



**FINAL**

## **Meeting Minutes**

### **Alternative Energy Committee**

**TIME:** Thursday, June 10, 2021 at 7:30 pm

**PLACE:** Town of Cohasset Zoom session

#### **ATTENDEES:**

##### **Committee Members**

Tanya Bodell (chair)  
Adam Amann  
Deborah Cook  
Steve Wenner

##### **Excused Absences**

Pat Gooding  
Tyler Thibault  
Michael Schmitt

##### **Guests**

Joan Meschino, State Representative  
Keri Thompson, Select Board  
Jean Healy Dippold, Select Board  
Steve Girardi, Coh. Water Commission

##### **Unexcused Absences**

##### **Town Staff**

Brianna Bennett  
Michelle Leary

#### **1) CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:35pm.

#### **2) MEETING MINUTES**

Steve Wenner made a motion to approve the May 13, 2021 minutes, which was seconded by Adam Amann. The minutes were approved unanimously.

#### **3) Presentation by MA State Representative Joan Meschino - new Massachusetts climate law: "An Act Creating a Next Generation Roadmap for Massachusetts Climate Policy"**

MA State Representative Joan Meschino presented on the recently-passed legislation regarding climate and energy.

- This bill is designed to provide mandatory reporting updates to the Global Warming Solutions Act to keep the Commonwealth on track to meet its goal to reach net zero fossil fuel consumption by 2050.
- The bill addresses six sectors of the MA economy.
- The Clean Energy Center was allocated \$12M to ensure environmental justice is part of all decisions and actions.
- The bill increased the Renewable Portfolio Standards, requiring 40% renewables by 2040 and also increased the renewable requirements for municipal electric plants.
- The bill has many other provisions: encouraging electric buses, supporting building decarbonization through changes to Mass Save and the stretch code with the goal of having a million homes completely electric by 2030, and increasing incentives for purchasing electric utilities through the Clean Energy Center.

#### **4) ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATION UPDATE:**

Brianna reported on the number of electric vehicles using Cohasset charging stations. The number of unique visitors has increased steadily:

- February = 14
- April = 30
- May = 42

The 141 charging sessions to date have saved 8,145 kg of carbon, equivalent to carbon sequestered by 209 trees for ten years. The cost to Cohasset has been \$215.

The official ribbon cutting ceremony for the charging stations occurred during Earth Day. Brianna showed the marketing video she created about the charging stations:

[EV Ceremony Slideshow.mov - Google Drive](#)



**ACTION ITEMS:**

AEC – Keep monitoring charging station data and determine when to make recommendation to the Select Board to set a price at the charging stations.

Brianna -- write an article for Cohasset 143 and the Mariner on the success of the charging stations to highlight this offering in the Town.

Brianna -- ask Cohasset cable TV to air her video about the charging stations to increase exposure and knowledge about the electric charging stations in Town.

**5) UPDATES ON 2021 INITIATIVES**

- **Go Electric:** Debbie Cook said the Go Electric steering committee has substantially progressed on the website and is almost ready to start soliciting vendors.
- **Town Hall renovation:** Brianna reported that Town Meeting funded \$750,000 for the construction plans for the town hall renovation
- **Grants:** Michelle said that the town applied for the maximum funding from MAPC, putting in a grant request in every category. She expects to hear in a year about the town's success in receiving funding.
- **Solar**
  - a. **Solar at schools:** Tanya reported that rooftop solar at the schools currently is not possible for the foreseeable future because the roofs are not scheduled to be replaced for 3-8 years. Many schools are on the same schedule, which will slow down the replacement program.
  - b. **Solar canopies in school parking lots:** Ameresco has had two meetings with the School Committee, but there have been no results so far.
  - c. **Third party sites:** Tanya said these are still being investigated.
  - d. **New solar arrays:** Tanya said the AEC's article was deferred at Town Meeting because all the suggested sites had too many issues, including shading and wetlands.
  - e. **Floating solar arrays:** Steve Girardi said the Cohasset Water Department is researching floating solar arrays for Lily Pond, especially to investigate whether they can keep the algae growth down.
  - f. **Community solar:** Tanya said the MBTA station parking lot should be considered for community solar.



