

CORNISH ENERGY COMMITTEE MINUTES
May 13, 2024, 7-8:30 PM
Cornish Town Offices and via Zoom

PRESENT: in person, CEC members Joanna Sharf, Bill Schmidt, Everett Cass, Myron Kuhre and Alternate Bill Cable; PEC members: Bob Jordan. Via Zoom: CEC members Richard Thompson and Mike Belanger. Joanna appointed Bill Cable as a full voting member for the meeting for purposes of an in-person quorum. Also in attendance: in person, Dwayne Churchill.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Bill C. made a motion to accept the April 9, 2024 minutes. Bill S. seconded and all approved.

INFLATION REDUCTION ACT: GUEST SPEAKER JOSH ELLIOT, NH DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY: Joanna introduced Josh Elliot, who presented to the Committee about the status of implementation of the IRA by the NH DOE. Josh began with an overview of the history of the agency and its mission. Attached is a copy of the slides that were presented. Key highlights of the presentation included:

- There are 2 federal bills, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) which will provide significant funding to NH communities in the next few years for municipal (high priority) and residential solar support, weatherization of homes and businesses, contractor and workforce training, and home electrification. Josh said there is a certain amount of flexibility in how the state uses these funds.
- \$1.4 million will be allocated for a Municipal Solar Program that will provide grants to communities to install solar arrays on town owned facilities. Applications for this funding should be available within approximately 2 weeks.
- Josh mentioned that \$4.1 million in US DOE funds are available to NH if the state adopts the latest energy building codes (2021). The funds would be used to facilitate implementation of the new codes. However, adoption of the codes has become controversial, and it's unclear at this time what the outcome will be. The decision will be made by the NH legislature.
- The US Environmental Protection Agency will also support community solar programs, and NH has already been successful in securing \$43.5 million. No matching funds from communities are required.
- Josh was open to participating in a Cornish-Plainfield forum on federal funding programs and suggested that October might be a good timeframe.

WIND POWER FORUM: The Committee discussed the recent visit to the wind farm in Lempster on May 10. 14 people attended the visit. Joanna asked for feedback on the visit and comments focused on the impressive height of the 250 ft. towers and the capacity of

each wind turbine to produce enough energy for 1,000 homes for one year. The Committee then discussed scheduling a forum on wind power in September. Virginia Parker of the Groton Wind Farm might be a potential speaker. It also might be good to have someone from the town of Lempster speak about the process of adopting wind power in a town. Richard and Doug Cogan offered to explore possible presenters. The Committee also discussed the possibility of wind power in Cornish. There was general agreement that monitoring of Cornish wind patterns in different parts of town would be needed to determine viability of the concept in Cornish.

NEW ENERGY CIRCUIT RIDER APPOINTED FOR SULLIVAN COUNTY: Joanna introduced Doug Cogan, who recently assumed this position. Doug explained that his job is to assist municipalities in identifying sources of funding for energy efficiency projects. Examples of projects include solar, battery backup systems, electric school buses, clean diesel, and weatherization. He added that Cornish could qualify for the 30% federal tax credit on solar projects. Doug offered to share sample RFPs that towns have used to solicit proposals from installers for municipal solar installations. Doug shared his contact information and encouraged the Committee to call on him for help.

WEBSITE IMPROVEMENTS & VISUAL PRESENTATION OF CORNISH ENERGY CONSUMPTION PATTERNS: The Committee discussed how to get the raw data on town energy consumption presented in easy to read graphs for the town website. Joanna suggested the possibility of using donated funds at the Committee's disposal to hire someone for this project. Bill S. offered to speak with a neighbor who is a CPA about volunteering for this task.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Mike Belanger obtained information from Heidi Jaarsma on the funds remaining from Laird Klingler's \$1000 grant. We spent \$289.35 for publicity & postage for Solarize 2022 and \$150 for the e-bike program on 6/23/2023. Current balance is: \$560.65.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, June 10 at 7pm.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35pm.

ADDENDUM: Slides from NH Dept of Energy on Federal Funding for Energy Projects. (See subsequent pages)

**NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPT. OF ENERGY PRESENTATION TO CORNISH & PLAINFIELD
ENERGY COMMITTEES, MAY 13, 2024**

NH DEPT OF ENERGY:

- Created in 2021 to provide a unified state agency on energy matters
- What we do: • Regulatory
- Enforcement and Audit • Policy and Programs
- Mission Statement: The prosperity and security of New Hampshire and its citizens require an affordable, innovative, reliable, and sustainable energy economy. The Department of Energy is committed to achieving that goal and will provide a unified direction of energy policies, responsible and practical programs, principled regulation, and skilled representation, in energy-related proceedings, of New Hampshire's public interest. The Department of Energy will serve the people of New Hampshire in an honest, transparent, and effective manner.

