

Boxborough Energy Committee March 2015 Minutes

Date/Location: Wednesday, March 11, 2015, Town Hall

Attending: Members: Margo Webber, Francie Nolde, Abby Reip, Richard Garrison, Keshava Srivastava, Santiago Tapia-Perez, Larry Grossman, Rebecca Morrison

BOS Representative: None

Guests: None

Members Absent: Vince Amoroso, BOS Representative

Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 8, 2015, Town Hall.

Minutes

General business

- February minutes were approved.
- Francie has arranged for AB students (Community Service) to hand out Solar Initiative flyers at the dump. An adult must accompany the students and Francie asked for EnCom members to sign up for a time slot at the dump. Students will hand out flyers Wednesday April 8 from 3-7 and 8-4 Saturday April 11, 2015.
- Francie described all the outreach she has done for the Solar Forum information session.
- Francie asked Adam Duchesneau, Town planner, to contact Hudson Light and Power to get the names and addresses of the 40 Boxborough residents who use Hudson Light. He successfully secured the names/addresses with the understanding they are only for Town use. Francie will stuff and stamp envelopes with our two flyers and a letter explaining to Hudson Light customers that they are eligible to participate in the Boxborough Solar Initiative. Adam will mail them out from Town Hall. Hudson Light welcomes their 40 Boxborough customers to apply for the Hudson Light rebate program.
- Francie, Richard, Dave Lindberg, Selina, Vince Amoroso, and Ani Krishnan (MAPC Rep.) met with Scott Edwards, General Manager, and Nick Lawlor, Asst. Manager, of LELD to discuss net metering. LELD has drafted a comprehensive solar plan that includes phase 2 of net metering for LELD consumers. The LELD Board of Commissioners is holding a meeting March 24, 2015. (However, we have late breaking news: the Board is not going to review/approve the new plan; Scott is simply going to implement it late spring.)

The proposed plan includes an increase in the net metering allowance from the current cap of 1% of peak demand to a cap of 3% of peak demand. The breakdown will be for up to 1% net metering for residential units and up to 2% net metering cap for commercial units. The current residential net metering is at a total of 89 kW and will be increased to 450 kW. This will allow up to 92 residential units each with a 5 kW PV system to connect. LELD will also limit the size of the PV system on a home from 5.8 to 6.5 kW. If a residential unit goes above this size PV unit, they will not get net metering. LELD has also proposed residential units to choose between the installation of **net metering or a rebate**. LELD will offer a rebate of \$1,000 per kW installed up to a max of \$5,000 for a 5 kW PV system. LELD will cap the rebates at \$100,000, or up to 20 houses with a 5 kW annual usage. Commercial units will not be offered a rebate.

- The EnCom needs to gather home owner cost information for the Solar Forum. A key to obtaining interest in the solar program is show low costs and low/no financing. With a \$5,000 rebate, a \$3,000 federal credit, a \$1,000 state credit, a \$20,000 system could cost about \$11,000. On top of that you have electric savings of about \$500/year and SRECs. Jim Elkind suggests a payback of 7-10 years (his latest estimate after the meeting).
- Richard has drafted an RFP. Richard and Francie met with the BOS Monday, March 9, 2015, and will return Monday, March 16 to finalize the RFP and our joint letter to the Beacon from Encom and BoS. The BOS are on board with the program. Legal will review the RFP and it will be released by March 23, 2015. Proposals from the installers, after responding to the RFP, are due April 23. A committee of 4-5 will evaluate and interview the installers and select an installer by May 21, 2015. A second outreach "Solar 201" with the selected installer will be held in early June. The sign-up period will be from early June to mid-November 2015.
- Dave Lindberg, Building Inspector, will be the Town Hall responder for the program, and will answer installer questions.
- The RFP interview committee will consist of Richard Garrison, Larry Grossman, Simon Bunyard, and Jim Gorman. The group will have one month to review all proposals, interview top candidates, and make a selection.
- The Solar Forum (101) program was discussed. The forum will be Thursday, April 16 from 7-8:30 at the Library. The presentation will begin with Francie doing a 5-minute introduction, LELD giving a 5-minute presentation, Elizabeth Youngblood of CEC giving a 45-minute presentation/solar overview. Senator Jamie Eldridge will talk about solar legislation he is working on for 5 minutes. Then we'll have a question and answer period for 20 minutes. It was decided the program would be too long if Sascha Deri also gave a presentation about solar components and add-ons.
- Abby is working on a website. She has received permission to work on the website and will set up a separate Boxboroughsolar.com website specifically for the Solar Initiative program.
- Francie and Richard are looking for volunteers to help with the program and asked the members to volunteer for a committee.