- **Electric Buses:** The AEC formed an electric bus subcommittee per the vote at the April meeting. Tanya and Steve Girardi will serve and will look for 2-3 more members outside of the AEC. Tanya said the current lease is up in two years. Tanya said part of the subcommittee's scope might be to look for bus parking and energy storage sites.
- **Electric Municipalization:** Tanya said funds are now available to hire a consultant to investigate what will be required from the town for electric municipalization, including purchasing the distribution lines from National Grid. The AEC is being tasked with pursuing this effort, resulting in an RFP if appropriate. One question that must be included in the risk-benefit analysis would be the status of the solar array at the transfer station. Another question Steve posed was whether this would affect electrical aggregation.

**MOTION:** Tyler made a motion to establish a sub-committee to research electric municipalization, seconded by Debbie. The motion passed 4 - 0 with one abstention. Tyler volunteered to take the lead on this project and will find additional members outside the AEC.

**ACTION ITEM:** Form subcommittee to study electric municipalization of Cohasset's electric grid.

## 6) UPDATES ON 2020 INITIATIVES

- **Solar Energy RFP:** Solect was told by National Grid that it would cost \$500,000 to upgrade National Grid's system to accommodate additional solar generation. Steve Girardi said he would contact Manny, an engineer for National Grid, to find out why it would cost so much.

**ACTION ITEM:** Steve Girardi will inquire from National Grid about the cost to allow additional solar generation on the grid.

- **Microgrid:** Brianna said she expects that a meeting to update the project will be held in July. She thinks mobile storage fed by existing generators will be the preferred, most cost-effective choice.
- **Data Initiatives:** Brianna said she is still trying to pursue the data and has reached out to the RMV EV hub. She said Jake Vaillancourt from Hull is also trying to collect the same information and thinks it may take state legislation. Tanya said that the excise bills from

the Cohasset tax collector contain all the information about the make and model of the car and said someone must have this information.

**ACTION ITEM:** Brianna will ask the Cohasset Tax Collector how the excise bills are generated and who has the car information so the bill can be generated.

- **Sustainability Initiative:** Brianna said Brian Foulds from Concord will be a guest speaker at an upcoming AEC meeting to talk about Concord's sustainability program, including electric buses.
- **Community Aggregation:** Steve Wenner reported that MA DPU asked for the wording of the warrant article approving electrical aggregation and the vote tally at town meeting.

**ACTION ITEM:** Steve Wenner and/or Brianna will ask Town Manager Chris Senior for the wording and vote count of the Community Aggregation article and supply it to John O'Rourke at Good Energy.

## 7) **MATTERS NOT REASONABLY KNOWN IN ADVANCE**

Steve Wenner asked Tanya if she could update the South Shore Sustainable group about the status of the AEC's projects on June 29. Tanya agreed to participate.

## 8) **NEXT MEETINGS**

Second Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm:

- July 8, 2021
- August 12, 2021

## 9) **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to adjourn was made, seconded and passed unanimously.

The meeting ended at 9:15pm.



## **SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS**

### **All Members**

- Choose members to serve on Electric Municipalization Committee.
- Keep monitoring the charging stations and costs to the Town.

### **Adam Amann**

- Research opportunities for hydrogen-powered buses.

### **Tanya Bodell**

- Arrange for presentation about hydrogen at an upcoming meeting.
- Develop a grant proposal for FEMA.

### **Debbie Cook**

- Provide June meeting minutes for next meeting.
- Continue to monitor organizing effort of the tri-town committee for the Go Electric Project.

### **Pat Gooding**

- Research sustainability programs in other towns.

### **Michelle Leary / Brianna Bennett**

- Write an article for Mariner and Cohasset 143 updating the usage and success of the charging stations.
- Ask the Town Collector how the information for the car excise taxes is stored.
- Ask Cohasset cable to air Brianna's charging station video.

### **From prior meetings:**

- Monitor town hall planning on HVAC systems and look for grants for upgrades to most efficient systems.
- Consider microgrid proposal for FEMA in October 2021.
- Continue to pursue Electric Vehicle count.
- Continue to explore ways to obtain an inventory of Cohasset home generators.
- Continue work on LED lighting in schools.

### **Steve Wenner**

- Ask Chris Senior for wording of the Electric Aggregation article and official vote count and supply to John O'Rourke at Good Energy.