

Joint Thetford Energy Committee Meeting DRAFT MINUTES
September 1, 2022, 6:00 to 7:30 PM

Online: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88507614974>

Meeting ID: 885 0761 4974; Passcode: 818710

By Phone: +1 646 558 8656;

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JTEC Present:

Nolan Riegler, Chuck Cole, Stephanie Daniels, Chris Hebb, Erica Ko, Alice Stewart, Tom Ward

Guests Present: Mary Bryant

Call to order: 6:05 pm

6:00 Review Agenda and Approve August 4, 2022 Meeting Minutes

6:05 TES Solar Project Updates/CPG Intercession

Overview

- Normally expansion requests are expedited
- Public Service Dept concerned about costs to ratepayers because original project was in 2014, and any expansion keeps original net-metering rates for only 1 year
- Also not sure if expansion fits within state renewable energy plan
- Concerns that TES owns the RECs and concerns that those could be sold out of state. TES hasn't raised these issues, but rather these are the rules written in the laws
- Have made it conditional to review specific conditions in the law in a hearing, and will take evidence on two issues above

Request to JTEC

- Lesley, attorney from Norwich Solar looking for someone to be a voice for the town of Thetford
- If we do a motion to intervene, it would be due by Sep 9
- Lesley gave us a sample motion we could review and potential revise and use
- If we do a motion, as an interveners have the following rights
 - o ability to submit evidence, to cross examine witnesses at a hearing, file motions within the hearing, to get notice of anything that is changing within the process, have ability to appeal the decision, need to ensure everything is transparent and evidence based, as we are bound by laws of perjury
- We would also be subject to evidence (need to supply any relevant documents)
- Looking for a voice for TES
- Geoff from IREC will be the expert witness
- Could also recommend pro-bono counsel if we needed that

Tom: Is School Board involved? Where does power go?

- We think most goes to the school and intention of expansion to go to residents, and possibly propose to SB to use ARPA funds to buy down cost for low income residents
- TES made a motion to keep the RECs and would do this again

Tom: Is there anyone else in town should be involved?

- TES and SelectBoard are inherently interveners because project affects the town, land owner TES gets all the documents and part of the process

Erica: Why JTEC would be involved?

- Geoff will do the heavy lifting, we don't need to do research, etc; Lesley is the one in the lead representing the project.
- Lesley sees JTEC as advocates for the solar array, and best positioned to speak to this
- Mary: SB is far removed from the school and would be a lot to take on
- Alice: As a town committee, are we allowed to file motion to be interveners, or anyone we need approval from?
 - o Geoff talked to Bryan, he was fine with JTEC doing this
 - o Nolan presented to School Board, and they wanted JTEC to do this - Julie Acker said this would be fine.

Nolan

- Schedule (see document with full schedule in Google Drive – screenshot below)
- 9/9 file motion deadline
- Late October – evidence
- February final hearing over Go To Meeting

Stephanie: Is value to demonstrate townspeople interest?

- Yes this is the value of filing a motion. Lesley said there wouldn't be much more evidence that we might need to provide

Discussion:

- Would be very good to understand more about PUC's case, and to understand what the points are.
- Could be the potential rate increases to consumers
- Typically the PSD would just rubber stamp any expansion, and it's unclear why exactly
- Most likely the hearing would be fairly straightforward and the procedure

All: Reviewed the Motion to be filed, enter JTEC's charter plus additional statements that show how this effort would allow Thetford to meet the Town Plan energy goals, which JTEC drafted

Alice – looked at town enhanced energy plan for quotes to use in motion

DECISION: Motion made to intervene, and seconded

Nolan:

- Send draft motion to Lesley for feedback
- send a letter to School Board and SB that we're doing this

6:35 Committee Commission Charge

Draft Charge: Nolan took inspiration from other town committees for a draft

Alice: there's so much more about sustainability, and would expand our scope a lot more; and we could not do this alone. We might need a broader discussion with the SB and others to define

Erica: By saying 'sustainability' doesn't mean we have to cover all sustainability issues, but gives us more flexibility to do what we want to do. Might also attract new members.

Tom: 'energy' is almost lacking. Talking with Strafford resident about their energy committee which is now called 'energy and climate committee' – which could mean consider broader concerns beyond cost alone and how decision impact climate crisis.

Alice: Perhaps 'energy and climate resilience committee' which is clearer perhaps, and core to the need for Thetford to be resilient to weather events and climate shocks

Chris: 'culture of sustainability' is more nebulous than what we've been doing is promotion of renewable energy and energy conservation.

Mary: impression that 'sustainability' can alienate, while climate resilience is more accessible. Agrees with the idea of changing the name

Including Forests & Soils will bump into Conservation Commission mandate. This could just be a call for us to work more with the conservation commission

Focus our work on energy, and possibly create a sustainability working group between committees. We should look for ways to link better with other committees.

IDEA: Organizing dialogue over a potluck about sustainability, to discuss what might be needed across committees and SB

Nolan: will consult Strafford committee charge and do another draft charge and share back

7:20 Updates/Next Steps:

Alice

1. How we treat public comments
 - Had lengthy comments on EV charging from a resident, and asked about sharing this
 - Alice shared the comment in the Google drive in lieu of an official public comment period
 - Planning Commission have a policy of 'editing for clarity' public comments before sharing publicly
 - We essentially do this in our meeting minutes
 - **Conclusion: We should retain full unedited comments in the google drive, and edit for clarity when sharing a summary for public**
2. Housekeeping
 - posting the agenda, link to our google sites, and then we all get the JTEC email requesting access to folder – Nolan replied
 - Dennis is still on the Thetford Energy committee list, who controls? Mike Kiess or Martie?

Nolan: will check with Martie about uploading documents to the website and if she controls the Thetford email list

Erica: IREC Working Groups

- Chuck will attend the climate action guidelines, Erica attending the REBs

- Tom: surprised that E Thetford might be off the list since Huggetts isn't interested, there are other sites

Alice: can speak with Geoff about alternative sites for EV charging station in E Thetford

ARPA Funds – Mary B- Do we want anything as a committee to suggest?

We do have items but are not ready. Is the ARPA

SB: are talking about categories for a town survey, and would need to do in the next day or two

Erica: will talk to Geoff and send Mary some ideas about ARPA Funds

Topics we didn't have time to discuss:

- **Post Mills Solar**
- **EV Charging Station**
- **WD**

Future Meeting Topics

Decision making criteria for efficiency investment (Marc Chabot)

Next Meeting October 6, 2022

Adjourn 7:40 pm

Annexes:

Schedule below of TES solar array hearing

Date	Event
September 9, 2022	Deadline for motions to intervene
September 9, 2022	Applicant files supplemental direct testimony
September 23, 2022	Discovery requests served on Applicant
October 7, 2022	Applicant responds to discovery requests
October 28, 2022	Non-applicants file direct testimony
November 9, 2022	Discovery requests served on non-applicants
December 2, 2022	Non-applicants respond to discovery requests
December 21, 2022	Applicant files rebuttal testimony
January 11, 2023	Discovery requests served on Applicant
January 25, 2023	Applicant responds to discovery requests
February 15, 2023	Non-applicants file surrebuttal testimony
Week of February 20, 2023	Evidentiary hearing
Four weeks after hearing transcript is complete	Parties to file proposed findings and briefs
Two weeks after proposed findings and briefs	Parties to file reply briefs