



## Energy Committee

Town of Hinesburg  
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### Energy Committee Meeting Notes *Draft*

Meeting Date: Tuesday Feb. 27 7-9 PM

**Location:** Town Hall, Lower level

**Attending committee members:** Chuck Reiss, Sam Lash

**Attending interested residents of Hinesburg:** Nate Methot (by phone), Margaret McNorlan, Richard Hopwood

**Official business could not be transacted at this meeting due to a lack of a quorum. The energy committee needs at least three of the five potential members to be present to have a quorum.**

- Meeting was called to order by Chuck at 7:10
- Sam requested an addition to the agenda of a short review of the state legislative activity specifically the house bill H-289
- Potentially new committee members were introduced
- Chuck reviewed some past energy committee work. (see attached list)
- There was discussion of projects the committee will consider this year:
  - Apply for a grant to install an electric car charging station in the town hall parking lot.
  - There was discussion about adding additional charging stations in town, perhaps at the library, the police station or other public spaces in town
  - The energy committee will encourage the town to apply for state funding an electric car charging station that may be presently available. Nathan offered to look into charging station options for Hinesburg
  - Discussion of the potential renovation of town hall
    - The town has applied for and has received a grant for an energy assessment of the town hall. This assessment is potentially scheduled for May 15 of this year. This assessment is required to be considered for additional funds from the Vermont Municipal Energy Resilience Program (MERP). Up to \$500,000 may be available for the town to do energy upgrades. It was discussed how the budget for the renovation may include energy work that could qualify for the MERP funds. The Energy Resilience Assessment will provide significant information required for the application for the additional MERP funding.
  - Town wide effort to get homes to net zero energy
    - There was discussion of how to motivate Hinesburg residence to get their homes reliant on renewable energy. Concern was expressed for lower income households and how they can come up with the capital to invest in energy retrofits. Margaret mentioned the idea of a town revolving energy loan fund

that would help residents come up with the deposit required to get low interest loans for energy work. There was also discussion of the state and federal incentives and rebates available to significantly reduce the cost of energy improvements. There was also discussion of requiring all new homes built in Hinesburg to be net zero energy by 2030, which is noted in our Town Plan adopted in July 2021 (see section 8.4.7 under goals in the Energy section, Chapter 8)

- Discussion of present and additional solar pv potential in Hinesburg
  - Update on the landfill solar pv project, the police station solar pv
  - Hinesburg is serviced by two utilities GMP and VEC. There was discussion as to where additional solar pv could be located in town
- Creating a clearly defined path for the town of Hinesburg to achieve the goal of 90% renewable energy by 2050
  - Create a local or regional “dashboard” to track progress towards the 90% renewable goal. EAN (Energy Action Network) is promoting a Vermont Energy Dashboard that may be useful for tracking energy projects (<https://eanvt.org/tracking-progress/community-energy-dashboard/>)
  - Have more informational opportunities for residents to understand how their homes can be weatherized, heated and powered by renewable energy.
- Energy Legislative update
  - Sam gave the committee a brief update on The Renewable Energy Standard reform bill (H.289). Sam expressed concern that the bill did not include meaningful provisions for community solar pv projects and group net metering

**Some of the highlights of H.289 are: (From Renewable Energy Vermont 3/15/24)**

- Moving utilities' overall renewable energy requirement from 75% to 100% (year varies by utility)
- Moving utilities' in-state renewable energy requirement from 10% to 20% (year varies by utility)
- Requiring utilities to purchase new in-region renewables like offshore wind (quantity and year vary by utility)
- Committing Vermont utilities that are already 100% renewable to procuring an increasing amount of their new load from new renewables
- Effectively banning new biomass electricity and excluding large hydro from qualifying as a source of new renewable power

Meeting was adjourned at 9:10 PM

Minutes respectfully submitted by Chuck Reiss

**Next Hinesburg Energy committee meeting will be Tuesday March 26, 2024 7 PM lower level meeting room at Town Hall**