

Mason Energy Commission Meeting September 14, 2020

Present for this Zoom Meeting: Darrell Scott, Curt Spacht, Kathy Chapman, Liz Fletcher, Garth Fletcher, Joe Harney, Dave Morrison, Richard Stockdale, Michele Siegmann, and Michelle Scott

The right to know meeting checklist was read. Approval of minutes by roll call was unanimous. See above.

Garth provided an update of the lighting situation. He worked with the town and the consultant to review what had been done and bring up any issues. The lighting job appears to be done, with minor outstanding items that will be handled by the town department. For example, the fire department is undergoing a renovation, so there was a discrepancy between the lights provided and the lights needed. This was found to be acceptable during the review. Garth reviewed the lighting power to insure that it was appropriate for the specific tasks associated with the particular lighting configuration. All users reported being satisfied with the new fixtures – which in many cases significantly increased the amount of light. Comparing the wattage of the 49 fixtures replaced by the upgrade, their total after upgrade was 1/3 of the total before upgrade (2,891 W before versus 933 W after). The actual reduction in the town's usage will vary from this because not all fixtures are on the same number of hours per week. For example, replacing a high wattage bulb which is only on a few hours a week will not make as big a difference as several low wattage bulbs which are on for 40 hours a week. Because of the subsidy program, town bills will not decrease for several years until our 60% share (Eversource pays 40%) of the upgrade costs has been paid off through energy savings. After that period the town's total bills will decrease to reflect our lower energy usage.

After the meeting, the project was signed off as completed (on Sep 19). In the past, Mason's electrical bills have covered the period between the 19th of each month, e.g., Sep 19 to Oct 19, so the bills received by the end of October may be the first which cover the updated system. Of course Covid-19 has changed the town's consumption, so it may be a year before we have truly comparable data on the actual reduction in usage.

The situation with the website was discussed. It was decided that a small group would consider the alternatives, including creating a website that would be a repository for energy information, but which would not be under the auspices of the MEC or associated with the Town of Mason website. Curt, Michelle, Darrell, Garth, and Kathy will discuss the website options.

The virtual tour was discussed. Bob Dilberger has sent information to Darrell about his geothermal heating system. Darrell is in the midst of making updates to the school wood boiler presentation and will start Bob's configuration in October or after.

The educational initiative was discussed. Dick was able to get in touch with teachers who suggested that now is not a good time to invite MEC people to help because of the chaos with remote/in-person learning. However there was positive feedback all around. Dick and Joe agreed to team up to further the educational initiative. Subsequent to the meeting, Dick met with Joe to discuss the educational opportunities and Joe gave details on the intricacies of modern schooling. Joe called Milford and Dick called Mason, both reaching an answering machine.

Dick sent mail to Kristen Kivela (principle Mason Elementary School) and got a response, thanking Dick for the support and stating that the school will use the ideas as needed. Kristen would like to meet in person at an appropriate time.

Long range planning proposals were discussed. Commission members were encouraged to come up with possible plans for our future work.

Renewables assistance for businesses was discussed. There is a wood heat program that offers help to small businesses. Kathy will make a list of businesses in Mason that might be able to take advantage of this program and reach out to them.

Shelburne, NH, solar success was discussed. It was agreed that we should try to hear from the people who made Shelburne's success possible.

The meeting was adjourned at about 9:10PM.