

ENERGY COMMITTEE
March 21, 2018
Mulvey Municipal Center
Regular Meeting Minutes

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Chris Ehlert at 5:04 pm.

Members Present:

Chairperson Chris Ehlert, Bill Fish, Bill Fredrickson, Darlene Briggs, Richard White and Jill Brainerd.

Municipal Building Energy Audit Results – Lester Foster:

Mr. Foster cancelled tonight due to the inclement weather.

Upon a motion by Darlene Briggs, seconded by Richard White, it was:

VOTED: Unanimously to add “Discussion – proposal for further action from Town Council to Eversource regarding our LED Streetlight purchase” under #3: LED Streetlight Project Update.

LED Streetlight Project Update – Bill Fish:

Mr. Fish stated that he has been in contact with Town Attorney Michael Wells and there still has not been any communication from Eversource Attorney Jackie King. He also spoke with Woody Weiss who heads the task force in Madison and quite a few other towns. All have stated that they have had the same problem with Eversource. He also spoke with an Attorney at CCM who stated that this is not uncommon. The Bottom line is that today is the end of the 6-month period. This is not a showing of good faith on Eversource’s part.

A motion was made by Bill Fish to:

Ask the Board of Selectmen to request the Town Attorney to write to Jackie King, Attorney for Eversource, stating that the 6 month period is up and to request them to proceed expeditiously at the previously agreed upon price and to copy Mr. Finelli and Jim Judge, CEO of Eversource.

Richard White amended the motion to include:

A copy of said letter should go to the corporate chain of command and an executive committee within Eversource for clarification. Copies shall also go to Andy Merolla of CCM, and 4 Commissions of the Public Utility Regulations Authority and Elected Officials Art Linares, Devin Carney and Jessie McLaughlin. The letter drafted should express consent and direction of the Board of Selectmen, as the Chief Executive Body of the Town of Westbrook.

VOTE: Ayes: Bill Fish, Bill Fredrickson, Jill Brainerd, Darlene Briggs and Richard White. Abstentions: Chris Ehlert. The motion carried.

Mr. Fish stated that the audit of street lights was started last Friday and should be completed by this Friday, depending on the weather. There were several streets in the mobile home parks that were not included in the audit. It is a possibility that they may be privately owned. (Mr. Fish looked up information and learned that Jensen’s has separate agreements with Eversource for the street lights). Mr. Fish will contact DPW Foreman John Riggio. At this time, it is still best to cover the cost of the purchase of street lights through internal borrowing of funds.

Microgrid RFP Update – Chris Ehlert:

Mr. Ehlert stated that there is no further update at this time. We are still waiting to hear from DEEP.

ZREC Update – Chris Ehlert:

Chairman Ehlert stated he spoke with Bruce McDermott from Murtha Cullina and Chris Whitman from Solomon Energy regarding where Forefront stands with Westbrook. We were awarded certain buildings that we put in for and Forefront has stated that they will not move forward unless all the buildings put in for are approved. It was stated that they would start reviewing the purchase agreement that Forefront put into ZREC for the High School, Town Hall and Daisy Ingraham School. Mr. Ehlert asked them not to review the document at this time because he was told by another municipality that they had the same issue with Forefront. Therefore, we might want to consider going with the next bidder. Mr. Ehlert would like to exhaust every measure with Forefront before going to the next bidder. Chris Whitman has stated that the upcoming auction will probably be in April or May. This could possibly be the last auction.

Jill Brainerd stated she is waiting for pricing to come on replacing the roof at the Town Hall. Mr. Ehlert stated that the Town Hall would be perfect for ZREC. We will include the Town Hall building in the spring auction with the understanding that we cannot move forward unless a new roof is installed. Chairman Ehlert will be getting authorization/approval from the Board of Selectmen at their meeting tomorrow, in order to move forward with the spring auction.

Committee Member Updates:

- Chairman Ehlert stated that he has requested all the information that the Board of Selectmen have that helped make the decision to stay with oil tanks instead of switching to natural gas, as originally voted. He has since gotten the information, but has not reviewed it yet. There was discussion regarding natural gas vs. oil.

Approval of Bills:

None.

Approval of Minutes – February 21, 2018:

Upon a motion by Bill Fish, seconded by Richard White, it was:

VOTED: Unanimously to approve the minutes of the meeting held on February 21, 2018, as amended.

The next meeting will be April 18, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.

Adjournment:

Upon a motion by Bill Fish, seconded by Richard White, it was:

VOTED: Unanimously to adjourn at 6:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Kathleen H. Kelemen, as transcribed from a recording.