

By-Laws for the Bristol Energy Committee

Draft 3/18/2024

I. Mission

A. The mission of the Bristol Energy Committee is to promote energy savings and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We recommend to the Municipality policies and practices to insure sustainable energy use, secure funding sources and measure initiatives. We engage and educate the community by organizing related activities and projects.

II. Authorization

Authorized by the Bristol Select Board on

III. Purpose and Functions

A. Promote energy savings for individuals, businesses and the community as a whole; and provide resources to residents and commercial establishments that clearly outline energy conservation and efficiency steps that will reduce energy bills.

B. Report to the Select Board actions the Community should take to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions of the Town of Bristol and its residents.

C. Identify funding sources available to the Town of Bristol and its residents' for energy initiatives and participate in the application processes and as approved by the Select Board.

D. Communicate the energy consumption of the Municipality and community at large.

E. Coordinate, organize and/or support relevant activities in the community and related projects to support community engagement and education initiatives related to energy and greenhouse gas reductions.

IV. Procedures

- A. In general, projects and decision-making are to proceed along the following guidelines:
1. The Committee will develop its work program and assign specific tasks to its committee as they arise. The committee members or citizens or community groups may present suggestions for projects.
 2. The Committee will present approved recommendations and/or plans to the Planning Commission and the Select Board as appropriate.
 3. Final decisions and actions shall be decided by majority, subject to law and overrule by the Select Board.
 4. The committee shall operate in accordance with the Vermont Open Meeting Law. The Committee shall be responsible for public communications.

V. Membership

A. Membership on the committee and its activities are under the jurisdiction of the Select Board with confirmation of official membership annually in April. Members are expected to attend two-thirds of scheduled meetings per year. There is no limit on the number of members, however the Committee has a goal of 7 participants. The committee welcomes volunteer involvement and participation without formal vote by the Select Board.

B. The Committee is chaired by a person or persons (in the event of co-chairs) from its membership who have been selected annually by a vote of the Committee.

C. Voluntary resignations must be submitted to the Committee and Select Board in writing.

D. All vacancies shall be filled by the Select Board.

E. All members shall serve without compensation, but may be reimbursed by the Municipality for necessary and reasonable expenses incurred in the course of their duties.

VI. Meetings

A. The Committee Chair(s) shall develop an agenda for distribution to all members prior to each meeting.

B. Committee meetings shall be open to the public and held monthly at a regular day and time to be determined by the Committee. Special and emergency meetings may be held at other times in accordance with Vermont Open Meeting Law.

C. Agenda and time/date of meetings shall be posted on Front Porch Forum.

D. All records and minutes of any Committee meeting or action shall be filed with the Town Clerk and posted on the web site and be available to the public.

E. A quorum shall consist of the presence of a majority of the Committee. No action shall be taken without the affirmative vote of a majority of the Committee members present and voting.

VII. Conflict of Interest

A. In order to secure and preserve the highest level of public trust in the deliberations and decisions of the Committee, it is incumbent upon each member not only to scrupulously avoid any act which constitutes a conflict of interest established in law but also to avoid any act that gives the appearance of an undue special privilege or a conflict of interest.

B. A member shall withdraw from all participation, in any matter including all formal and informal discussion and voting, in which the member concludes that (s)he may have a conflict of interest or upon the assertion that there is a reasonable public perception that a conflict or a special privilege may exist.

VIII. Committees

A. The Committee may function with both standing and ad hoc subcommittees. Standing subcommittees shall be established by a majority vote of the Committee; ad hoc subcommittees may be established by

decision of the Committee Chair. The Committee Chair shall appoint Chairs for all subcommittees.

B. All subcommittees shall function in an advisory capacity to the Committee. No action shall be taken by any subcommittee without the prior consent of the Committee.

C. Subcommittee membership shall be open to the public. The time and place of each meeting shall be posted on Front Porch Forum. Minutes of subcommittee meetings will be submitted to the Committee in accordance with the Vermont open meetings law and incorporated with the records of the Committee.

IX. Administration

A. The Committee shall have the authority to request appropriations from the Town of Bristol for its operating expenses. Funds appropriated or donated to the Committee shall be under the control of the Town and management of the Committee. The Town Treasurer may establish a special Energy Committee trust & agency account for grant and donated funds that shall accrue from year to year

B. The Committee shall have the authority to receive gifts, grants, or money from any sources for these purposes. Any funds from private, state, or federal sources which impose any obligation on the Town of Bristol shall be accepted only by consent of the Select Board.

X. Amendments

A. These Bylaws may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the Committee by a two-thirds vote of the Committee. Written notice of intent to amend must be publicly posted, sent to each member of the Committee, the Town Manager and Chair of the Select Board at least seven days prior to the meeting at which the proposed action is to be taken.

XI. Dissolution

A. The duration of the Bristol Energy Committee is intended to be perpetual. In the event of dissolution, all existing trust & agency funds

of the Committee remaining after payment of appropriate expenses shall be distributed to tax-exempt organizations emphasizing the same purposes as the Bristol Energy Committee, or to the Town, as determined by the Select Board.

Composed by Richard Butz, based on Town of Middlebury By-Laws