NEW FEDERAL FUNDING:

Investing in Infrastructure and Jobs Act (IIJA) or Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL):

- Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant (EECBG)
- Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund (EERLF)
- Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP-BIL)
- 40101(d) Grid Resilience Funding
- State Energy Program (SEP-BIL)
- Energy Code Adoption

Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)

- IRA Rebates Program
- Contractor Training
- Solar for All

Formula vs Competitive:

Formula:

- Guaranteed allocation for the state
- Funding awarded contingent on the state filing a compliant application

Competitive:

- Funding awarded on a competitive basis, with no guarantee of success or awards

Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grants (EECBG)

- NH's allocation: roughly \$1,400,000
- Revival of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act program
- Direct appropriations made to the states
- Direct appropriations made to ten largest counties and ten largest cities in each state
 - All Counties receiving funding
 - Nine of ten counties receiving roughly \$80,000 each
 - Rockingham County receiving \$244,000
 - Concord, Derry, Dover, Hudson, Londonderry, Manchester, Merrimack, Nashua, Rochester, and Salem

- Eight of ten receiving roughly \$75,000 each
- Manchester: \$163,000; Nashua: \$144,000

EECBG Eligible Uses:

- development and implementation of an energy efficiency and conservation strategy
- retaining technical consultant services to assist the eligible entity in the development of such a strategy
- conducting residential and commercial building energy audits;
- establishment of financial incentive programs for energy efficiency improvements;
- the provision of grants to nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies for the purpose of performing energy efficiency retrofits;
- development and implementation of energy efficiency and conservation programs for buildings and facilities within the jurisdiction of the eligible entity;
- development and implementation of programs to conserve energy used in transportation;
- development and implementation of building codes and inspection services to promote building energy efficiency;
- application and implementation of energy distribution technologies that significantly increase energy efficiency;
- activities to increase participation and efficiency rates for material conservation programs, including source reduction, recycling, and recycled content procurement programs that lead to increases in energy efficiency;
- the purchase and implementation of technologies to reduce, capture, and, to the maximum extent practicable, use methane and other greenhouse gases generated by landfills or similar sources;
- replacement of traffic signals and street lighting with energy efficient lighting technologies;
- development, implementation, and installation on or in any government building of the eligible entity of onsite renewable energy technology that generates electricity from renewable resources;
- programs for financing energy efficiency, renewable energy, and zero-emission transportation (and associated infrastructure), capital investments, projects, and programs;

EECBG: State Allocation:

- New Hampshire's allocation: roughly \$1,400,000
- Application and program approved by US DOE on May 3rd
- Municipal Solar Program to provide grants to communities to install solar arrays on town owned facilities
- RFP will be released soon!
- Announcement will be made on NH DOE website and through our email list.

Energy Efficiency Revolving Loans:

- NH's allocation: roughly \$840,000
- Guidance allows provide a wide variety of financing options
- Not a lot of money for quite a substantial undertaking that will not go very far
- Original NHDOE application: use funding as loan loss reserve; de-risks financing.
 - Allows funding to go further
 - Avoids federal compliance requirements: Build American, Buy American, Davis Bacon, etc.
 - Revised guidance issued that now requires Davis Bacon, making the proposal not viable
 - Revised Application due 6/1

Weatherization Assistance Program, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (WAP-BIL):

- NH's allocation: roughly \$18,000,000 to be spent over a five-year period
- One time appropriation to boost the existing Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)
- Runs parallel to the current program

Both programs:

- Contract with the Community Action Agencies for program administration
- Works hand in hand with NHSaves Home Energy Assistance (HEA) program

40401(d) Grid Resiliency Funding:

- \$460 million allocated annual over five years to the states and Indian Tribes, distributed via formula
 - NH's allocation: roughly \$3.3 million per year for five years.
- Eligible Entities:
 - State's electric distribution utilities, NH Electric Cooperative, and the municipally owned electric utilities
- Program:
 - Goal: reduce the frequency and duration of outage events, with an emphasis on disadvantaged communities
 - Funding is available for a variety of projects, including vegetation management and hardening of infrastructure
 - Awarded by NH DOE on a competitive basis

State Energy Program: BIL:

