



# TOWN OF STRATHAM

INCORPORATED 1716

10 BUNKER HILL AVENUE STRATHAM NH 03885

VOICE (603) 772-4741 FAX (603) 775-0517

## ACCEPTED MINUTES FOR STRATHAM ENERGY COMMISSION MEETING June 11, 2024

**Meeting held at the Stratham Municipal Center**

### **Commission Members:**

- Matthew O'Keefe - absent
- Charlie Case
- Michael Welty
- Joe VanGombos
- Joe Anderson - Select Board Member - absent
- Paul Deschaine

### **Also Attending**

- Tim Stevens – Director of Public Works
- Zoe Manos – Stratham State Representative

**Call to Order: 6:00 PM**

**1. May 14, 2024 minutes approved**

**2. Municipal Solar** – options of town properties for solar were discussed. Possible sites were evaluated and listed as YES worth looking at now in detail, MAYBE worth looking at later, and NO not worth pursuing at this time. David Moore and Matt Okeefe are working with ReVision Energy on a possible buy out of the Police Station solar at the end of Year 6 – the Town's first opportunity.

### **YES Properties in priority order**

YES #1 New DPW shed to store spreaders. Tim made a quick estimate of 20 feet by 80 feet. An earlier cost estimate was made without a roof, but Tim suggested that a roof would protect the spreaders and could be a possibility for additional solar panels with an electric load at the site. This installation would be approximately the same size as the Police Station.

There are two possible funding sources to augment Town funding - one state and one federal. The State has announced solar grants - Tier One grants total \$1M and are designated for disadvantaged Municipalities and Tier Two grants total \$250K for other Municipalities. Maximum size is 60KW. All applications need to be submitted by August 1, 2024. A federal grant program for Municipalities is called Direct Pay and can cover as much as 30% of the cost. Tim will check with David Moore on the status of funding for a new DPW shed before Monday



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(June 17). Tim should contact ReVision Energy ASAP for current solar pricing. A decision can then be made quickly whether to pursue State and Federal grant funding

**YES #2** Part of the multipurpose field beyond the softball field and behind the Municipal Center may be available. There is a walking track in the area and could be accommodated. Possible other uses for the field would need to be looked at for recreational uses or a site for a new Town building. The surrounding residential neighborhood may object due to a visual impact.

**YES #3** Possible solar on a new roof for the Stratham Memorial School Building. It is recognized that the SMS School Board has the responsibility to make a decision on roof solar, but any economic benefit would benefit Stratham tax payers. There is a 3 phase power connection at the school and all of the power generated would be used on site.

**Four Town Owned sites were identified as MAYBE worth looking at later:**

**Maybe #1 - Gifford Farm Land near Stratham Hill Park**

**Maybe #2 - 12 Trisha's Way which is part of the open space for the Trisha's Way/Stephen Drive subdivision**

**Maybe #3 - Capped Landfill at the Transfer Station.** A portion of the landfill area with buried tree stumps could be a problem.

**Maybe #4 – Stevens Recreational Area** adjacent to DPW has a high potential for solar use with a significant load at DPW if conflicting recreational uses can accommodate it. A conduit has already been located under the DPW driveway to accommodate wiring.

**Other Sites determined to be NO at this time**

The SEC looked at the Fire Station roof twice in the past for solar but the remaining life of the roof prevented that option. DPW recently repaired the roof around the periphery to extend its life. This would be a good opportunity when the roof is replaced in the future.

The main DPW garage needs a new roof now, but the roof is shaded by a tall embankment and trees - and would only be viable for solar if many trees were removed. Some of the trees are privately owned.

Ten other Town Owned Parcels were determined to be impractical for solar.

**3. Hydro Net Metering opportunity revisit** – A second group net metering program for hydro generation has been proposed. The program would support New Hampshire Hydro



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Generation facilities and make them economically viable while providing the Town a very small benefit. The Town would have joined the first group in 2022 but it was quickly fully subscribed. Consensus was not to pursue the second group.

**4. Community Power Updates** – CPCNH is in the process of developing the next six months of rates for August 1, 2024 through January 31, 2025. Dates are:

Friday June 21 Eversource, Liberty and Unitil rates are known for this period

Monday June 24 CPCNH issues rate recommendations for review by members

Thursday June 27 CPCNH Board of Directors sets rates

Monday July 1 New rates are posted

CPCNH allows Member communities to set up their own reserves starting August 1. CPCNH proposed adding a single additional rate with a surcharge that customers can select. CPCNH has had feedback asking them to consider any reserves to be collected from all four existing rates as a more equitable option. Consensus to put the reserves issue off for another year.

CPCNH currently has \$9M of joint reserves

There is no resolution yet on the Net Metering issue

The Energy Commission needs to report to the SB including success of the program and the new CPCNH rates for the August 1 through January 31 timeframe as soon as they are available. Also include a comparison with Eversource, Liberty and Unitil rates.

**5. EV Chargers** – tabled until next month. IT was noted that level 3 superchargers installed near Planet Fitness are expected to go on line soon.

**6. Municipal Building Initiatives** – The RFP for HVAC improvements to the Municipal Building will be sent out on June 13 with Energy Commission recommendations. Three proposals are expected. Tim Stevens is also looking at lighting improvements in Municipal Buildings with Affinity.

**7. Stratham Memorial School construction project review** – sub committee representation – Mike Welty has volunteered. The 6/13 SMS Board meeting will determine membership.

Adjourned: 7:55 PM