

Town of Bow

Energy Committee

10 Grandview Road, Bow, New Hampshire 03304

Location: 10 Grandview Road, Bow, NH, Room B

Time: 6:30-7:30pm

APPROVED MINUTES

Wednesday, February 16, 2022

Attendees: Jessica Dunbar, Chris Andrews, Chris Moore, Dana Mosher, Michael Leuchtenberger, Kathy Roberge, Lisa Franklin, Christopher Nicolopoulos, Michael Wayne, Rob Ray, John Stevens, Mara Hoplamazian

1) Welcome

Jessica Dunbar welcomed all attendees.

Mara Hoplamazian of NHPR sought and received permission to record the meeting.

2) Introductions

Jessica Dunbar is a resident of Bow. She and her husband have installed solar panels, a heat pump, and made other energy efficiency upgrades in their home. She is interested in helping others in Bow navigate decisions about how to improve energy efficiency in their homes. She would also like to see the town develop a town energy plan.

Chris Moore has lived in Bow for five years. He and his family have worked on making their home more efficient through lighting, insulation, heating, etc. He is also the Energy Efficiency Project Manager for the state of New Hampshire.

Kathy Roberge has lived in Bow for 24 years. She has used NH Saves rebates to improve energy efficiency in her old house. She has worked for Eversource for 12 years.

Lisa Franklin has lived in Bow for two years and is interested in supporting environmental causes.

Michael Wayne is a member of the Board of Selectmen.

Christopher Nicolopoulos, Chair of the Board of Selectmen, offered some suggestions to the committee. These included getting the selectmen on board for grants, becoming familiar with the CIP for long-range planning, using table space at elections to connect with community, reaching out to the recycling committee and coordinate on outreach, submitting articles to the Bow Times, and providing regular updates to the Select Board.

Michael Leuchtenberger has been a resident since 2020. He drives electric vehicles, has solar panels, and would like to install heat pumps. He is a Senior Minister at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Concord. He helped the church get solar panels, which involved addresses zoning issues. He is interested in energizing the local population and a neighbor-to-neighbor approach to encouraging energy efficiency.

Dana Mosher has been a resident since 1980. He has worked as a builder and taught at NH Community College. He would like to create a resource on energy efficiency for the town.

3) Guest Reports:

a. Chris Andrews, Bow Building and Facilities Manager

Chris Andrews is Bow's Building and Facilities Manager. He provided a list of energy efficiency projects Bow has undertaken on municipal properties. Many of the town buildings are old and in need of efficiency upgrades. He has helped the town take advantage of rebates to reduce costs. He noted that the Selectmen have been supportive of this work. One of the upcoming projects is an energy audit of the Municipal Building.

b. Rob Werner, Concord Energy and Environment Committee, League of Conservation Voters

Rob Werner was not able to attend this meeting.

c. Representative from Dunbarton Energy Committee

Bob Ray and John Stevens are guests from the Dunbarton Energy Committee. Bob shared an overview of their committee efforts. Their initial focus was on lighting. They have also done outreach and engaged the community. They have a program called Neighbors Warming Neighbors, through which they assist homeowners in a casual energy audit using an infrared tool obtained via a grant. They have done about 39 houses so far, but progress was halted by the pandemic. They installed 160 solar panels at the Dunbarton Transfer Station; this was a good deal with a lifetime savings of \$300,000. They are now looking for town-owned parcels for a solar array for the school system. They have put on an annual Energy Expo; they have found the best time of year for this is in early fall. They are interested in partnering with Bow on future expos. They recommended developing a strong relationship with the Select Board and getting a Selectman to attend meetings if possible. They also highlighted the importance and benefits of adopting a helpful and supportive approach with the community.

Michael Leuchtenberger asked about the possibility of working on transportation, such as supporting the transition to electric vehicles. Jessica Dunbar mentioned possible infrastructure grant money for electric buses. Christopher Nicolopoulos said the Town of Bow leases buses on a 1-2 year cycle, making it easy to determine bus costs in support of an argument to the School Board to consider a switch. He also said we might consider making the pitch to the Police Department for cruisers.

4) Review of Committee Charge

Jessica Dunbar proposed changing the committee's name from Energy Conservation Committee to Energy Committee, in part to distinguish it more clearly from the Conservation Commission. All were in agreement.

Attendees then reviewed the former Energy Committee's charge and made several revisions.

The former charge consisted of two parts as follows:

The Board of Selectmen established the Energy Conservation Committee to:

A. Work with all town government and willing parties to identify, study, encourage and propose changes in current or future operational procedures or regulatory requirements that are either cost neutral or that will result in a cost saving.

B. Create public awareness and disseminate information for promotion and implementation of various measures to achieve the goal of reduction in carbon emissions and create a more environmentally conscious Town of Bow.

Attendees discussed each part and agreed upon a new charge with four parts as follows:

- A. Work with all town government, public entities, and interested parties to identify, study, encourage, and propose changes in current or future energy-related operational procedures or regulatory requirements.
- B. Engage the community with the goal of creating a more energy-conscious Town of Bow.
- C. Identify resources to support the implementation of the committee's goals.
- D. Develop a town energy plan.

The group was undecided on the best number of committee members to require. The former charge required the committee to have eight members. We discussed lowering this number, but decided to first check with the Town Manager to better understand the options for designating a group number while the committee is new and still seeking additional members.

The group also discussed adopting the Dunbarton Energy Committee's mission statement, with slight revision, as follows:

Mission Statement:

To encourage and support Bow's municipality, businesses, and residents in the practical application of technology and practices resulting in energy efficiency and sustainability for buildings and transportation in order to lower our energy costs and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

5) Closing Comments

Jessica Dunbar said that the Energy Committee expects to continue to meet monthly on the third Wednesday of the month at 6:30pm. Chris Andrews suggested considering more frequent meetings while the committee gets established. This will be considered, but no additional meetings are currently planned.