

Town of Bow

Energy Committee

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

Time: 7:00pm

DRAFT MINUTES

Wednesday, May 3, 2023

Attendees: Jessica Dunbar, Chris Moore, Russel Anderson, Michael Leuchtenberger, Karri Makinen

Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant

Karri Makinen reported on her research regarding the grant. She had initially been very excited about the grant, especially having worked on other grants in the past, but when she learned that the total funding of \$8.8 million would be distributed among only 10-20 awards nationwide, with preference for disadvantaged communities, she felt less enthusiastic. Although the money is being reserved for smaller communities (rather than big cities with other resources), she suggested that projects currently being considered in Bow, such as municipal solar or LED lighting, would not be innovative enough to be competitive. Thus, she did not feel it was worthwhile for Bow to apply, unless all other projects were put aside to focus solely on this.

Russell Anderson offered that, if we already had a fitting project in mind, it would make sense to take advantage of this grant, but it feels instead like we going about it from the opposite direction.

Russell Anderson motioned that we do not pursue this grant; Michael Leuchtenberger seconded; all in favor.

Jessica Dunbar asked about how the group could do more going forward to keep up to date on and be ready for grant/funding opportunities.

Karri Makinen asked, have you looked at Community Development Finance Authority? Russell Anderson answered, yes, he and Jessica Dunbar met them at last fall's Local Energy Solutions Conference.

Michael Leuchtenberger asked about how to avoid reinventing the wheel, learn from other towns what projects/grants they have considered or tried. He also mentioned HAREI and that he knew someone who wanted to start a similar organization based in Concord. Karri Makinen suggested that would be a good grant project.

Russell Anderson suggested making a list of cool projects and find other towns to potentially partner with.

Karri Makinen suggested framing the approach around community engagement, which is often an attractive component in grant applications. She also said that another key in winning grants is being able to show documentation that the project idea has been previously developed or touched on in the past,

that it has been “stewing” and already has some support (for example, included in master plan, discussed at town meeting, etc.).

Jessica Dunbar suggested it might be time to start an Energy Plan, one of the committee’s original charges, as it would be a good way to establish the priorities and framework needed to make Bow ready for grant opportunities as they arise. The group agreed. Karri Makinen offered to do some research in to the current master plan and which parts pertain to energy. She suggested paying attention to what is there as well as what is not there. Russell Anderson asked her to send everyone a link to the master plan.

Chris Moore asked, procedurally, what is the process for codifying the master plan?

Karri Makinen said it is a planning board document. There are a lot of listening sessions to gain input. There is a comprehensive update every 10 years, with the last one being maybe 2017ish. However, we could work on a energy plan as a stand alone document and could start anytime; the master plan could then reference the energy plan goals.

Jessica Dunbar will add discussion of the energy plan to the next meeting’s agenda.

Adjourned: 7:58pm