7:01 PM by Chairman Tony Connors. Other members present were Antone Vieira, Max Kohlenberg, Walter Barnes, Ed Goldberg, and Leo Brooks. Absent were Karl Daxland and John Ciccotelli.

Landfill solar update: Westport is in a queue. There is no contract now with ACE (American Capital Energy). The Town signed. ACE does not know the incentives nor what changes are necessary so ACE has not signed. Town Counsel will start negotiating with ACE. No costs from NStar as yet.

Update on Future Generation Wind proposal: A proposed PPA was sent to Town Administrator Jack Healey for analysis. The input of the Energy Committee members is requested. Pricing is of concern. Mr. Connors appointed Attorney Kohlenberg to look over the PPA.

Discussion of engaging an energy consultant: Chairman Connors researched this subject and the funding of a consultant by contacting other towns. He asked for input from committee members. Mr. Goldberg spoke of the complexities of the contract, a small charge for the life of the contract, advantage of drawing on experience, and averaging the costs out of future savings. Mr. Kohlenberg spoke of focusing a consultant on a defined mission and asking whom a consultant had guided. Mr. Brooks pointed out that the State was not in a consulting role and a consultant was a good idea. Mr. Barnes spoke of area examples of projects with problems and public outcry. It was pointed out by Mr. Connors there is less risk to a community if a renewable energy project is financed by someone else. Mr. Vieira spoke about wind farms financed by big government in Utah and Wyoming and Mr. Goldberg mentioned the less-invasive offshore wind projects where the numbers of turbines offset one that goes down. Mr. Kohlenberg moved that the Energy Committee ask the Board of Selectmen to fund ten hours initially with a consultant. The consultant would meet with the Energy Committee with questions. The Energy Committee must come up with a focus. Mr. Goldberg seconded, and the vote was unanimous. Mr. Vieira and Mr. Kohlenberg mentioned the need for a backup plan for the landfill project.

Report on field trip to bio-digester (Leo): Mr. Brooks and Mr. Connors visited Jordan's Dairy Farm in Rutland, MA to experience how a digester works. The components are from Europe. It is clean and efficient and processes manure from cows, salad oil, mayonnaise, and suitable industrial waste. The operation needs 70 tons per day for the digester to produce the methane fuel for the generator. Transport and tipping fees are factors to be considered too. The methane is burned in a 300 KW generator running 24/7 powering the farm and 300 homes. The byproduct is a low-volume-solid liquid fertilizer which is used on local fields. The crop yield has had a 30% increase. It was pointed out by Mr. Vieira and Mr. Goldberg that, locally, New Bedford and Dartmouth are partners in the Greater New Bedford Regional Refuse District considering a digester that requires 12 tons per day. The waste stream available is mostly food waste and sewage sludge. Mr. Connors suggested that Westport should be contributing to a regional solution.

Rural Electrification grant application: pays for three-phase wiring. Mr. Connors said this would be an advantage for the Town. Mr. Vieira thought the power companies should be looking at this possibility. Mr. Goldberg wants to look at the application.

Set date of next meeting: scheduled for September 9, 2013 but due to a conflict, later revised to September 23, 2013 at 7:00 PM in the Westport Town Hall.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM by consensus.

Respectfully submitted by Anne Barnes

