

## **Boxborough Energy Committee August 2014 Minutes**

**Date/Location:** Wednesday, August 13, 2014, Town Hall

**Attending: Members:** Francie Nolde, Margo Webber, Santiago Tapia-Perez, Abby Reip, Kesahva Srivastava

**BOS Representative:** Vince Amoroso

**Guests:** Kerin Crockett, Dana Labb

**Members Absent:** Larry Grossman, Richard Garrison

**Next Meeting:** Wednesday, September 10, 2014, Town Hall.

### **Minutes**

#### **General business**

- July 2014 minutes were approved. Next meeting will be September 10, 2014.
- Abby is paying \$24 a month to maintain the Solarize Boxborough survey monkey. Abby will submit her bills to Francie who will submit the bills to the Town for reimbursement. The survey monkey will be on line from May through the end of August.
- Santiago had summarized the data to date from the survey monkey. So far 141 people have filled out the survey. 72 of the 141 (51%) surveys indicated that they were extremely interested and 41 of 141 (29%) were very interested. Vince stated that the survey monkey is a self selection process, only residents who are either very interested, or not interested at all, will respond. Often those that do not respond are not interested. The Committee will keep the survey open until the end of August. At the end of August, Santiago will do a final summary of the results and put all the comments together. The Committee will wait until the September meeting to decide if they want to pursue the Solarize program.
- Margo indicated that one reason the Solarize Stow program was so successful was that Hudson Light and Power offered an additional rebate to residences that installed solar units. LELD does not offer this rebate and the current electric rates are low. The committee talked about meeting with LELD to see if LELD would be willing to offer any rebates or help. Vince indicated that the committee would need to identify a certain circumstance that will generate an interest from LELD so that they would be willing to help.
- Francie summarized the Legislative Bill H-4185 that was not passed as written. Only the net metering cap increase was allowed by being attached to another bill. The net metering cap was increased from 3% to 4% for the private sector and from 3% to 5% for public sector projects. A 17 member task force will be created by October 1 to make recommendations to the legislature on net metering policies and solar incentives.
- Margo indicated LELD has been unable to download the Boxborough Municipal electric data with their new computer system. In the interim, Becky Busby has been going to the Town Hall and going through the individual bills and summarizing the electric data for each municipal account from January to June 2014. Margo will again contact LELD or Savas to see how the energy committee can obtain the monthly electric data.

## **Main Discussion**

The main discussion was with Kerin Crockett, 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, and Dana Labb, new principal of the Boxborough Elementary School. As of July 1, 2014, Blanchard Elementary school falls under control of the Acton Boxborough School District. The District has already implemented several changes. New motion controlled sensors were installed for the lights in the gym and library. If no one is in the gym or library, the lights will turn off. In addition, the janitorial staff met with Kate Crosby and the Acton janitorial staff and have been trained to turn off the lights at night. They are walking around with “Be Green” tee shirts. The AB facility manager, JD, has been walking through the school and learning about the issues. Another change is the recycling company has been changed to a company Acton uses. All recycling will be single stream, which is easier to implement and does not require separation. New procedures have been generated for recycling food wastes. All teachers will be trained before the start of school and the children will learn the new procedures at the start of school.

Kerin Crockett recently met with Kate Crosby for several hours to discuss the power down program and the recycling programs at the other Acton Schools. To initiate the “Power Down” Program, Blanchard School has 25 Kilo-Watt meters. These meters will be distributed, one to each of the upper classes. The teachers will use these meters to demonstrate to each child how much electricity electronic units require, even when they are plugged in and not in use. By demonstrating that electronics use electricity, it will make it easier for the kids to understand. Kerin will see if the older kids can work with the younger kids in the star buddy program.

Kerin has received information on the “Green Team”, a federal program. This requires each teacher that participates to sign up their classes. All classes that participate must complete and submit projects. The program does offer rewards for the projects. Dana, Kerin and the assist principal Karen Tower will have community meetings to push sustainability and being green. They will look in to having certificates and awards for the kids and classrooms, such as “Greenest classroom”.

A discussion on the water use was held. The Town of Boxborough has a municipal well behind the library that serves the Library, School, Police and Fire Departments. Recently a new flow meter was installed on the line to the school so that the amount of water used by the school could be monitored. This plumbing action resulted in a coliform bacteria hit, that has since been resolved. The kids at the school all bring in water bottles from home and don’t drink the water at the school. Poland Spring bottled water is available for students and staff. Margo mentioned that the high school has bubbler machines that provide carbon filtration and UV disinfection to treat the water. Every time a child fills their water bottle using water from the machine, it notes how many plastic water bottles have been saved. The Boxborough Elementary school should look in to installing these units.

Dana talked about the school lunch program and federal requirements to serve specific foods and not allow food to be shared. All uneaten food must be tossed.

### **Action Items**

- Abby will submit receipts for Solar Monkey survey to Francie for reimbursement.
- Santiago will do a final evaluate from the survey monkey after the survey closes on August 31. Santiago will summarize all the comments for the committee to review.
- Francie will talk to Vicki about getting a fourth recycling bin and interior basket and talk to Selina about placing a bin at Blanchard.
- Margo will work with LEED on finding a way to get the monthly electric data.
- Francie will talk to Dana Labb about walking through the school prior to school opening.