

CORNISH ENERGY COMMITTEE MINUTES  
August 12, 2024, 7-8:30 PM  
Cornish Town Offices and via Zoom

**PRESENT:** in person, CEC members Joanna Sharf, Bill Schmidt and Mike Belanger; via Zoom: Myron Kuhre; PEC member Bob Jordan, and Susanne Haseman; Via Zoom: CEC member Richard Thompson, PEC members Evan Oxenham and Nick Cohen, Dick Gendron, and Doug Cogan (Sullivan County Energy Circuit Rider). Frank Parks was on via phone.

**APPROVAL OF JUNE MINUTES:** Mike made a motion to accept the July minutes, and Bill seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

**NEW MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:** The Committee welcomed Susanne Haseman to the meeting. Susanne expressed interest in joining the Committee in response to a notice in Cornish Connect. She wants to contribute what she can to addressing global warming, an issue she cares deeply about. Susanne is a retired psychotherapist. On via phone was Frank Parks, who is also possibly interested in joining the Committee, but he had poor reception so could not communicate with us. Joanna explained that the Committee meets with and votes to recommend candidates, and the Select Board has final approval. She expressed an interest in voting on Susanne's nomination at the next meeting and urged Frank to join the next meeting in person if possible so that the Committee could formally meet him.

**WIND POWER FORUM:** The Committee discussed a recent email from Joanna that provided more background information on the Lempster wind farm project (copy attached in the Addendum to these Minutes). Apparently, the project was undertaken without much input from the community and the town was deeply divided on it. For this reason, and because of the demands of the Community Power process (discussed below), Joanna suggested postponing the wind power forum until after Town Meeting in March. After some discussion, the Committee agreed. In the meantime, Richard is scheduled to speak with Jason Du Terroil who is Senior Director Organic Growth at Avangrid about the forum and will let him know about the change in timeline for the forum. Jason could be a possible speaker at a Wind Forum. The Committee further agreed that there would need to be more than one speaker at the forum.

**COMMUNITY POWER UPDATE:** Joanna re-confirmed that the Select Board had signed the CPCNH Joint Powers Agreement. The Committee then discussed the draft Electric Aggregation Plan (EAP) that had been distributed in advance of the meeting. Based on Plainfield's experience in joining CPCNH, Evan explained that Cornish will need to hold two public hearings about the plan, and the plan will need to be approved at the March, 2025 Town Meeting. Joanna also explained that the NH Public Utilities Commission will need to approve Cornish's plan prior to starting the program and added that the more changes made to the plan, the longer that process may take. For now, Joanna wanted the Committee to focus on two particular issues: first, choosing the percentage of renewables

tied to the default rate for Cornish. For the program to commence, the default rate has to be lower than rates offered by any of the utilities. After the program has launched, the default rate does not need to be lower than the utility rate, but the Town will make every effort to keep it lower. Right now, the default percentage of required renewables for the State of NH is 23%. In light of the Town's commitment to achieve 100% renewably sourced electricity by 2030, Joanna asked the Committee to consider tying a renewable percentage of 33% to the default rate. Evan explained to the group that the Select Board will appoint an Authorized Officer (not mentioned in the EAP) who will have final say on rates charged to rate payers. It was also clarified that the "Cornish Power Committee" mentioned in the draft agreement will be the Cornish Energy Committee. The second issue Joanna highlighted was the option of adding a fraction of a cent to the default rate to be used to build a discretionary reserve fund that could be used for energy projects in Cornish in the future (e.g., energy audits, community solar, charging stations). Evan indicated that any add-ons would need to be approved at Town Meeting before going into effect. He also suggested it might make sense to get the program up and running smoothly for customers before implementing add-ons. Doug suggested that, if and when the town implements add-ons, it would be important to keep descriptions of possible projects pretty general in order to be in a better position to be eligible for various municipal grant opportunities. The draft EAP mentions that Cornish would have the option of hiring its own commercial broker, but this would be unlikely to happen since the town would probably opt to work through CPCNH for all energy services related to the program. The Committee then discussed the timeline for the next several months: first, the Committee needs to finalize the EAP agreement, and then the Select Board must approve it. After Select Board approval, two public hearings must be held prior to Town Meeting. In light of the amount of work to do, and the tight timeline, the Committee agreed to dedicate its entire next meeting to review of the draft EAP. Evan will be available to answer questions, and Joanna was going to invite Andrew Hatch from CPCNH to attend as well. The Committee also discussed additional ways to spread the word about Community Power, including having a table at the Recycling Center to distribute literature, and posting information, including a full copy of the EAP, on the town website.

