

# Town of Bow

## Energy Committee

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

Time: 6:30pm

AGENDA

Wednesday, March 30, 2022

Attendees: Jessica Dunbar, Chris Andrews, Dana Mosher, Chris Moore, Michael Leuchtenberger, Stephen Elgert, Alex Grene, Angela Brennan, Andy Duncan

### 1) Welcome

Meeting started at 6:30pm.

Introductions:

Chris Andrews is Bow's Building and Facilities Manager.

Jessica Dunbar is chair of the committee.

Dana Mosher and Michael Leuchtenberger are approved members of the committee.

Chris Moore has submitted his application to join the committee.

Stephen Elgert and Alex Grene are interested in the committee and considering membership.

Angela Brennan is on the Select Board and interested in the committee's work.

Andy Duncan is a guest from Lakes Region Community College.

Angela Brennan announced that the Selectmen will take turns attending our meetings.

Michael Leuchtenberger motioned to approve the minutes from the February 16<sup>th</sup> meeting;

Dana Mosher seconded that motion; all in favor.

### 2) Guest: Andy Duncan on NH Saves Button Up workshop and related topics

Andy Duncan shared several resources and events we might find helpful:

Clean Energy NH

Local Energy Solutions – Conference (October?)

Energy Week April 11-15 (Clean Energy NH and Nature Conservancy)

Greening our Faith Communities April 9

Energy Star Program – Portfolio Manager (PM) – Emily Bolger

Chris Andrews took a seminar on this years ago. He started to use PM, but didn't get far with it.

Chris Moore is familiar with PM. He says the early versions were difficult to work with, but the newest iteration is much simpler. It is a powerful benchmarking tool. It is a pain to set up at first, but easier to maintain. It is meant for non-residential buildings. It scores building from 0-100.

Target Finder is a simpler tool to start with for estimating a year of data rather than month-by-month.

#### Building Operator Certification Program

Robert **Dion** of the Bow School System is currently taking this certification course. Might be a good person to contact from the school.

#### New Hampshire Energy Education Project – K-12

A lot of energy committees in state see themselves in outreach role.

LRCC NH Rural Renewables – no-cost technical assistance for commercial businesses

Chunk of town is Liberty Natural Gas; most of town is Unitil.

There is a separate fund for public schools and municipal buildings than for businesses.

Suggest having an informational event for businesses.

Maybe Bow business after hours? – check with Matt Taylor at Community

#### Development

They do have outreach materials they can share with us.

Resilient Buildings Group (RBG) – **Chris Andrews and Dana Mosher have contacts at RBG**

The residential side of funding is still getting settled down from Public Utility Commission rejection of state energy plan.

Home Performance with Energy Start - “Free” Energy Audits (\$100 upfront that becomes a credit toward any work that is done based on recommendations)

Look for “Energy Audits and Weatherization” website.

Chris Moore went through this program 3ish years ago. He said it was a streamlined process. A representative calls you and does the audit. At the time, he received zero percent financing taken out of his electricity bill for improvements.

Vital Communities – good resources, has helped with weatherize campaigns

Sometimes energy committee can pre-vet installers and make a deal to provide preferential rates.

Or just publicize, and people choose their own vendor.

“Shakes to Shingles” is a weatherization company in Bow.

Installers are less busy in spring/summer, so that might be the best time to launch a weatherize program.

Jessica Dunbar mentioned Concord's weatherize program, launched last spring, but put mostly on hold due to funding issues. She said they have a concise and impressive audio recording introducing their program.

Communication channels – Angela Brennan suggested that most success is tied to town communication channels, active Facebook, etc.

Solarize campaigns – Canterbury is one example.

Other active energy committees – Exeter, Milford, Hanover, Dover...

Some of the motivating factors for these campaigns: climate, energy conservation, patriotic/energy security, resale value, comfort

Button Up – sponsored by NHSaves; Andy Duncan is a presenter

Workshop is no cost to the town.

Can invite someone from utility to be at presentation so people can sign up right there.

Best time to do these is early fall.

Participation varies depending on how well publicized. Might want to touch base with others who have had success bringing a crowd – contact Robbin Adams

Sometimes people are interested but then don't qualify; encourage them to check beforehand on NHSaves website.

Michael Leuchtenberger asked about regulatory obstacles.

Andy Duncan mentioned solar restrictions and energy codes for new construction.

Improving energy codes may be an opportunity for our committee.

Blower door test is already a requirement.

Bob Pike is Bow's Building Inspector – check with him on Bow's energy codes

GDS (?) has had day-long seminars on energy codes – not right now, but maybe will start back up again.

Energy Star – can tell you what % of Bow homes are energy star (are there any?)

For solar, one issue can be whether the home's current electrical system can handle it.

Jessica Dunbar asked about whether people might perceive that newer homes do not need audits or weatherization improvements. Andy Duncan confirmed that even newer homes can have issues.

Michael Leuchtenberger asked how difficult it is to do basic home survey like Dunbarton's Neighbors Warming Neighbors?

Andy highlighted the importance of having the needed tools.

Also, depends on the time of volunteers. Angela Brennan said the committee can pull in extra volunteers if we can find people who want to help.

Chris Andrews suggested asking fire chief about using their thermal imaging cameras.

Maybe could also combine our work with their safety education (ex. carbon monoxide).

HAREI – nonprofit that does solar raisers

#### Community Power

State law a couple years ago made this easier to do. Many others are doing this. It's in between a solarize campaign and being your own utility.

Low-Income Weatherization Programs have been very effective. Important to get the word out.

Bow does have some low income residents, so might make a good focus for some outreach.

Community Action Program works with low-income families.

Michael Leuchtenberger asked if there was anyone looking at town-aggregate energy use?

Andy Duncan said probably not – complicated to get data for whole town.

Easier to do for just municipal and school buildings.

Maybe ask Unutil or Regional Planning Commission.

Would be nice to have this information for purpose of benchmarking to measure future success.

However, not clear-cut because moving from oil to electricity will show increase in electricity despite lower energy usage.

Unutil coming out with electric vehicle charging rate – something to publicize

### 3) Discussion of near-term projects and overall plan forward

Chris Moore suggests we keep doing what we're doing, having speakers and doing research.

Important to start by being able to better answer: Where are we now?

For example, research current energy use in town buildings, find out what utilities we use and what areas they serve, etc.

He is also interested in bridging between Building and Facilities Advisory Board and our Energy Committee.

Chris Andrews clarified energy efficiency work to date has not been by the Building and Facilities Advisory Board; rather, he has been working with the Town Manager and Select Board. However, we do still need basic awareness between our two groups.

Chris Andrews noted that the Public Works Building is the least inefficient right now; requires longer-term thinking and grant getting. He would benefit from our input and assistance.

Michael mentioned his interest in and the importance of communications with residents. What are the ways we interact with the public?

Some possibilities proposed by the group:

Bow Times

Concord Monitor – Town Crier, Letter-to-the-Editor, David Brooks

Public Events – Parks&Rec Newsletter, Library, School

Town Facebook Page – goes onto Community Page

Bow Rotary, Bow Men's Club, Bow Garden Club

Dana Mosher let us know **he has access to a blower door** – this could be immensely useful for doing home surveys.

Dana Mosher thought it would be great to do something for Energy Week, even though there's not much time to prepare (Energy Week is April 11-15). Maybe blower door display? He will think this over and get pictures of municipal buildings from Chris Andrews for possible PPT/presentation. Jessica Dunbar will share with the group short series of Button Up videos that Dana Mosher made several years and which might make good posts on Facebook and elsewhere.

Angela suggested looking into Facebook features, such as scheduling posts in advance and assigning multiple administrators. She suggested recording a presentation to post on social media (for Energy Week). She mentioned that we can submit events to town calendar and people who have signed up will get alerts.

Jessica Dunbar will work with Tonia Lindquist to get the group an email address and Facebook page. We also talked about possibility of establishing an email list through a Notify Me link on the website.

Chris Andrews said that, among other work being done with Infrastructure Bill funding, the Town is using such funding to put an energy recovery system in the town hall.

Dana Mosher added that Building Science Corporation.com has a ton of great information about making buildings energy efficiency.

Jessica Dunbar reminded the group that Rob Werner of Concord will be our guest at our April meeting, and we will also continue our discussion of where to focus our near-term efforts.