

Bristol Energy Committee

November 20, 2024 Minutes

7:00pm by Zoom ONLY

Ben Skolozdra (BEC), Richard Butz (BEC), David Flaschenriem (BEC), Allison Pouliot (BEC), Jim Quaglino (Member of the Public), Carly Jack (AllEarth Renewables, Member of the Public), Sally Burrell (BEC), Carl Engvall (BEC)

- i. Citizen Comments/Concerns
 - None
- ii. Approve Agenda
 - Approved unanimously
- iii. Approve October Meeting Minutes
 - Approved unanimously
- iv. Guest Speaker: Carly Jack, AllEarth Renewables
 - Carly is marketing manager at AllEarth Renewables
 - Carly's main job is getting the word out about AER.
 - AER moved to Bristol from Williston in February of last year
 - AER is a Vermont based solar energy solution provider
 - Specialize in design & manufacture of dual-axis solar electric system with signature project – AllEarth Solar Tracker (24 staff and looking to hire more locally)
 - New building is 100% net positive through solar panels on roof, generate more than the building needs (EV car charging stations too)
 - > 8000 tracker installation across the US. Primarily focused on VT.
 - Solar tracker: grid-tied, ground-mounted dual-axis solar electric tracking system. It rotates a full 360 degree to follow the sunlight (more energy and higher efficiency than a static mount). Good analogy: sunflower that follows the sun.
 - Customer base: VT/New England, homeowners, businesses, dealers, developers, etc. based on sun profile and being close to home base
 - Scale: one/two chargers for a residential customer all the way up to MW farm. Sweet spot is 150kW.
 - AER does tours of their facility.
 - No roof required, can be mounted to the ground.
 - 16 AE trackers can be installed on one acre of land, and they have a wide range of options for different topographies
 - AER looking to do an Open House at their facility in the future to get people into the building to see how things are built. Engineering & manufacturing company first and foremost.

- AER does not manufacture the panels; they build the tracker system. They have preferential suppliers but panels are mostly from China and elsewhere in Asia.
- AER does not do island systems, they focus on grid-tied projects.
- AER CEO/Owner is David B., started NRG Systems in Hinesburg [wind turbine]. Company is very attached to the community in Bristol.
- EV chargers at AER site: two L2 chargers for staff. Connected to the building which is powered by solar (as noted above).
- AER heard about our desire for EV chargers in Bristol (we're working on it). Might be able to discuss with AER ownership for that topic.
 - Richard describing the grant we are hoping to get (see note below).

v. Update on EV Chargers

- No update as of now. Still waiting to hear back on the grant application.

vi. Update on MERP and Post-MERP

- Bristol has been awarded \$325k. Big number but less than what we applied for
- Verified with ACRPC that this is the amount we have been awarded. ~100 towns awarded, the state took the money they had and adjusted accordingly so more money could get to the most towns.
- Ian/Val/Freeda/Allison met this morning to discuss next steps. David F. no longer the Grantee officially, Freeda is now the Grantee (as the town Grant Administrator)
 - Executed the grant and sent to Allison and need to check with Ian on sending it back to the state.
- Also need to get together to redefine the scope and get further into the details. Allison reached out to Asher Nelson (Architect Consultant to set up grant) to see if he'd be willing to meet for an hour or two to see what to do next with the reduced amount. Waiting to hear back from him. David/Allison/Ian/Freeda/Val and maybe Matt Sharpe to meet with Asher.
- Might be able to get efficiencies with parallel Library grant that Efficiency Vermont is working with the town on.
- We are on the agenda for 12/2 Selectboard meeting to update them on where things stand. Allison and David to be at the board meeting.
- FYI, Val is retiring at the end of December. Ian to be interim Town Administrator.
- Open questions about project management going forward with the project.
- Period of performance is 12/16/24 through 12/31/26. Sounds like a lot of time but it'll go fast.
- Open question about how the money is delivered to the town. David recalls that the allocations happen through an application process similar to a construction loan, need to double check the specifics.
- Since we are given less funding, we think VT BGS will be less stringent about reporting and doing exactly what was in the application.

- Ian/Val discussed potentially pairing the grant funding with town capital improvement fund to cover the balance of the work after the grant funding window (post 2026).
 - Small MERP grant: did we get that funding? It was ~\$4k which was going to be split with the CEAC Navigator project. Did we get that funding? BEC believes it might have been left with the Town. Allison can follow-up with Ian and Val. Val informed us via email that this mini grant was not applied for by the Town.
- vii. Efficiency Vermont Workshop Wrap-Up
- Good turnout, 12-14 people, lots of questions and good information. Matt Sharpe did a good presentation and it was recorded by NEAT. David, Sally, and Ben attended as well to support the event.
- viii. Update on By-Laws for Selectboard Approval
- They are ready to send to the Selectboard. Richard to get them to Selectboard some time in December for them to consider and vote on adoption.

Next regularly scheduled meeting: December 18, 2024