**IRA FORUM:** The Committee discussed plans to have a public forum on various IRA-funded programs this fall. October had been suggested as a possible timeframe. The focus of the forum would be on rebates and tax credits available to qualifying Cornish residents. But considering the urgency and amount of work related to the community power process, the Committee decided to wait until we know more about the scheduling of public hearings for Community Power before making a decision on whether to hold the forum on IRA incentives.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

**NEXT MEETING:** Monday, September 9 at 7:00 PM.

***See next pages for Addendum***

**ADDENDUM:**

**Email from Andrew Hatch sent July 16, 2024 11:22AM to Joanna Sharf & Evan Oxenham**

Good morning,

I had a call from Jason Bourne earlier. He said that the Cornish Selectboard had voted 2-1 in favor of joining the Coalition.

He will be getting me a signature for the JPA. We discussed the need to appoint a member rep and alternate.

All the best

**Andrew**

Andrew W. Hatch  
Outreach Coordinator  
Community Power Coalition of NH  
Call/Text - 603 545 7718

Visit [CPCNH.org](http://CPCNH.org) for further information

**Email from Joanna Sharf sent Monday, July 22, 2024 9:53PM to Energy Committee Members:**

Hi everyone,

I wanted to let you know about various items:

1. Portfolio Manager: I've gotten 2 responses to my request for Portfolio Manager help. One from John Drye who manages the portfolio manager site for Hypertherm and one from Yadin Flammer. This is wonderful! I am in touch with both of them.

2. Committee Membership: The Selectboard advanced Myron Kuhre to full membership. How are you doing Myron? We all wish you well and a speedy recovery. We have 2 potential candidates for alternates: Frank Parks & Susanne Haseman. Susanne emailed me and expressed interest in response to our posting in Connect Cornish. I will write to them both and explain the process for membership: namely that we ask that they attend at least one meeting, that they familiarize themselves with our mission statement & goals, and meet with us to tell us why they are interested in the Committee and how they might want to help us achieve our mission. The Committee would then vote on whether we want to recommend them to the Selectboard for appointment.

3. Weatherizing Town Offices: I spoke with the Selectboard a week ago and they agreed that I could submit a revised estimate from Earthshare to Eversource to find out how much Eversource can contribute to the cost of the project. The revised estimate excludes the cost of bat guano removal and the spray foam option. Revised estimate attached.

4. Town Hall & Town Garage: The Selectboard wants to concentrate on the Town Hall only for now. I learned from NHEC that they might cover as much as \$750 for the cost of an energy audit (which can cost around \$1200-\$1500) and might pay up to 35% of the cost of weatherizing. The Selectboard is interested in replacing the existing gas heaters with heat pumps and NHSaves offers a rebate of \$250 per ton for heat pumps. I need to find a contractor who can do an energy audit and find out how much they charge. I will be contacting Martin Bean of Earthshare and Margaret Dillon about this.

5. Bats in Town Offices: I met with Scott Borthwick of Estate Wildlife Control at the Town Offices today. He showed me whether the bats are getting in: at the very peak in front and lower down in the back the metal roofing is bent back. Also one storm window is not fully closed and another window is broken. He would install one-way doors and seal up all openings. His company can also do bat guano removal as long as it's not on top of insulation. His estimate is attached. He will be providing a separate estimate for guano removal. I'll forward that when I get it. The bats cannot be removed until after August 15 because they are raising their young now. As for the bat house in back, it might help to attract bats if we rub fresh bat guano on the outside. Also, bats are now hibernating inside buildings and seem to be using insulation to keep warm, so we might consider installing some insulation in that bat building.

6. Community Power: The Selectboard has signed the JPA and Jason Bourne said that he would be the member representative. They just need an alternate now, so I told Andrew I could be the alternate. I hope that's ok. I believe anyone is welcome to attend Coalition meetings and can volunteer to help out, so if Bill Schmidt or anyone else wants to be involved I think that would be great. I have the customer data from Eversource & NHEC and have written again to Liberty to obtain the data from them. Next step is to draft an Electric Aggregation Agreement, and to schedule public hearings.

7. Cornish Energy Busters: I only heard back from Nancy about my name for a team that can help residents troubleshoot high electric bills (Bill Cable's idea). "Who You Gonna Call? Cornish Energy Busters!" We could make a flyer and also post in Connect Cornish. Would love your thoughts.

Thank you all!!  
Best,  
Joanna

**Email from Joanna Sharf sent August 6, 2024 9:32PM to Cornish & Plainfield Energy Committee members:**

Hi everyone,

We can discuss this at our meeting next Monday, but I just wanted to update you about my and Richard's efforts to secure speakers for this event.

The Lempster Town Office referred me to the Planning Board chair, Mark Adams, and when I finally reached him, he said that he didn't have a totally positive outlook on the wind farm. He said that the project was basically foisted upon the town by Iberdrola because the town didn't have a zoning ordinance for wind turbines, and the town had hardly any say in how the project proceeded. He said the town was bitterly divided over the project.

Richard finally got the direct contact info for the speaker from Groton Wind, but as of last week, he hadn't yet heard back from him.

So it's looking like we may need to put this forum on hold. But we will have to decide that at our next meeting.

All best,  
Joanna