

# Minutes of the Westmoreland Selectmen's Meeting

Thursday, February 3, 2022

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Frank Reeder, Russ Austin

1. The meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm by Russ Austin. Clayton Stalker excused
2. Guest:  
J.B. Mack from SWRPC and Dori Drachman, co-chair of the Monadnock Sustainability presented the Basics of Community Power in NH. Drachman explained how buying in bulk for all residents and businesses from an electric supplier at wholesale price could save the town money and give the town more options to use renewable energy. Individuals can choose to opt out of the program if they choose. To begin the process the Select Board would appoint a Committee of about 5 members. The committee would research community power plans and providers and develop a plan that would best suit the town. Residents would vote to put the plan in place at a Town Meeting. Drachman also explained that the only upfront cost to the town would be for the Town's attorney to look over the plan and contract and money to send an initial notice to residents giving them the option to opt out if they wanted to. Does not affect property tax since there is nothing to tax. Frank Reeder reiterated that when the community power option was first presented to the board by John Snowdon the Board decided to wait until other towns had completed the process which at this time none have entirely due to unfinished legislation delaying their launch. John Snowdon agreed that it would be an easier process to use other towns as models than to create the model as we did with broadband. Mark Terry suggested that data could be collected as far as how much work plans have been for other towns so we know what a proposed committee would be doing. Drachman said the legislative process should conclude within the next six months so towns can begin launching their plans. Once that happens we would be able to see the entire process. See attached pamphlet
3. Approval of Minutes: January 12, 2022. Motion was made by Frank Reeder and seconded by Russ Austin to accept the minutes as printed. Motion passed 2-0.
4. Accounts Payable: Motion was made by Russ Austin, seconded by Frank Reeder to Approve Manifests: \$198,110.73 Motion passed 2-0.
5. Old Business:  
Selectmen signed the 2022 Town Warrant
6. New Business:  
Signature Approval was given for the following:  

|                                       |                             |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| State of NH Criminal Check: 1/18/2022 | NH Retirement: 1/27/2022    |
| Payroll: 1/22/2022, 1/31/2022         | Patnode Excavation 2/2/2022 |
| Payroll Taxes: 1/22/2022, 1/31/2022   | Invoice Cloud 2/3/2022      |
| Healthtrust: 1/27/2022                |                             |

  - A. Town Election and Town Meeting to proceed as usual this year. Election to be held at the Town Hall Tuesday March 8th 11am-7pm and Town Meeting to be held at the School Wednesday, March 9th at 7pm. The executive order allowing drive by voting and zoom meetings expired and will NOT be an option this year. The Absentee Ballot process will not include Warrant Articles which must be done in person at the Town Meeting.
  - B. Selectmen signed a Thank you letter to Dick Schmidt for replacing the faded Town History plaque in front of the Town Hall

- C. Selectmen signed a letter to Planning and Zoning Boards proposing change in Clerk duties
- D. Gazebo - Kathy Watson would like to fundraise for a gazebo on the town common. Frank said the Board would need more information about size, lighting and maintenance before it could be considered. Fundraising for a building on the common would need to be approved by the Select Board.

7. Correspondence:

- 1. Susan Finnegan sent an email from the Budget Committee regarding highway funding and paved roads vs dirt roads. After reviewing the email Selectmen requested minutes of the Budget Committee meetings that were held regarding the 2022 budget so they can see issues that were discussed, and a list of specific questions for Selectmen based on a Budget Committee vote reflected in those minutes
- 2. Keene Sentinel called requesting a statement about the Adler Civil Suit being opened by the court. Select Board statement is as follows:

In September 2021 the Westmoreland Board of Selectmen settled a civil lawsuit they brought against former Town Clerk/Tax Collector Cindi Adler. Following a thorough review of personal financial statements and lengthy negotiations between the Town attorney and Mrs. Adler's attorney, the Selectmen agreed to a settlement of \$48,500. The settlement was sealed by a Cheshire County Superior Court judge pending the outcome of a criminal proceeding filed by the State against Mrs. Adler. The judge recently made the settlement public.

\$26,592.61 of the settlement was used to balance a budget deficit revealed by an audit of Town finances for the year 2018. The remaining \$21,907.39 was placed in the Town's general operating fund to help defray audit and legal fees. Mrs. Adler has pleaded guilty to criminal charges brought by the State and is scheduled to be sentenced on February 23, 2022. The Board of Selectmen will be present at the sentencing and will present a victim impact statement on behalf of the Town.

- 8. The meeting was adjourned at 2:55pm

Respectfully submitted,

Jodi Scanlan

Town Administrative Assistant

NEXT MEETING -THURSDAY FEBRUARY 17,,2022 6:00pm  
MINUTES ARE INITIALLY POSTED AS UNAPPROVED  
SELECTMEN SIGNATURES DENOTE APPROVAL

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

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Clayton Stalker, Chairman

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Russ Austin

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Frank Reeder

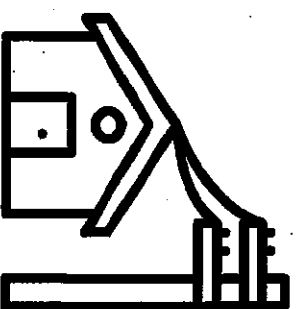


# Monadnock Sustainability Hub

## Questions? Want help getting started?

See our FAQ pamphlet/webpage or email the Monadnock Sustainability Hub at [info@monadnocksustainabilityhub.org](mailto:info@monadnocksustainabilityhub.org). We are happy to give a presentation on Community Power to your Select Board or others in your community.

Learn more about Community Power at [www.monadnocksustainabilityhub.org](http://www.monadnocksustainabilityhub.org)



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## BASICS OF COMMUNITY POWER IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

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Southwest Region  
Planning Commission

## WHAT IS COMMUNITY POWER?

Community Power is a new NH program (per RSA 53-E) that allows local governments to buy electricity for all of their residents and small businesses at wholesale prices. In other words, it's a bulk purchasing program for electricity. Towns work in collaboration with experienced service providers who know the electricity market so town staff do not need expertise in the energy sector. While towns with Community Power programs can purchase electricity on the wholesale market, they do not own or maintain the poles and wires. Repairs, power outages, and routine upgrades are taken care of by the utilities.

## HOW DOES COMMUNITY POWER BENEFIT NH COMMUNITIES?

**Local Control** - Towns can choose what company to buy electricity from, and the source of that electricity, so that it reflects their priorities.

**Increases Renewables** - If a community prioritizes renewable electricity sources, Community Power makes it possible to purchase more of their electricity from renewables like solar, wind, and hydro.

**Cost Effective** - Because they are contracting on behalf of all of a town's residents, Community Power programs can often negotiate lower and more stable electricity prices than the utility rate.

**Promotes Equity** - Community Power allows residents of all income levels to enjoy the benefits of renewable energy. You don't need to buy expensive solar panels or even own your home. You just need to pay your electricity bill.

**New Products and Services** - Community Power programs can establish a reserve fund to finance a variety of locally-determined projects, such as: local renewable energy development, batteries for residents and businesses for use during power outages, and energy efficiency renovations in low/moderate income homes.

## KEY ACTION STEPS TO LAUNCH COMMUNITY POWER IN YOUR COMMUNITY:

