



**Meeting Minutes – Final**  
March 27, 2019 – 6:30PM  
City Hall – 98 Washington Street

**In Attendance:** John Hayes, Jeff Cohen, Phil Koch, Gail Kubik, Chris Cantone, Lisa Peterson (Councillor), Jenna Ide (staff), Brittany Dolan (staff)

**Not in Attendance:** Rick Nye, Lisa Rosenthal

**Public:** Angelina DiMauro (SSU Intern), Megan Riccardi, Mark Patterson, Susan Patterson, Judith Reilly, Richard Stafford, Nancy Morgan, Richard Wilcock, Carolyn Ziering

**1. Introductions**

**2. Public Comment**

- No public comment.

**3. Review & Approve Meeting Minutes**

- Jeff motioned to get submissions by Friday. Phil seconded.
- Votes passed unanimously.

**4. Green New Deal Resolution for Salem**

- Jeff Cohen - We are on the third revision of the resolution that we would like to submit to the council. Many groups and individuals involved in the edits of this document so that it will fit in with Salem's vision.
- John Hayes - Can we change #9 to "in particular coastal flooding and sea level rise that is already being realized".
- Chris Cantone – How many years have we been doing Salem PowerChoice?
- Jenna Ide – About 4 years.
- Chris Cantone - On #5 add the amount of time that Salem has been implementing PowerChoice which we have had in effect for over 4 years.
- Jeff Cohen – We want to be able to find ways for the committee to participate and implement the City's 100% clean energy resolution.
- John Hayes – Change #9 "demolished an entire town,"
- John Hayes – Take numbers off of "whereas" and keep them for "resolved"
- John Hayes – #4 resolved "The City Clerk hereby will forward"
- Jeff Cohen – Motioned to ask Lisa Peterson to submit this resolution to the City Council at her earliest convenience and that she notifies the committee when it will be on the City Council agenda so that SERC can have a representative there.
- Gail Kubik seconded.
- Vote passes unanimously.

## **5. Geothermal Energy**

- Jenna Ide – Our intern is working on a resiliency FAQ and we would like to be able to put geothermal energy on our SERC website in some way.
- Phil Koch – I wanted to raise the question of geothermal energy again because it hasn't been raised in the past and I just wanted to make it a talking point again. I have resources that I could put the intern in contact with. I would be able to put a summary together for another meeting and then maybe be able to put something together to put on the website.
- Jenna Ide – I would like to be able to put something on the website now so that we would be able to put more information there in the future
- Angelina DiMauro – Geothermal energy isn't often thought of and I think it is very important to talk about it in terms of renewable energy. I would like to be able to give a little background on geothermal and then maybe some helpful links and graphics would be useful.
- John Hayes – Mention other geothermal examples in Salem like the Berry library at SSU. Unfortunately there is no educational tool in the library to be able to see real time data on the energy output.
- Jenna Ide – Is the Hawthorne Hotel another example?
- Jeff Cohen – They were looking into it in the past but I don't believe they do. Would we be able to find out how many installations we have in Salem?
- Richard Stafford- Dr. Joseph Story on Winter St. has it.
- Jeff Cohen – It would be great if there was a way that we could find out who has it in Salem and then do an outreach event.
- Chris Cantone – What about asking the Building Department if there are any permits for these systems in Salem?
- Richard Stafford – I had an estimate 8 years ago and it would've been approximately \$50,000 to do it then. They did a full survey on my house. Has the city explored any options for this in municipal buildings?
- Jenna Ide – We would like to be able to look at it for Bentley Academy but we haven't been able to evaluate it as of yet. They want to add air conditioning to the building and this would be a good opportunity for us to implement this. Most of the other schools are hitting "life" on their systems but we really haven't done any analysis on where we would do it. It is most likely not feasible if you are not already going to be replacing your heating system. It would be extremely expensive to do it on a facility that didn't need an upgrade. Next year we are hoping to look to start more studies to look at the feasibility of this.
- John Hayes – If we could find a geothermal installation that we could have a tour at for the committee that would be a great thing to participate in.

## **6. Solarize Plus**

- Chris Cantone – Why can't we apply for all three technologies?
- Jeff Cohen – I would like for all three technologies to be included but because we are doing it with Swampscott and Nahant together, the 3 communities have to come to a conclusion together.
- Chris Cantone – If this is a benefit for a resident to install renewable energy on their home so why wouldn't we just add the EV onto it?
- Jeff Cohen – It's not necessarily a rebate. It's a tiered system so the more people that sign up, the cheaper it becomes for everyone that has signed up. The previous round

of Solarize Mass, the price was 38% better than the state average. It's a 4 month program to sign-up.

- Jenna Ide – One way of thinking is that we want to narrow it down to try to get the lower prices for everyone. People might not get the tiered pricing if there are too many technologies.
- Jeff Cohen - It would also mean that we would be negotiating with multiple installers and that can be complicated.
- Chris Cantone – So it would make sense to cut EV out then because we want to encourage solar more to people that may not buy it unless it is at this tiered price.
- Jeff Cohen – ASHP are a great opportunity for those who do not want to do solar or have already done solar.
- Jenna Ide – Salem is the largest community and we are helping Nahant and Swampscott because they are smaller.
- Gail Kubik – Is this for retrofitting or new construction?
- Jeff Cohen – It's very hard to get commercial buildings to participate. I think this is a great way to start doing outreach. We can't be 100% clean energy if we don't do residential sector.
- Jenna Ide – We are working with the planning department to work on a marketing plan for affordable housing adder.
- John Hayes – I signed up for solarize in the past and I really believe in it.
- Jeff Cohen – We will present the residents with the company that we've chosen but there will be other companies that try to get involved even if they aren't chosen by us.
- Chris Cantone - The solar industry has incentives that you benefit from. One of the incentives is going down. SMART is not going away in MA. We are currently in block 8 right now in our territory so when that fills up, it is unknown as to what goes forward after that. DOER has a 400MW review period and they are in the process of reviewing of what would happen next.
- Jeff Cohen – Federal tax credit is 30% and SMART is based on whatever block number it is. Solarize gives a very low price to people.
- Jenna Ide – It's an opportunity for us to take advantage of this again and help our residents.
- Chris Cantone – The solar coach is on behalf of the city and just reviewing contracts for people?
- Jeff Cohen – There will be 2 people from each town. A municipal person and a volunteer solar coach. The solar coach is the primary marketing person. The solar coach is required to sign documents from the state. In general the solar installer is going to have a better price than anybody else out there.
- Chris Cantone – typically these programs are beneficial.
- Jenna Ide – Installers are vetted.
- Jeff Cohen – There is an advantage to experienced people working with the solar coach if they are not experienced in the solar industry. I think we will have an advantage since we have been through the program before.
- Jenna Ide – We did just go out to bid with municipal aggregation for electricity supply with Vistra for a 30 month contract. We have generally had a low price for the past 2 years but now prices will generally be higher than what you would pay for National Grid.
- Jeff Cohen – Will people notice this?
- Jenna Ide – Yes. But they would also notice it if they go back to National Grid anyways. Attorney General is now cracking down on companies that knock on your

- door and try to get you to sign up with them. Hopefully there will be no door to door solicitation with money involved so hopefully moving forward this can be stopped.
- Jenna Ide – The company that the city will contract with will not come to your door.
  - Chris Cantone – PowerChoice is an “opt out” program.
  - Jenna Ide – You can opt out at any time and change between the levels at any time. We will be sending information about that soon.
  - Jeff Cohen – If Solarize is run the way it was run in 2014, there are many people involved in the installer selection process and it is a good process to protect the residents.
  - Brittany Dolan – We are still looking for volunteers to help with this program so anybody that is interested please let me know.
  - Nancy Morgan - Jeff helped me in the past and I believe in not leasing solar panels.
  - Jeff Cohen – People in the past told me that the most common thing that they wished is that they had signed up with Solarize when they had the chance.

## **7. Updates to SERC Website – SSU Intern Angelina DiMauro**

- Angelina will be redesigning the SERC website to be more user-friendly.
- Sustainability tab will include action plans with the city like transportation, recycling committee, bike committee, conservation, sustainable food resources.
- Energy tab will have wind, sun, geothermal, and other renewable energy information for residents to be able to learn about.
- Resiliency tab will have a FAQ. Eventually we will bring this up to SERC to go through it later and choose the ones with the best and most valuable information.
- John Hayes – Everything will have internet links to it so more people can be educated.
- Angelina – I will send it out to the SERC members to go through.
- Compact of Mayors update:
  - Committed as a city in 2015. International alliance of cities and local governments to combat climate change and move to a low impact societies.
  - Lexington, Medford, Wellfleet, New Bedford, Cambridge, and Boston has all committed to this.
  - City submits a plan and Salem only has a commitment so far. We have not submitted a plan yet like other cities have.
  - 2016 a new Global Covenant for Mayors was formed. It doesn't affect the commitment it just has a different name.
  - John Hayes – Green community act has a lot of this information that we could use to submit a plan.
  - Jenna Ide – we need to do it for the state in order to get green community designation. We have done it in the past but it's a lot of work and we have been figuring out the best way to try to do this.
  - Jenna – we got designation by 2010 but we haven't met the 20% reduction goal yet but MAPC and DOER are working with us to try to figure out what is going on and why haven't we met our goal even though we have done a lot of projects. Small lighting projects might not be worth it in big buildings because we don't see the changes. High school is biggest energy user because it is the biggest building and it was built in the 1970s. Bigger projects make a difference but the smaller projects will most likely not get us to our 20% reduction goal. Carbon emissions have reduced a lot but the electricity usage

has gone up. We are hoping to get larger projects going in order to try to get to this 20% reduction goal.

## **8. New Business/Upcoming Events**

- Somerville Sustainability Tour
  - Lisa Peterson – Something she came across to put it on our radar as something that we could possibly do in the future. Somerville is putting together a tour of 20 homes of various people doing sustainable things in their home. The public is welcome to go to each home and check out what is happening. Somerville councilor will be on the tour. Each stop will be different and it is a compelling idea for us to think about here in Salem. This might help people who are unsure about sustainability learn new things.
  - Brittany Dolan – There is potential to do this with the Solarize program.
  - Jeff Cohen – It could be a very wide range of things on the Salem sustainability tour.
  - Angelina – It will be April 28 11-5pm.
- Sea Level Rise Projection Map
  - Gail – Resilience zoning overlay district. Boston is going to create this and you will have to conform to resilience standards. Salem should look into doing this. It will probably be released at the end of the year.
  - Lisa Peterson – Do we take into account out of date infrastructure that is causing frequent flooding?
- Salem State University Earth Week – April 8-12
  - Tim DeChristopher is speaking Thursday at 12:15pm.
  - His film will be screening on Tuesday. Film is called Bidder 70. He bid to take over the lease of oil drilling land. He went to jail for doing this but he is a climate change activist.
  - He will be getting an award on Thursday.
  - You can look up the schedule on SSU website.

## **9. Jeff Cohen motioned to adjourn. Chris Cantone seconded.**

- Votes passes unanimously.

Meeting is adjourned at 8:23pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Brittany Dolan.