

Westmoreland Community Power Committee

Minutes

November 22nd 2022 Unapproved

Members Present

Alan Bell, Mark Terry, Melissa Bonito, Terry Cox, Scott Talbot

Public Present

John Snowdon (Board of Selectman Representative)

705pm Meeting Started by Mark Terry

Mark introduced Scott Talbot as the newest member of the committee and John Snowdon spoke about how Scott was involved in the firehouse committee.

Mark also noted that Henry Herndon (Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire) was going to make a zoom call into our meeting as soon as he was able to and that the meeting would shift to the zoom call as needed.

708pm Terry Cox moved to approve the minutes from November 9th, Mellisa Bonito 2nd the motion. A vote was taken to approve the minutes with all in favor.

709pm Mark Terry started a discussion about when we should have a Public Meeting regarding the Community Power Coalition which involves reaching out to the town and getting people at large in to hear about the Coalition and what it means for the town of Westmoreland.

Many dates were talked about and John Snowdon's experience with the High Speed Internet committee was very helpful in determining the timeline and how we might go about getting the word out. As the committee has zero funds available to it we discussed ways to contact the residents that would be the least costly and effective. Postcard being the cheapest after facebook and public notices.

In conversation the committee agreed that we put up a notice at the transfer station with details about the coalition, and that we get the information out and available in multiple ways before we call the meeting in order to preempt any rumors and misinformation circulating amongst the town, as has been the case with other town endeavors.

725pm Henry Herndon called into the meeting and talked about the Coalition. Below is a transcript of his initial monologue (not this is automatically transcribed as such there may be errors in a few places, I have tried to manually fix those where I have found them)

"My name is Henry Herndon. I'm a consultant working with the power coalition in New Hampshire. And I've been working on this project since 2019. When it was just a little glimmer of an idea and the New Hampshire General Court passed legislation that authorized our programs. And at the time, I was with clean energy New Hampshire, which was a nonprofit advocate in the state and I was working with cities

and towns and energy committees on various projects, but legislation came along and immediately thereafter, I worked to form a work group of some of the leading city cities and towns in the state that were thinking about the power and Clifton Below who was the author of the legislation and are in a longtime statesman, working on energy policy in the state. He's now City Councilmen for the City of Lebanon and the fourth Chair of the coalition. And I love to every detail every piece of the story but over the course of 2020 Hammer, Lebanon, Chester County and Nasua worked to sort of research community power markets and our state, they came to understand that the statewide coalition power agency model is the most effective model and has seen you know, great benefits and cost reduction in developing multiple energy resources and really building an innovative local energy economy and subsequently these communities, and in sort of a workgroup, that we will work in hired a law firm to help draft the corporate charter of the statewide nonprofit Power Agency Communities Power Coalition in this structure called a joint powers agency where you have multiple municipal governments. They create a new corporate body that they control, they appoint representatives to its board to provide oversight and then they share their authority and in this case, their community Power Authority. So we got a law firm, we wrote this joint powers agreement, which I understand that committee in the town are considering. And this was based on sort of public power and in the long history of this kind of model in many states across the country, and what and incorporate the agency last October October 2021, with an original 14 founding members, so those 14 members came together, they created this nonprofit corporation that they control the appointed representative to the board and since that time, it's grown to 24 municipal and county members. And so the structure that's sort of the governance structure you have a nonprofit that is governed by the number of towns, and then we can talk about the operating structure for the business model, if you will, and that is that the the coalition has issued a request for proposal for comprehensive services and credit support and through that process, has executed contracts or as approved contracts with a couple of firms to run all of the technical professional services required to transact large volumes of electricity and provide customer service to all the retail customer accounts. So there are three firms that are that are private firms that will be providing service to this nonprofit coalition. And that sort of the one is retail customer services. So that's all customer enrollment and the utility data management is in the billing. The second is the power buying company. That's the energy portfolio manager if you will, and delve into the wholesale market and manage all the electricity contracts. And then the third is Clean Energy New Hampshire to support some of the grassroots cities and towns on the ground and developing their programs locally. There's a law firm with a technical consultant. And we're right now as we're preparing sort of the final stages of startup launched the initial 10 cities and towns, community power programs have become the default electricity provider, notify all residents businesses in the community, to the program and then begin providing that electricity throughout those communities and to sort of clear the way for other communities to fall in. So I just threw a lot at you and I'll pause for a moment and I hope that was clear and maybe you can let me know if there are other gaps I may have missed or things like that."

745pm Mark Terry said he thought that was pretty good and covered a lot.

The committee asked several questions about how the Coalition works also if there were any materials to help with the town presentation. Henry responded that there is a information deck in PowerPoint form which the town can modify and utilize in it's presentation and that he would also be able to answer specific questions at the meeting.

One of the questions the committee had was how coalition dealt with solar credits and what would happen to those people in town who had alternative energy system which generated credits on their energy billing. Henry stated that the Coalition would be giving competitive credits however that it may be necessary to opt out of the Coalition until the customer receives either cash or energy from their existing net metering account before joining the Westmoreland Community Power Coalition. This brought up how people would be able to do that and it was stated that they would have 30 days to opt out before they are automatically opted into the Coalition.

Another question regarded how the funds which the Coalition accrued would be used. Henry stated that for the first year or two a reserve fund would be built up in order both purchase power and to act as a reserve to give the Coalition the flexibility to stabilize prices for the consumer. Eventually the Coalition could build up a credit rating and potentially work with energy developers and financiers to partner on projects to generate long-term energy saving contracts and projects for the coalition. Member towns if they choose could add an additional fee to energy costs and have their portion of the fund in escrow to utilize on projects of their own as well.

Next the committee talked about dates for the town meeting and at this time we are still figuring out a suitable date when Henry and the Committee can present the Coalition to the town.

820pm Scott Talbot made the motion to close the meeting, Terry Cox 2nd the motion. The meeting closed by unanimous vote.

Submitted by Alan Bell committee member and Clerk