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Town of Shaftsbury

Municipal Offices at Cole Hall

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Meeting Minutes

Energy Committee

Date of Meeting: October 1, 2024 at Cole Hall and remotely via Zoom

Members Present: Andrea Bacchi (chair), Bill Christian, Dave Beach

1. Call to Order

The meeting came to order at 6:07 p.m.

2. Conflict of Interest Statement

No one reported a conflict of interest with any item on the agenda.

3. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Christian moved to approve the September 17 minutes. Mr. Beach seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-0.

4. Public Comment

There were none.

5. Committee Goals

a. Copy for Contacting Public Officials & Town Committee Chairs Updates
Tabled.

b. Email Marketing Monthly Public Awareness Campaign Updates

Ms. Bacchi said she will begin sending out email tests to committee members.

c. Committee bios & headshots for Shaftsbury Town website Updates

Mr. Christian and Mr. Beach will provide these items to Ms. Bacchi.

d. EV Charging Station Proposal Discussion Updates

Mr. Beach said he firmly believes the stations should be owned, run, and maintained by the private sector, not the Town.

e. Energy Fair (MERP Grant)

Ms. Bacchi suggested the Town hold an energy fair at which different companies and non-profits visited to exhibit their wares and services. Button Up, Window Dressers might be included. Mr. Christian said it was good idea but a hard one to pull off. He noted that attendance at the Shaftsbury Solar presentation was large because the topic was controversial.

In response to a suggestion that a smaller scale event held at Cole Hall, Mr. Christian said he thought people, including vendors, are so busy that it might be hard to put together. Ms. Bacchi said it wouldn't happen until spring.

She described a recent interaction with the Heat Squad, when she learned that the income verification process will be changed soon – one will be able to self-report.

Mr. Beach agreed that an energy fair might be a good idea, but folks can already research options. He wondered whether it would be well-received by the public, though certainly some would find it interesting. Ms. Bacchi pointed out that often people don't know what they don't know. Mr. Christian said he's been involved in doing these things for a long time, and has found that the same people keep coming – and they already have the information in hand.

Ms. Bacchi suggested inviting vendors and organizations to attend committee meetings, which could be publicized.

She suggested visiting the school. Mr. Christian said he's done such things and enjoyed them greatly, especially when the students were excited about it. (He noted that teachers are already under the gun to address certain issues and may find it hard to fit it in the school day.)

Ms. Bacchi said the MERP grant could help fund these activities, since Mailchimp will cost only about \$20 monthly. Mr. Christian said we could speak with Callie Fishburn at BCRC and perhaps partner with other towns on an energy fair or other outreach effort. He recommended some sort of hook – a giveaway, food. Ms. Bacchi will speak with Ms. Fishburn.

6. Other Business

Mr. Beach said he'd noted that the state's policy is to generate about 35% of our energy using biofuels, and thought it odd that the state would be subsidizing CO2 emitters (notwithstanding that wood and the like are carbon-neutral). It seems a step back. He spoke about furnace and stove efficiencies. Mr. Christian responded. Mr. Beach said he will reach out to the state to hear their rationale for subsidizing technologies that increase levels of atmospheric CO2.

7. Review of Action Items

- Ms. Bacchi will send Mr. Christian her email from Heat Squad.
- Ms. Bacchi will reach out to Callie Fishburn at BCRC re hosting an energy fair and the logistics thereof.
- Mr. Beach will reach out to State re their policies on wood fuel.
- All will send Ms. Bacchi bios and head shots.

8. Adjournment

Mr. Beach moved to adjourn to at 6:35 p.m. Mr. Christian seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-0.