



Energy Committee

Town of Hinesburg
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Meeting Minutes – July 17, 2018

- Approved 8/07/18 -

Members Attending: Chuck Reiss, Mike Webb, Richard Hopwood, Laura Capps

Public Attending: Tom Murray, VP Customers and Communities at Vermont Gas

Agenda:

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment
3. Additions/ Deletions to Agenda
4. Discuss open meeting requirements
5. Discuss resolution regarding expanded fossil fuel infrastructure in Hinesburg and presentation to Select board
6. Start the literature review of the Act 174 and the enhanced energy municipal plan planning process
7. Video series from net zero workshops
8. Approve minutes from past meetings
9. Set agenda for Aug. 7th, 2018 meeting

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 PM.

2. Public Comment

Tom Murray requested to speak about the Committee's proposed resolution regarding expanded fossil fuel infrastructure. Tom expressed the following VGS concerns with the resolution as submitted to the Select Board (see table below). At the end of the discussion Tom expressed that if Hinesburg passes the resolution it will have little impact on VGS so it's "not that big of a deal".

Additional commentary and resources provided by Committee Member William Scott in advance of the meeting are included at the end of the meeting minutes.

VGS Concerns	Hinesburg Energy Committee Responses
<p>VGS has plans to capture and reuse methane from agriculture processes and landfills (“renewable natural gas” or RNG) to supply up to 5% of the natural gas served to Vermont by 2020. 1st capture project for VT is planned for Salisbury.</p>	<p>Currently no farms or landfills in VT provide RNG to VGS. Most farms are not being targeted by VGS as RNG resources due to size. RNG is not delivered separately from conventional natural gas (CNG) and there are concerns with environmental impact. Because RNG is piped with CNG and the amount of RNG available today in the in near future is minimal, supporting RNG does not align with meeting the Town’s energy goals.</p>
<p>Will the 100 or so customers VGS has told can connect to existing main pipelines still connect?</p>	<p>Yes, the resolution does not intend to limit service lines being installed along abutting properties to existing natural gas main lines in the community should those community members decide to connect.</p>
<p>VGS has committed to service St. George with natural gas. The easiest way to service St. George is to go up the road along 116 by CVU. Will VGS be able to do this?</p>	<p>116 is a state road. While the Committee would likely vote against permitting VGS to install a main along this road if asked, the decision is not the Committee’s to make.</p>
<p>Natural gas is being singled out under this resolution.</p>	<p>This resolution prohibits all fossil fuel infrastructure, not just natural gas.</p> <p>Hinesburg has precedent in preventing fossil fuel infrastructure. When oil was being considered for piping, the Town passed a resolution at the Town Meeting advising the select board to prohibit oil infrastructure.</p> <p>Over 35 towns in Vermont have passed a similar resolution this year in an effort to meet our statewide energy goals of 90% renewable energy.</p>
<p>VGS offers attractive incentives for weatherizing homes when customers connect, CNG is also an</p>	<p>Other incentives are available to homeowners for weatherization. CNG is not in line with the</p>

affordable energy source.	energy goals of Hinesburg, and whether CNG is less environmentally damaging than oil is debatable. The Energy Committee is conducting an evaluation to determine what the most affordable options are for low-income families in Hinesburg between switching to CNG and using other renewable energy resources. Both options include weatherization. RNG is not an affordable option.
What happens with winter peak load demands with additional cold climate heat pumps (CCHPs) on the grid – won't the back-up electricity generators be powered by natural gas anyway?	CCHPs are part of a comprehensive energy retrofit. There are ways to work with GMP and other utilities to manage the peak load events and shift the load curve to optimize our electricity portfolio across the town.
Would like further clarification on the terms "agreement" and "town lands" in the resolution as well as maintenance and replacement of existing infrastructure.	The Committee will discuss this with the Select Board when reviewing the resolution.

3. Additions to Agenda

At the suggestion of Dick Hopwood, a discussion of the net zero energy workshop series videos was added as item number 7 on the Agenda.

