

**CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND, MAINE**  
**SOUTH PORTLAND ENERGY & RECYCLING COMMITTEE**

**South Portland Energy and Recycling Committee**

**Meeting Minutes**

**December 16 , 2015**

**So. Portland Community Center**

**Large Conference Room**

**Call to order - 6:30 pm.**

**Committee**

- Bob Foster - At Large (Beecher) Chair - **present**
- Clyde Barr - At Large (Beecher) - **absent**
- Jessica Williams - At Large (Blake) Secretary - **present**
- Gregory Norton - At Large (Blake) - **present**
- Rita Thompson - District 1 - **absent**
- Rich Crowley - District 1- **present**
- Todd Erickson - District 2 - **absent**
- Melinda Timpf - District 2 - **present**
- Vacant - District 3
- William Fritzmeier - District 3 - **present**
- Eric Knutsen - District 4 Vice Chair - **absent**
- Patrick Cyr - District 4 - **present**
- Michael Shutts - District 5 - **absent**
- Andrew Snyder - District 5 - **present**
- Julie Rosenbach - City Liaison - **present**
- Vacant - School Department Liaison - **absent**

**Membership Report and Updates:**

**Andrew Snyder joins the committee representing District 5**

**Mike Shutts and Todd Erickson have resigned from the committee.**

**Old Business:**

- Acceptance of November's minutes: **Motion to accept Patrick Cyr; seconded by Melinda Timpf. All in favor.**
- Updates on current City Council initiatives- **from Julie Rosenbach, City Sustainability Coordinator**

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- **Outreach and Education**
  - **Recycling: Julie and Leo Mahue from ecomaine have given 2 presentations to municipal employees at City Hall and one for Community Center employees.**
  - **Plastic bag and polystyrene ordinance: Julie will be working in the schools, targeting all second grade classes to talk about plastic bags and polystyrene in the context of the new ordinances. She will be handing out reusable ecomaine bags which will contain a worksheet about waste reduction. Julie would also like to distribute these bags and worksheets to low income households, by placing them at different locations. Distribution locations may include: Red Bank Hub, Housing Authority; South Portland Bus transportation hub.**
    - **Andy S.: What about offering reusable bags when people pick up recycling bins. Julie will give some bags to public works.**
    - **Julie feels like she's hit municipal offices pretty completely.**
    - **Julie met with Jane Eberle, liaison with the schools. Two 8th grade classes at Memorial Middle School are doing a year- long climate change project.**
    - **Potential problem with reusable bag ordinance - people are coming out with plastic bags that look similar to the ones used now by grocery stores, but they are thicker and thus considered reusable. Legion Square Market will be offering these to customers for \$1.00. Discussion about what the committee thinks about these types of bags: These bags are technically acceptable because the ordinance defines reusability based on the thickness**

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of the plastic, and they may not be that different from the plastic reusable bags that most people are already using. The main problem with both types of bags is that at the end of their life, they are not recyclable. While offering these bags may seem to go against the spirit of the ordinance, they are reusable and if someone pays a dollar for one, there is a built in incentive to reuse it.

This is a tricky question and Julie stated that the goal of the ordinance is to encourage greater reuse and reusability, not necessarily perfection at this point.

There were questions about potential risks of backlash against the ordinance if grocery stores start charging \$1.00 for plastic bags, but Julie clarified that the disposable plastic bags that are currently used will still be available, but at a charge of \$.05 per bag. Falmouth is currently working on a plastic bag ordinance and is looking at changing language about thickness of the plastic bag to avoid this potential issue.

- Rich C: will Legion Square Market be collecting data about bag sales?
- Julie: Good question. How will we know if the plastic bag and polystyrene ordinance is successful or not? Julie will ask a number of different stores for sales data for their bags which will be a baseline survey and help the City gauge success.
- Will: dept of justice environmental grant program related to exposing kids these issues.
- Gulf of Maine has lunch and learn - target 5th and 6th graders about science and climate and weather.

