

Energy Committee Meeting July 20, 2011

Attendees: Richard Anderson, Linda Zukauskas, Norman Sherman, Gary Nurnberger

Absent: Roger Plourde (out of town, on vacation, absence approved by chair)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The committee unanimously approved minutes of the last meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE

Linda gave each committee member a copy of the Woodbury Library Long Range Plan. She passed along the compliments of Library Director Pat Lunn who appreciates the professionalism of the Energy Committee and asks their input on the plan.

In other correspondence, First Selectman Jerry Stomski updated the committee on the status of the air sealing and ductwork project.

At the 6/23/2011 BOS meeting, the selectmen awarded ECS a contract for air sealing for \$11,626.00 and a contract to Paparazzo Sheet Metal for the duct work for \$10,756.00 as per the recommendation of the PBC.

The additional 400ft of pipe insulation will be out for bid.

Linda Anderson has notified.

You may contact the individual contractors to see what their schedule are for performing the work, such as insulating, sheet metal and/or duct blasting.

Please let me know if you need additional information.

Linda commended Roger for his help in getting a rebate from CL&P, in the amount of \$1375. She also thanked Chair Chris Laux for using the specs from the bidder who won the heat pump RFQ and prepared the CL&P paperwork.

She noted that this rebate is not time-sensitive but the money that the town might get for installing new ductwork is dependent on getting information to CL&P and a memorandum of understanding in place before work begins.

✓ **ACTION ITEM:** Linda and Roger will work to gather the results of the duct blast test to get the CL&P money in place.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

There was none.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

ARRA Block Grant Update– Linda Z.

Referring to the memo referencing the EC's recommendation for an HVAC Plan, Linda said that Ron Judson had not gathered information at the time of the last PBC meeting and the PBC will not meet 7/27 due to a lack of a quorum. Linda will follow up on this at the August PBC meeting so this doesn't fall through the cracks. She noted this doesn't have to be a huge project for one person as the information does exist somewhere and it's a matter of just pulling it together.

The committee also noted the new school administration would need to be brought in to the project.

Gary asked who was administering the work for the air sealing and ductwork.

✓ **ACTION ITEM:** *Linda will follow up with Jerry and ask if his office is expecting anything from the EC.*

Linda confirmed that the duct blast test would come first to get results for the CL&P monies. Roger has said he has materials he can use to convert the duct blast test to the data needed to apply to CL&P.

The committee discussed the removal of air tanks. Chris had sent an email saying:

The PBC has taken the position that the risk of fire by cutting with a torch or saw of the old air tanks in the Shove Attic is real and unacceptable. We therefore have recommended to the First Selectman that the air tanks stay in place and the air sealing of the front attic floor be performed around the tanks. Since trapped air itself is a great insulator perhaps the loss of efficiency won't be great.

Richard followed up with Jerry and was told that Jerry had asked about insurance and received a blank stare from an estimator.

In response to Gary's question, Linda clarified that PBC said they would ask ECS to include a layer of hard insulation to bring the floor of the attic up to R6 or R7. This was to be added to the approved bid; removal of tanks was never going to be something the town would ask of ECS.

Gary noted that the issue is no longer about money but risk of fire.

Linda said that, without paying for tank removal, there would be more money left in the EECBG. She had received approval from OPM to use some of the EECBG funds for the removal of the air tanks.

Richard noted the ESB is done and there is insulation in Boyd. After working on Shove, the work is done in this project and he asked what more can be done for the buildings.

Linda said the town does not need to spend the whole EECBG.

Richard asked if the work of the EC would be done soon and didn't see a "hard, physical" direction for the committee. He did see a direction for an education component.

Linda noted that while other energy committees/commissions in other towns are using grants and other funds to implement innovative technologies such as wind and solar power, the Woodbury EC thinks these are not worth the investment until the technology improves.

She also noted that Newtown is converting fleet vehicles to natural gas and Newtown and Woodbury both have a gas line running through their towns. It might be another project to consider.

Gary said he'd attended a Newtown Sustainable Energy Commission and one of their projects involved kids in updating their web site. He suggested the Woodbury EC might do something like that.

Norman said the EC could educate itself and offer that information to the public, comparing different energy alternatives available. He cautioned that some good items might not be readily available, either locally or time-wise (i.e., not fully developed).

Richard said he would like the EC to “see some results,” noting that the EC has a diverse background and has done some good work.

He asked if it would be wise to look at window replacements as another project. The EC has done the attic (A) and basement (B) work and the conditioned space (C) is the next logical area to address.

Gary noted that his study showed exterior storms to be the best solution but not nearly as effective as insulation.

Linda said the remainder of the EECBG funds should be around \$10,000 so the EC could start a window project and Gary said it might be possible to supplement such a project with other funds.

Richard expressed concerns that the PBC or Historical Commission might not be on board and Gary said that, while exterior storms are not the most attractive solution, they do protect the original windows and it should please the Historical Commission.

Linda said the library is relatively new and the committee said it makes more sense to work on older buildings where the return on investment is higher. She added that the hot air rises in the atrium, trapping and overheating the rooms on the second floor overlooking the first. It might make sense to install fans to push the hot air away and recalculate it below.

✓ ***ACTION ITEM: The members will think about a direction and discuss it at the next meeting.***

CT Clean Energy Grant of \$2,000 Update – Linda Z.

There was no discussion.

Comparison of Energy Alternatives – Norm S.

Norman explained that the rush on natural gas has pushed the industry to drill father (from 1000 to 1500 feet) to reach the gas. In the past, production costs were significantly lower than sales, indicating a large profit margin. Today, the production costs have risen to the point where the margin is very small.

This trend has been present for three to four years.

Norman noted that pockets of gas are isolated as opposed to a continuous area as found in oil fields.

He concluded that natural gas might not be the “silver bullet” to energy woes.

The committee also discussed the problems with fracturing the earth to release gas. It has poisoned wells in nearby homes, to the point where people can ignite the water coming from their faucets because it is so full of flammable (and poisonous) material.

Norman also showed graphs to indicate that the reserves are not as large as claimed by gas companies.

He cautioned that there is methane hydrate trapped in ice and there are concerns that global warming might release these icy deposits of methane gas, which is 20 times more harmful to the global warming effect than carbon dioxide.

NEW BUSINESS

There was none.

SECOND PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

There was none.

ADJOURNMENT

FILED SUBJECT TO COMMISSION APPROVAL

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Zukauskas
Linda Zukauskas- Acting Clerk

