



TOWN OF STRATHAM

INCORPORATED 1716

10 BUNKER HILL AVENUE STRATHAM NH 03885

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

MINUTES FOR STRATHAM ENERGY COMMISSION MEETING Sept 14, 2021

Meeting held at the Stratham Municipal Center

Commission Members:

- Michael Ream
- Matthew O'Keefe
- Charlie Case
- Michael Welty
- Joe Van Gombos

Commission members not present were Michael Ream and Matthew O'Keefe

7:15 PM Call to Order

1. Minutes from July 13, 2021 were approved. The SEC meeting for Aug 10, 2021 was cancelled.

2. Municipal Solar Projects & Net Metering Change to 5 MW

The State passed a Community Power statute in 2019 that allows municipalities or groups of municipalities to purchase and generate renewable power for its residents with the intention that this action would help reduce greenhouse gases and save money for residents. At that time the statute limited the amount of renewable generated power that could be Net Metered to 1 MW. Net Metering is an important feature that allows renewable generated power to be fed back into the electric grid when the generated power exceeds usage - with a credit for the unused power "banked" for use when more power is used than generated. The 1 MW rule effectively limited the size of an economically feasible solar installation that a municipality could install. As a result, the adoption of Community Power by municipalities has been slow.

In August 2021, the 1 MW limit was raised to 5 MW (HB315) which could make Community Power a better option for municipalities. It is noted that the 1 MW Net Metering limit still applies to residents and businesses. It appears that school districts qualify as municipalities but this needs to be verified.

Hanover has adopted Community Power and other municipalities have formed Community Power Committees to study this.



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3. Further Discussion from July 2021 - Capital Project to replace heating and cooling units at the Police Department.

Two propane fired cooling condensers and two propane fired forced air furnaces are now used and are operating at capacity. The possibility of replacing the existing system with heat pumps was discussed which are more efficient than the propane fired units we now have. Nate Mears is not convinced that heat pumps are the right choice. Joe VanGombos noted that heat pump reliability has improved in recent years and can produce heat efficiently except in the coldest weather when electric backup heating is used. He also noted that heat pumps would qualify for incentives from Unitil. Joe VanGombos will look at a comparison of heat pumps versus replacing the propane fired units we now have.

4. Electric Vehicle Charging Station at the Library

Newmarket has a charging station at its Library and EV usage has begun. Mike Welty will speak with Deborah Bakie about getting an updated count of electric vehicles in Town. The possibility of the town of Stratham converting to electric vehicles as they are replaced was previously discussed. It was noted that all except one of the town's cars are Police Cars and that a few New Hampshire towns are starting to use Tesla vehicles for that purpose. It was suggested that we arrange to show an existing Tesla Police Car to the Police Department officers and others interested.

5. Electronic Transmission of Town Electricity Usage from Unitil

Joe VanGombos noted that Unitil can provide electronic inputs on usage but possible format and data transmission issues would need to be looked at.

Adjourned 8:15 PM

Next Meeting: Tuesday Oct 12, 2021 at 7 pm.

Respectfully submitted – Charlie Case