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- **Pesticide Draft Ordinance:** Julie has been working furiously on this and will be presenting the Draft Ordinance to Jim Gaily before January 1. One potential snag in this process is a proposed bill in the State Legislature that, if passed, would preempt any local ordinance against pesticides. Members of the committee were encouraged to contact their state representatives about this bill.
  
- **E-Waste (electronic waste):** Julie met with the City IT Director and Public Works Director Doug Howard about e-waste. SP has no e-waste program and residents' only option for recycling is to drop items off at Goodwill or at Best Buy for example. Julie spoke with Fred Dillon about including e-waste collection during Household Hazardous Waste collection events. Julie has set up a bin at city hall for municipal e-waste which will be collected by an e-waste hauler. It was suggested that Household Hazardous Waste collection take place twice a year instead of just once.
  
- **Solar:** The City's RFP (request for proposal) received 2 proposals, both of which were rejected. \*\*Please see summary attached at end of minutes. Not giving up on solar. Looking for cost effective ways to get more solar and to streamline the process.
  
- **Climate action plan update:** Julie met with Ben Link from GPCOG about what the update will look like and to review first level of data in mid January to see what the differences are between previous data and Julie's data. Also, where are we with the current recommendations of climate action plan, what are next steps for municipal CAP targets and goals. In 2014 the US Conference of Mayors introduced a Revised Climate Protection Agreement

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<http://usmayors.org/climateagreement/Final%20USCM%202014%20Mayors%20Climate%20Protection%20Agreement.pdf>

which includes new reduction in green house gas (GHG) emissions goals for 2050. This document should help direct the work of the committee with regard to the Municipal Climate Action Plan (CAP) and next steps.

**Discussion about CAP next steps and how the ERC could participate in the creation of a South Portland Community Energy Strategy**

Brainstorm about next action items to reduce municipal emissions. In addition to municipal piece there is the community piece. Community level data, how are we moving forward as a community, can we create a community energy strategy (as opposed to a community Energy Management Plan which is slightly different) to help us transition to a sustainable energy community. Collaborate with Conservation Commission and the Economic Development Committee to come up with the working framework. What is the framework process for developing an energy strategy. How do we engage and involve people in the process, how do we frame this in general and what is our timeframe. Possibly get a CDBG (Community Development Block Grant). There may also be a number of other grants we could pursue. This is a good time to talk about transitioning away from oil and oil infrastructure. Looking at what other cities have done will be essential. Patrick C. and Greg N. and Bob F. have already looked at Boulder, CO; Bridgeport, CT; and Burlington, VT as some examples. We need to ask: Where are we, where do we want to be, how do we get there? Phase one of this process would be a brainstorming and listening session.

- It was decided that the committee would meet on January 6 from 6:30-9:00pm for a workshop to brainstorm how the ERC can organize its work around the creation of a Community Energy Strategy. This was suggested and decided on after discussion about the difficulty of making progress while meeting only once a month for less than 2 hours. It is possible that subcommittees will be formed that would meet outside of the

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monthly full meeting schedule. The committee will follow all appropriate City guidelines in setting this up.

- **In Summary, For Upcoming Workshop: A brainstorming/idea sharing session. All members are encouraged to do/think about the following.**

**Goal**

Develop recommendations that the City of South Portland (and its committees) can pursue to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and transition to alternative, sustainable energy.

**Recommendations**

May target municipal operations, businesses, residents, and larger community/regional level projects through education & engagement, data, actions, policies, projects, etc.

**Homework**

1. Start with the Conservation Commission's list
  2. Review current [Climate Action Plan](#)
  3. Read the revised [U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement](#)
  4. Explore other cities' energy & climate plans
- Review of Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA) - refer to Nov. 30th City Council workshop. Anything we do that is considered city business is supposed to be accessible by the public. If 3 of us meet it is officially a meeting and we have to publish the meeting beforehand. Back and forth about Newsletter is ok, Bob cleared that last year.
  - Andy Sneider, new member district 4 representing 5: asked about whether or not we have city email addresses - NO, members use their personal emails.
  - Will: if I want to communicate with the group post it to docks or a single email can go to the group, but no back and forth communication.