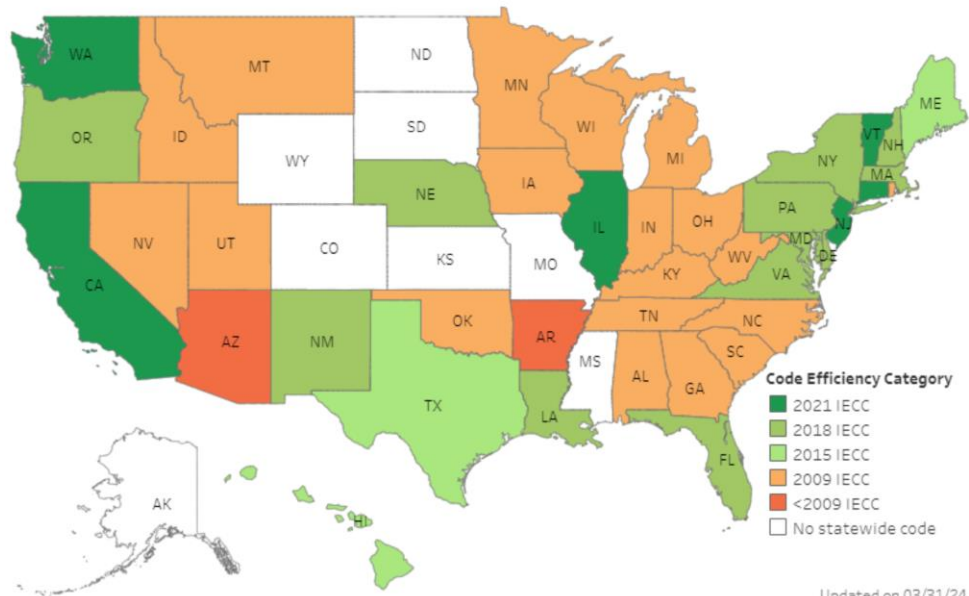
- State Energy Program (SEP) is the most flexible source of funding available to let states use as they see fit.
- NH's allocation: \$3.6 million to be spent down over 5 years.
- Have used it for staff initial to build up capacity

- Working on developing plans for additional uses, including assisting with federal compliance

Energy Code Adoption (50131):

Funding available to implement the latest building codes (2021 Energy Code)

- NH's allocation: up to \$4.1 million to support implementation
- NH DOE has filed a letter of intent (LOI) for the funding.
- Application not due until September 30, 2025.
- Legislature has final say on code adoptions
 - Current practice being to remain one code behind the most recently adopted standard
 - Legislation pending that would adopt all code updates, except for energy codes



Home Efficiency Rebates:

IRA Home Efficiency Rebate program, formerly know as HOMES

- NH's allocation: roughly \$35,000,000
- Provides rebates for residential energy efficiency measures
- Allows use of either projected or realized energy savings
- Rebates range from \$2,000 to \$8,000 depending on project and income
- Enhanced rebate and project allowances for those making 80% of area median income or less
 - \$91,500 for a family of four

Single Family:

- 20%-35% modeled energy savings: \$2,000 or 50% of project costs, whichever is less
- 35%+ modeled energy savings: \$4,000 or 50% of project costs, whichever is less
- 15% minimum measured energy savings: payment rate per kwh saved, equal to \$2,000 for a 20% cost reduction for the state's average home, or 50% of the project total

Low Moderate Income Single Family:

- 20%-35% modeled energy savings: \$4,000 or 80% of project costs, whichever is less
- 35%+ modeled energy savings: \$8,000 or 80% of project costs, whichever is less
- 15% minimum measured energy savings: payment rate per kwh saved, equal to \$4,000 for a 20% cost reduction for the state's average home, or 80% of the project total

Multi Family:

- 20%-35% Modeled Energy savings: \$2,000 per dwelling unit maximum, \$200,000 per building maximum
- 35%+ Modeled Energy savings: \$4,000 per dwelling unit maximum, \$400,000 per building maximum
- 15% minimum measured energy savings: payment rate per kwh saved, equal to \$2,000 for a 20% cost reduction for the state's average home, or 50% of the project total

Multi Family with 50% occupied by Low Moderate Income households:

- 20%-35% Modeled Energy savings: \$4,000 per dwelling unit maximum
- 35%+ Modeled Energy savings: \$8,000 per dwelling unit maximum
- 15% minimum measured energy savings: payment rate per kwh saved, equal to \$4,000 for a 20% cost reduction for the state's average home, or 80% of the project total.

