



TOWN OF STRATHAM

INCORPORATED 1716

10 BUNKER HILL AVENUE STRATHAM NH 03885

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Draft MINUTES FOR STRATHAM ENERGY COMMISSION MEETING January 10, 2023

Meeting held at the Stratham Municipal Center

Commission Members:

- Michael Ream
- Matthew O'Keefe
- Charlie Case
- Michael Welty
- Joe VanGombos
- Joe Anderson - Select Board Member

Not Present: Michael Ream

Also attending: Paul Deschaine – Retired Stratham Town Administrator
Lester Cuff
Roger Dunn

Call to Order: 6:00 PM

1.Minutes from December 13, 2022 meeting were approved

2.Matt O'Keefe has provided inputs from the Energy Commission for the Town Report.

3.Community Power Updates – The Select Board appointed a new **Energy Aggregation Committee** at their meeting on December 19, 2023 following a presentation by Joe VanGombos titled "Community Power Aggregation – An Economic Opportunity for Stratham Residents and Businesses".

As Joe described, Community Power will aim to lower rates, improve price stability over time, and provide innovative options. It is a way to allow municipalities and counties to aggregate retail electric customers to provide customers access to competitive markets for supplies of electricity and related energy services. By banding together to create a larger market for suppliers, more favorable supply options can be secured. This pertains only to the purchase of energy supply, not how power is delivered.

The Select Board Motion was as follows:

"As authorized in RSA 53-6, the Select Board hereby individually appoints the members of the Stratham Energy Commission to serve as members of the Town of Stratham Energy Aggregation



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Committee. Those appointees are Matt O’Keefe, Joe VanGombos, Charlie Case, Mike Ream, Mike Welty and Joe Anderson. The Committee’s charge shall be to develop an Energy Aggregation Plan in accordance with RSA 53-E and the committee’s term shall sunset on April 1, 2024. In accordance with the RSA, the plan shall be prepared for Select Board consideration to advance to a Town Meeting.”

The Stratham Energy Commission has been looking carefully at the possibility of recommending that the Town adopt Community Power which allows municipalities and counties to aggregate retail electric customers and provide them access to competitive markets for supplies of electricity, thus reducing cost, improving price stability over time and providing innovative options such as renewable energy. This program would be voluntary for residents and incorporate mechanisms to accommodate those with Solar already installed with Net Metering agreements. The State requires municipalities to submit an Energy Aggregation Plan (with prior approval by Town Meeting) to the PUC before launching a Community Power Program.

A top priority for the Energy Commission is to hold information sessions for the public to describe options now available such as switching to a third party for energy supply as well as using less electricity. It was noted that third party energy rates have been volatile reflecting the uncertainty in the energy market. As of early January, third party supply rates offer an opportunity for residents to save on their electric bills. Information will be periodically included in Select Board Newsletters, and a questionnaire sent to residents is being considered. It was noted that there are tax credits available for roof solar, battery storage and heat pumps. The excellent presentation “Button Up New Hampshire” would be included in information sessions.

The recent Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) provides a variety of incentives for clean energy. Non-taxable entities such as local governments can invest in clean energy with a direct payment option (30%) in lieu of tax credits. Also, New Hampshire has increased the net metering cap for municipalities from 1 MW to 5 MW. Together, these are a good opportunity to get partial funding for municipalities to invest in new clean energy projects.

An opportunity to support hydro generation facilities was presented during 2022 by Freedom Energy Logistics which would also provide a small revenue stream for the Town. We were unable to participate with the first group of Towns but expect a second opportunity as more hydro generation facilities join. Joe VanGombos has agreed to follow up.

Charlie Case has agreed to chair the new Energy Aggregation Committee. Meetings will be on the second Tuesdays of each month immediately following the Stratham Energy Commission meetings. Matt O’Keefe will write up the minutes for the new committee.

Mike Welty asked the Commission to find a replacement for him as chair of the Energy Commission and members asked if acting chair Matt O’Keefe would step in. Matt will consider it.



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Unfortunately a long time Energy Commission member, Mike Ream, has been unable to participate and will be asked to step down to create a vacancy. He will be asked to step down from the new Energy Aggregation Committee as well.

Adjourned: 6:30 PM, followed by the first meeting of the Energy Aggregation Committee

Next meeting will be February 14, 2023 at 6 PM

Respectfully submitted – Charlie Case