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- Municipal Climate Action Plan: Subcommittee discussions: **See above discussion re: CAP and Energy Strategy**
  - Group 1: Define 1-3 action items: data
  - Group 2: Define 1-3 action items: grant
  
- Newsletter - status of upcoming articles and due dates - **We are doing well and have articles planned for the next 2 submissions.**
  - 12/28: Long Creek - Will Fritzmeier
  - 1/11: Local Sustainability - Greg Norton
  - **Members are encouraged to volunteer to write articles. Authors will**

**share their work with the group for feedback via email or using Google Drive and then submit their article directly to:**

**Sentry**

**Molly Lovell-Keely**

**email: editor@inthesentry.com**

**Phone: 282-4337 ext.223**

**Fax: 282-4339**

**Deadline for article submission Monday by Noon for Friday of that week**

**Published every Friday**

**Jessica will continue to submit the same article to the City Clerk for inclusion in the twice monthly City Newsletter.**

**Jessica will check with City Clerk about archiving all ERC Articles on the ERC webpage on the City website.**

**All articles are available on the Google Drive in the “Newsletters” folder.**

**New Business:**

**Energy Management Plan - See above discussion**

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Adjournment - **Motion to adjourn Jessica W; Seconded by Andy S.; Meeting adjourned 8:44pm**

**Workshop Meeting: Jan. 6, 2016 - Community Center - 6:30pm**

Next **Regular** meeting: Wed., January 20, 2016 - Community Center

**\*\*Summary of solar proposals submitted in response to South Portland's Request for Proposals for Solar Photovoltaic Projects at Select City Facilities BID#08-16**

Earlier this year we issued an RFP for installing solar photovoltaic arrays in South Portland. We identified eight municipal buildings, the capped landfill, and Wainwright Fields as possible sites. We sent the RFP to over sixty solar firms nation-wide. Ten firms attended the mandatory pre-bid site tour, and we received two proposals.

After internal review and an analysis carried out by our consultant, Competitive Energy Services (CES), we determined that the best course of action would be to reject both proposals because neither deal structure is in the best interest of the City.

Here is a summary of the proposals, our reason for rejecting the bids, and recommended next steps. Our consultant analysis is attached.

**Ameresco proposed two options for solar at the landfill**

Option 1: A 658.4 kW DC array, which would generate ~845,000 kWh annually at a power purchase agreement (PPA) rate of \$0.149/kWh with annual escalation of 2%.

Option 2: Four (4) 658.4 kW DC arrays individually interconnected and metered, which in total would generate ~3.38 MWh annually at a PPA rate of \$0.122/kWh with annual escalation of 2%.

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Both of these options present a steep cost premium over the rate we are paying for grid-tied electricity (see attached analysis). It is also unclear whether the second option of splitting a large project into four segments would be allowable under current PUC rules.

**Revision Energy and Energy Systems Group (ESG) partnered on a proposal for two phases of solar combined with an energy performance contract**

Phase I: A 245 kW DC array at Wainwright Fields, which would generate ~320,000 kWh annually at a PPA rate of \$0.109 with a 2% annual escalation and acquisition of the system in year 7 for roughly \$288,000.

This rate presents immediate and long-term savings to the City (per kWh it is one cent less than the existing CMP small general service rate). However this cost structure is dependent on entering into a performance contract with Energy Systems Group (ESG). The phase I rate is specifically tied to signing a letter of intent with ESG to go through an "ideation" process and conduct an investment grade audit.

Phase II: A 920 kW DC array at the Landfill, which would generate ~1.16 MWh annually. Revision does not specify a PPA price for this phase, rather the PPA price would be driven by the level of energy savings able to be generated through performance contracted projects.

While we would like to install solar arrays at both of these sites, two factors led us to reject this proposal. First, we determined that it is not in the City's best interest to pursue a performance contract at this time. There are three reasons for this: first, we have already identified lists of energy projects to pursue; second, we believe we can get a better rate financing these projects independently; and third, we would like to retain

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control over the projects/savings we have identified.

The second issue that was uncovered during our analysis of this proposal is whether or not the current deed will allow a ground-mounted solar array to be built at Wainwright Fields.