4. Open Meeting Requirements

Chuck explained that all meeting minutes must be submitted in draft format to Renae within 5 business days of the meeting. Minutes must be approved at the following meeting, or at time of next quorum by the committee. Approved minutes must also be submitted to Renee.

All meeting agendas must be submitted at least 48 business hours in advance of the meeting for posting on the Town website.

Laura to send in May and June minutes when submitting draft minutes for July.

5. Discuss resolution regarding expanded fossil fuel infrastructure in Hinesburg and presentation to Select board

To ensure the energy resolution was approved as part of a warned Committee meeting, Dick made a motion to again approve the Hinesburg Town Energy

Resolution for submission to the Select Board. Laura seconded the motion with the understanding that the committee will clarify the language regarding the terms "agreement", "town lands", maintenance and repair of existing infrastructure, and ability for adjacent property owners to connect in section 2 A of the resolution with the select board. No further discussion. Unanimous vote in favor by committee.

6. Start the literature review of the Act 174 and the enhanced energy planning for municipal plans process

Committee divided the review into sections with assigned leaders as follows:

- i. Section 6 - Energy - Mike (Chuck co-pilot)
- ii. Section 7 - Transportation - Dick (Richard Watts)
- iii. Section 8 - Policy - Bill
- iv. Section 9 - Renewables - Chuck (Mike co-pilot)
- v. Laura - Review standards application sections unassigned and project manage

Key docs to use: application, town plan and guidance document. Laura to send the application to the Committee. By August 6, all owners send in their notes of their comparisons to the full Committee for review prior to the Committee meeting on Aug. 7.

Chuck to get clarity on the following:

- How preferred sites are established.
- Whether preferred sites are determined based on individual pieces of property or based on classifications of property.
- What is the final deadline? Are there any interim deadlines?

7. Net Zero Workshop Series Video

Dick spoke with Cal and Cal is working to complete the final two videos. Once complete, the Committee will work on distribution to other Energy Committees and post the full series on the Town website.

8. Prior Meeting Minute Approvals

Chuck motioned to approve June Minutes, Dick seconded, Laura was in favor and Mike abstained as he was not at that meeting.

9. Agenda for August 7

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment
3. Additions/ Deletions to Agenda

4. Discuss meeting minutes for Feb, March, and July; approve minutes
5. Act 174 work report-out by section owners and next steps
6. Revisit 2018 budget and discuss 2019 strategy and planning
 - a) Net Zero videos
 - b) Fall 2018 Workshop series
 - c) Municipal building efficiency
7. Video series from net zero workshops
8. Approve minutes from past meetings
9. Set agenda for Aug. 7th, 2018 meeting

Meeting Adjourn

Laura motioned to adjourn the meeting, Chuck seconded the motion and all were in favor. Meeting concluded at 8:48 PM.

Notes Submitted by Laura Capps

Background Information on Natural Gas from William Scott

1. A recent article in the premier scientific journal Science. This is the most comprehensive and recent in a series of studies over the past 10 or so years demonstrating that, when emissions of methane from production and distribution are taken into account, gas is comparable to coal in terms of its GHG emissions to the atmosphere and a lot more damaging than oil.
2. The most recent VT GHG inventory published June 18, show that we are failing badly in efforts to reduce GHG emissions which are UP 16% over 1990 rather than significantly decreased. See page 3 for data showing emissions from natural gas for residential/commercial/industrial uses are roughly double from 1990. Correcting for fugitive methane emissions would roughly double the emissions numbers for gas.
3. The CCRPC ECOS plan considers natural gas an obstacle to achieving county emission reduction goals - see for example discussion in section section of page 74
4. Global methane emissions are rapidly increasing - see attached graph. Since methane traps up to 86 times more heat than CO₂ over a 20-year time period (the chemistry is complex and some estimates place the multiple as low as 72) it is extremely dangerous when you consider the effects of tipping points in the next 20 years.

5. For anyone interested in background information I've attached a piece I wrote for VT Digger in 2013. It's a little out of date but consistent with most recent findings on the damage from natural gas.

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