



# TOWN OF STRATHAM

INCORPORATED 1716

10 BUNKER HILL AVENUE STRATHAM NH 03885

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

## DRAFT MINUTES FOR STRATHAM ENERGY COMMISSION MEETING

October 8, 2024

Meeting held at the Stratham Municipal Center

### Commission Members:

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

Also Attending: David Moore – Town Administrator

Call to Order: 6:00 PM

August 13, 2024 and September 10, 2024 minutes approved

### Municipal Solar

Latest on Stratham's NH Municipal Solar Grant Application – Nothing has been posted yet by the NH Department of Energy on applications, but they did post that they are looking for a person to be a technical monitor for the program. We know that all Towns working with Clean Energy New Hampshire (CENH) on this Grant had questions from the DOE. Matt completed a survey for CENH regarding Direct Pay assistance if our Grant Application is successful.

Police Department Solar Array Buy Out from ReVision Energy – The Select Board has approved proceeding with the Buy Out. ReVision has been in contact with the Town to complete the transaction after which all of the electricity generated by the Police Station solar array will be “free” versus the 9.24 cents per kwh we have been paying ReVision Energy as part of our Power Purchase Agreement. Once the Town owns the system, the Town can sell Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) through the Northeast REC Pool. Matt has spoken with ReVision about being our REC broker which would net the Town about \$5,000 per year. We need a strategy for Select Board approval but will wait until the Buy Out is complete. REC credits do not expire so there is no urgency to recommend a strategy.

Municipal Building Initiatives - The Town Municipal Center, including the Wiggin Memorial Library and Town Offices and the Police Department are serviced by a series of roof top



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heating, ventilation and cooling units that are beyond or nearing the end of their useful life. This project replaces these in-kind or with improved high-efficiency technology that is in keeping with the recommendations of the Energy Commission and our current HVAC vendor who provides regular service and maintenance of our HVAC units at all town-wide properties. An Energy Efficiency rebate of about \$7,000 is available through Unitil for this project. A contract has been awarded to Dowling Corporation and the Town is waiting for the them to provide required documentation for the rebate. It is anticipated that the project will be complete by the end of 2024.

The Energy Commission also recommends that the Police Station hybrid heat pump thermostats be programmed to switch from heat pump heating to furnace heating at a temperature of 40 degrees

**Lighting Proposals** – Incentives may be at risk as proposed by Affinity in their unsolicited bid to convert lighting in all Town buildings to LED. The Energy Commission will develop a strategy for this project possibly to be completed in 2025.

**SolSmart Program Enrollment** – The town staff has worked on a Solar Permit Application Checklist to help applicants make sure they have all the required materials together when they file a application for a solar installation (this is a requirement of the SolSmart program). The staff has been taking solar training which are strongly encouraged under the program. Mark Connors took a webinar on best practices in zoning and land use requirements for solar and Susan in the planning office completed a training on fire safety considerations with solar. Funding for the program is from the Federal Department of Energy. Sarah Yeager will be our SolSmart contact.

**Writeup to be included in the next Select Board Newsletter - for residents who want to join Stratham Community Power when their competitive energy supply contract ends**  
You may have seen that Stratham voted to select Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire (CPCNH) to become the electric supplier for those using Unitil for the supply portion only of your electric bill. Stratham Community Power has been supplying residents at a discount compared to the default supply rate since it launched this past Spring. Some residents have been using alternative “third party” suppliers since before that time and may be asking how to join in with your neighbors. If using an alternative supplier, when your contract is coming to an end, sign up at <https://www.communitypowernh.gov/stratham> to get started on transitioning to Stratham Community Power. Please review your current suppliers’ contract if you are ending before the contract term as some have fees that may be applicable.

**Community Power Updates** – Paul attended the 9/11 CPCNH Strategy Meeting and shared materials. As of September 1, 2024 there are 2,917 Stratham Community Power accounts out of a total of 3,765 representing a 77% participation rate. Residents with solar electric installations are still waiting for the Net Metering issue to be resolved by CPCNH, Eversource,



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Unitil, Liberty and the State of New Hampshire. Stratham Community Power metrics were reviewed and will be periodically updated by CPCNH.

**Group Net Metering Offer** – Freedom Energy has approached us again whereby the Town could decide to be an “off taker” for small hydro generators to help them survive and get a small benefit for doing so. Joe VanGombos will send detail information to David Moore for his review.

**Stratham Memorial School construction project review** – The Architect Company has indicated that they are no longer interested in this project after the scope was pared back from \$50M to \$15M. At this point, project direction is no longer clear but some improvements are believed to be “musts” such as lighting, HVAC and the sprinkler system. The School Board is looking to hire a pre-construction manager.

Adjourned: 7:35 PM