

WEAC MEETING Minutes - June 2023

In person meeting, Thursday - 6/15/23 @ 7:30 PM

Members in attendance: Kate La Croix (chair), Sue McGown (vice chair), Brian Bayer, Juliana Belding, Maria Costantini, Julie Gervais, and Leslie Greffenius.

Others in attendance: Rob Gotti (Select Board member), Srirup Kumar (member of the public). Tom Phibin (Westwood Energy Manager) participated by phone for the discussion of the CCE.

Routine business: Approval of the minutes. The minutes of the March and May 2023 meetings were unanimously approved after making some corrections.

Topics discussed w/next steps:

Members' terms:

- 1) Kate said there were no volunteers for the position of Chair, Co-chair and Secretary, so she, Sue and Maria will continue to serve in their respective roles. These positions can only be held for two years.
- 2) Brian and Juliana will leave the Committee due to competing commitments.
- 3) The officers were unanimously approved.

Presentation by Tom Philbin about the CCE and the solar initiatives:

1. Regarding the CCE, Tom Philbin reported on the recent meeting of Good Energy and the 6 communities about the CCE rates. The main points from that meeting are:
 - Both Eversource and National Grid have lowered the price for the supply of electricity for the summer period; the new rate is below the community aggregation rate. For Eversource, the difference is a fraction of a cent. If we are to go with past experience, we can expect a winter increase from Eversource of about 2 cents. On average, the aggregation default rate for the 22 months of the program is expected to be below the Eversource basic rate.
 - We should not lose sight of the fact that the purpose of the Aggregation program was to increase the percent renewable in the Eversource supply to Westwood at a price comparable to what was already being charged. When winter rates return, it is probable that aggregation rate will be below the Eversource option.
 - It should be pointed out that if someone were to opt out, there is no guarantee that they can get back into the program under the same conditions.
2. Regarding the solar and electric projects Tom reported that:
 - Money was secured for installing 4 EV chargers at the Police Station.
 - The solar projects at the Police Station and the COA are on hold because they are not financially feasible at the moment.
3. Rob noted that there are discussions about installing solar panels on the new school. This will depend if there is money left. Tom explained that one way is to do a PPA, whereby the developer would be responsible for the financing and installation of the solar array and the

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town would pay for the power used by the school. The developer would take advantage of all the tax benefits. The town could buy back the system after a minimum of 6 years.

Composting at some Westwood Schools:

1. Srirup (member of the public) reported that a group of parents is trying to launch a pilot composting program at one school using Black Earth. Because there is no money on the budget at the moment for this initiative, they submitted a grant proposal to WEAC and have also approached the schools and DPW. Srirup noted that the disadvantage of using Black Earth is the need to transport the material to their facility (this results in combustion emissions that are harmful). He would like to find a local farm to do the composting. It is possible to lease a digester. The through-put of the digester is 30 days and the size of the facility needed is about a quarter- to a half-acre. Having composting at some schools would be a way to educate the residents.
2. **Next steps:** Srirup will provide more detail about the grant request and some references for similar projects.

Westwood Day planning

1. Kate listed the topics/projects to highlight at the WEAC booth:
 - Opt-up to 100% CCE - ask Good Energy for materials
 - Support Hale -make a sign
 - Solar initiatives - make a poster
 - Composting -some activities
 - Recycling - recycling game
2. Kate listed possible options for composting in the food court:
 - Have a composting station
 - No station, just scattered composting barrels
 - Do nothing

The second option was the preferred approach. Volunteers will be needed at each location to ensure that the trash is sorted appropriately. Final plans will be made at the next meeting.

Hale

- 1) Kate reported that the Trustees will soon start holding public meetings to inform the public about the conservation restriction. There will be more meetings in the fall.
- 2) **Next steps** WEAC will discuss at future meetings whether to hold an informational meeting and/or lead some hikes in Hale to raise awareness of the issues.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Next meeting will be August 17, 2023

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