

Town of Cape Elizabeth – Energy Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date: November 21, 2024

Time: 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Location: Town Hall Chamber

Attendance:

- Present: Sam Milton, Richard Parker, Vince Flaherty, Ian Sample, David Bagdasarian
 - Absent: David Kane, Rosalie Blenkhorn, Niko Dietsch
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Agenda Topics:

1. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- Draft minutes were - Motion to approve with amendments was passed.

2. Climate Action Plan Review

- Discussion on updating the Climate Action Plan to clarify responsibilities between the Town Council and School Board.
- Emphasis on ensuring the School Board is identified as a key stakeholder, given their control over 80% of the town's budget.
- Concerns raised regarding school engagement in energy efficiency goals, citing past challenges with electrification and sustainability in school projects.
- Consensus to meet with both the Town Council and School Board for input and alignment.

3. Community Engagement Strategy

- Recap of recent events: EV Day, Courier articles, and workshops with GPCOG.
- Proposal to contribute a recurring 300-word column in The Cape Courier.
- Plans to collaborate with the Recycling Committee for an Earth Day event in spring 2025.
- Discussion on expanding outreach to local businesses via Stephanie Anderson's new business committee.

4. Student and School Involvement

- Mixed perspectives on student engagement; recognized the potential but also the resource demands.
- Emphasis on school buy-in and culture change to promote efficiency and climate action behaviors.

5. Solar Project Update (Encore)

- Encore has missed multiple deadlines and key staff members have left.
- New projected completion is Fall 2025.
- Concerns voiced about contract integrity, shifting PPA rates, and transparency.
- Current energy rate is more favorable than PPA.
- Suggestions to explore legal review, lease payment status, and possible re-bid.

6. Ice Rink Discussion and Town Support

- Committee expressed concern over the long-term energy and financial impact of the town potentially adopting the rink.
- Discussion of indirect subsidies already in place (e.g., discounted electricity).
- Recognition of the rink's benefits but emphasis on climate trade-offs.
- Suggestion to track rink-related costs as a budget line item for transparency.

7. Next Steps and Recommendations

- Committee to prepare memo on:
 - o Updated Climate Action Plan with clearer stakeholder responsibilities
 - o Rebranding the Energy Committee to reflect sustainability focus
 - o Outreach to Town Council and School Board
 - o Legal review of the Encore contract
- Plan to push for a joint workshop with Town Council and School Board in January.
- Suggestion to draft implementation steps and create accountability mechanisms.

Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn passed.
- Meeting concluded at approximately 8:00 PM.

Next Meeting:

- **Date:** December 18, 2024
- **Location:** Town Hall Chamber