

## **Mason Energy Commission Minutes (amended) October 1, 2018**

Present: Members Kathy Chapman, Liz Fletcher, Dave Morrison, Michele Siegmann, Michelle Scott

Alternates Garth Fletcher, Curt Spacht, Doug Whitbeck, Darrell Scott

Meeting began at 7:00. Minutes of 9/4/18 MEC meeting approved as amended.

**Pat Martin**, Chair of the Rindge Energy Commission, came to share the the long-term experience of the Commission and their ongoing activities. Pat is an electrical engineer who has designed low power circuits and portable computers, interested in energy issues since college. She's on the Clean Energy Team in Keene, and on the board of the Monadnock Energy Hub.

Founded in 2009, when the state first adopted enabling legislation for Energy Commissions, the Rindge Energy Commission (REC) has 3 members, soon to be 4. Their first task, with the assistance of the Selectmen and Town Manager Carlotta Pini, was to do an energy use inventory of municipal buildings. Working with the Manager, the Commission received a grant from the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA) in 2009 to do high quality energy audits of all town buildings. Margaret Dillon was the auditor and did an excellent job. Her audits still serve as a reference to guide energy efficiency improvements for these buildings today.

For example, the Rindge Fire Department is a cement block building, heated by oil and propane, very difficult to insulate. Margaret recommended the best efficiency measure would be to put in air-to-air heat pumps (mini-splits) which have greatly reduced oil and gas use and work for air-conditioning too. Other projects REC has completed are weatherization of the police station and Meeting House, a street lighting project, and improving library lighting through Eversource's Smart Start program.

Rindge voters have supported these projects because REC has a well-documented record of cost savings, thanks to Pat's ongoing tracking of municipal energy use through Portfolio Manager. REC's annual reports appear in the Rindge Town Report each year. This would be a good model for MEC to follow.

In 2014, REC began successfully working with the Jaffrey-Rindge School District. Margaret Dillon did an energy audit of the Middle and High Schools, and recommended that they combine their heating systems and convert from oil to wood chips, signing up for an Eversource Energy Saving Service Contract which would be paid back over time through the district's energy bills. Jaffrey-Rindge voters approved this \$2.2 million bond issue.

Pat described the Monadnock Energy Hub's Solarize Campaign to encourage people to sign up for solar panels. The more people in a town participate, the bigger discounts they can get from solar installers. The Energy Hub checks out various installers who want to participate, and homeowners who sign up can choose among them to contract for their installations.

Monadnock Energy Hub is looking for towns interested in joining the Solarize Campaign. Dori Drachman of the Peterborough Energy Commission is the administrator of the Energy Hub, which is sponsored by the Monadnock Sustainability Network. It would be good for MEC to contact her to find out more. Pat will send a link with Solarize campaign info.

MEC is most grateful to Pat for coming to Mason and sharing her valuable energy wisdom. It was a pleasure to meet her – her tireless advocacy for renewable energy on the state-wide and local levels is awesome!

**Margaret Dillon's Mann House audit process** – thanks to Select Board Assistant Kathy Wile's persistence, Margaret now has records of the building's energy use direct from the suppliers. Liz will ask Kathy if she knows of any floor plans of the building or library, and any plans for improvements. Liz will co-ordinate with Margaret, Kathy, and Wally Brown (in charge of building maintenance) to schedule the site visit in late October or early November, and can let Margaret in the building at 8am on whatever day is chosen. It's best if Kathy and Wally can be there sometime that day to answer any questions Margaret may have.

**Portfolio Manager data collection update** – Curt has entered data from Mann House and Fire Dept into the EPA Energy Star site, but it would need amending due to mis-understanding of the definition of occupancy. Garth said it means use of any area of a building that supports the organization's function, including record storage not always occupied by staff.

**Diesel Replacement Program update** – Dave sent off the application for a new truck. He had diesel mechanic Nate Archambault review the state specs to see if they fit what Mason needs – a heavy duty truck usable with a sander body, plow and wings. Dave should hear back by 10/22 if the state is considering Mason's application for a 25% rebate.

**Lighting update** -- Liz will contact Eversource's Anne K to see if Carl Edin of Energy Management Consultants is one of their contractors who can do lighting audits. If so, would Eversource support him doing an audit of Mason's municipal buildings? Especially MEC's first four priorities – Mann House & library, Fire dept, Highway office & quonset hut, and Police station. Carl is well recommended by Margaret D. A firm called LightTec, one of Eversource's contractors, did a lighting audit of the Rindge Library but only replaced fixtures with more efficient ones, they didn't do an analysis of lighting needs. It's best to have separate control circuits for each bank of lighting to save energy. Sometimes motion-activated light switches can be problematic, turning off too soon (like when someone is working under a truck) or too late (going up a dark stairway).

**Next meeting November 5<sup>th</sup>** – should we ask Scott Maslansky of Community Development Finance to come and speak about his loan programs to an assemblage of other town Energy Commissions?

Meeting adjourned at 9:05pm.