Implementation Hurdles:

Changing federal guidance

- Federal program guidance continues to be updated and issued, making program planning and design difficult.
- Question of 'retroactivity' the biggest change
 - First version prohibited retroactivity
 - Second version explicitly allows retroactivity
 - Conference presentations from US DOE have said "well, sort of"
- Potential for patchwork requirements on this topic between states

Shadow gas ban

- Requirement that any appliances installed have EnergyStar certification in order to qualify for the rebate
- EnergyStar has proposed to stop certifying gas appliances in 2024
- Functionally eliminates participation from program

Slow roll out from US DOE

- IRA passed in August 2022, Program Guidance issued July 2023 and updated in October 2023.

IRA Home Electrification Appliance Rebate program:

- NH's allocation: roughly \$35,000,000
- Provides rebates for residential home electrification measures
- Rebates depend on income and appliance
- Means tested program
 - 80% of area median income or less
 - \$91,500 for a family of 4

- up to 100% of qualified project cost
- Greater than 80% of area median income, up to 150% of area median income
 - Roughly \$182,000 for a family of 4
 - up to 50% of qualified project cost
- Greater than 150% of area median income
 - Not eligible

Rebate caps:

- Heat pump hot water heater: \$1,750
- Heat pump for space heating and cooling: \$8,000
- Electric stove, cooktop, range, or oven: \$840
- Heat pump clothes dryer: \$840
- Electric load service center upgrade: \$4,000
- Insulation, air sealing, and ventilation: \$1,600
- Electrical wiring: \$2,500
- Installation: \$500 and is commensurate with scale of upgrades installed
- Combined rebate amounts are capped at \$14,000 total

Implementation Hurdles:

- Income verification and point of sale
 - Federal law requires consumers to get these rebates at the point of sale
 - Federal law also requires income verification
 - Question: how do you do income verification at the register?
- No obvious existing delivery system
 - Unlike energy efficiency rebates, there is no existing delivery system to get these rebates out to customers
 - Brand new program infrastructure takes time to build and time for customers to learn
- Slow roll out from US DOE
 - IRA passed in August 2022, Program Guidance issued July 2023 and updated in October 2023.

Required Allocations:

- State plan must allocate at least 40% of the total funds to Low Moderate Income Households
 - \$11 million for each program
- State plan must allocate a further 10% to multi family Low Moderate Income Households.
 - \$2.7 million for each program

TRAINING FOR RESIDENTIAL ENERGY CONTRACTORS:
State-Based Home Energy Efficiency Contractor Training Grants or Training for Residential Energy Contractors (TRECS)

- Funding to:
 - Boost the skills of the existing workforce
 - Encourage new entrants to the workforce
- Goal: make sure there is a trained workforce to implement these programs
- New Hampshire's allocation: \$1.25 million over four years.
- Application proposes working with Lakes Region Community College to boost their existing programs and working along side NHSaves programs
- Application submitted January 31, 2024

SOLAR FOR ALL:

- Competitive funding by US EPA
- \$7 billion available nationwide for community solar projects as part of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funds (GGRF) programs
- NH DOE led Application
 - Worked with Community Loan Fund, and NH Housing on a three-part application
 - NH Housing: Affordable Housing Projects and Public Housing Authorities
 - Community Loan Fund: Resident Owned manufacturing home communities (ROCs)
 - NH DOE: Scale up existing Community Solar Program
- EPA announced in April awardees:
 - \$43,510,000 awarded to New Hampshire, one of 32 state level awards

FEDERAL FUNDING APPLICATIONS STATUSES:

- **Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant:**
 - Applied: September 2023
 - Award: May 2024
- **Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund:**
 - Applied: May 2023, Revision due June 2024
 - Award: TBD
- **WAP-BIL**
 - Applied: July 2022
 - Awarded: September 2022
- **40101(d) Grid Resiliency Funding**
 - Applied: April 2023
 - Awarded: September 2023
- **State Energy Program-BIL**
 - Applied: December 2022
 - Awarded: May 2023
- **Energy Codes**
 - Letter of Intent Filed: November 2023

- Application Due: September 2025
- **IRA Rebates:**
 - Early Admin Funds Applied: April 2023
 - Early Admin Funds Awarded: September 2023
 - HERA: Application Filed March 2024
 - HOMES: Target Application Filing June/July 2024
 - Application Deadline: January 31, 2025
- **Training for Residential Energy Contractor Grants**
 - Applied: January 2024
 - Award: TBD
- **Solar for All**
 - Applied: October 2023
 - Notification of Award: April 2024
 - Award: TBD

Questions?

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