

Green Communities committee meeting minutes March 14, 2013

Present: Mary Quigley, Brian Clark, Sewer Commissioners, Betty Nichols, Mary Fitz-Gibbons, Ann-Renee Larouche from HCOG

Meeting started at 6:05 pm

Brian described meeting he attended March 2 at Fire House with representatives from Select Board (Tom Carter), Finance Committee (Rickie Carol), Fire Chief Dell Haskins, Emergency Management (Doug Fields) and Rob Poissant to discuss potential repairs and upgrades to the fire house. Primary discussion was in regard to the electric service, currently 100 amp 3 phase. Service box has been added onto several times, all possible circuits are in use with some overloaded, requiring careful management of which loads are run at the same time to avoid breakers tripping. Overall capacity (100 Amps) is also stressed during Fall Festival. Alternatives discussed (ascending order of cost):

- upgrade service and generator switch to 200 amps, add generator switch to town hall - two generators (Chevy solution)
- upgrade Town Hall service to 400 amps, add 400 amp generator switch, run 200 amp feeds to town hall service, and 200 amp underground to fire house, upgrading it to 200 amp - one generator (Cadillac solution)
- do the above plus bury 400 amp service and communication wires from utility pole to town hall under 116 (Ferrari solution)

Brian explained that Green Communities was investigating the possibility of replacing heaters in the Fire House and/or Town Hall with a heat pumps which would increase the electrical demand substantially, both on the service(s) and for stand by generator(s). Waiting for energy auditor report before decision can be reached. Tom Carter directed finance that his preference was the Ferrari solution, it would probably not be affordable in this years budget but to get it estimated and look at setting aside some money in this budget year to help fund it in a future year. Doug Field indicated that they have approximately \$5000 grant money that needs to be spent this year, is planning to purchase larger standby generator for the firehouse, large enough to power the fire house and critical infrastructure (heat, telephones, IT) in the town hall. Will relocate the existing generator to the Highway Garage (currently has none) so that fuel can be pumped in event of power outage.

Other work needed on Fire House includes new entry door, replacing some decayed trim and clapboards, damaged vinyl siding.

Mary and Brian joined the Sewer Commissioners meeting for presentation by Ann-Renee Larouche regarding Hampshire Solar, a new municipal net metering program from Hampshire Power. The meeting was video recorded. The key details of this program are:

- 20 year contract with Nexamp, to purchase Net Metering Credits at 21% discount (requires town vote)
- 5 year contract with HCOG to supply electricity (can switch providers after 5 years)
- Net Metering Credits can then be used to pay your WMECO electric bill
- 79 cents of certificate worth \$1 for paying your WMECO bill
- must contract for set number of credits (measured in KWH's), price based on current electric price
- if your electric use decreases below the certificates contracted, they can be transferred/sold to other accounts in the municipality

Ann-Renee had been asked to fill in for someone else at the last minute and could not answer some of our questions, in particular are the credits applicable to all parts of the electric bill - generation, distribution, demand charge, fees and taxes. She thought it applied to the whole bill but will investigate and get back to us. Was also the question about the fact that WWTP gets two bills, one from WMECO and one from HCOG - are credits only useable for the WMECO part? Ann-Renee though both, but will check.

Sewer Commissioners plan to pursue getting article into town meeting warrant for this, Mary to look at participating with the other town accounts (Town Hall, Fire House, Library, Highway Garage). Was a question if the other accounts are under HCOG contract currently? Green Community should follow up on this too.

Latest version of the engineering specification from Vreeland Design Associates was discussed. Betty expressed concern that in some places where specific products were shown, there should be an "or equivalent" specified, so as to allow the contractor to substitute a similar product. Also discussion about doing the heater installation as a separate project. Will need to break this out of the design document, to allow bidding them as separate projects. Betty to request Vreeland to make these changes and then submit to FRCOG to initiate the bidding process. Sewer Commissioners formally approved proceeding to bid.

Green Community meeting adjourned at approximately 7:30 pm.

Document list:

Hampshire Council of Governments, sample warrant article for participation in Hampshire Solar
Hampshire Solar, A New Municipal Net Metering Program from Hampshire Power
Vreeland Design Associates "Ashfield Wastewater Treatment Plant: Plans to modify lower
greenhouse over treatment marshes to reduce heating requirements" March 14, 2013