

Bennington Town Energy Committee Minutes

October 8, 2020

Next Meeting, Thursday, November 12, 7 - 8:30 pm over Zoom

Present: Michael Kuser, David Durfee, Deanna Oakes, Susan Sommer, Allison Strohl, Bill Christian, Madison Kremer, Bruce Lierman, Jeannie Jenkins (notetaker).

Meeting called to order at 7:04 pm

Review minutes from September meeting: minutes approved with no corrections. Jeannie moved, Deanna seconded.

Guest Speaker - Susan Sommer, Director of Benn County Habitat for Humanity:

- Habitat works on new construction and home repair/weatherization
- Two houses in the works now. COVID restrictions allow only 4 volunteers at a time
- Follow Efficiency Vermont Basic performance standards
 - Very tight buildings and so include high ventilation standards
 - Would like to meet High Performance standards but would price houses out of affordable market
 - Cost of building materials has increased 20-30% since COVID
 - Until COVID, cost approximately \$110,000 to build a house
- After completion of last two houses, due to cost, will look at moving into weatherization for 2021-2022

Window Dressers Liaison: Bruce offered to be the Bennington Energy Committee liaison. Window Dressers would like to offer programming in Bennington Co next year with a north and a southshire event. Allison Strohl will oversee the countywide effort.

Banner OpEd: Allison reported that 4 opinion pieces are ready to go and just need Banner approval to run an energy series. Jeannie offered to help connect Allison and Dave LaChance.

Review recommendations to Select Board for 2021: The group continued work on recommendations.

- Would be helpful to have a short narrative either as part of recommendations or addendum explaining recommendations.
- Follow up –
 - Does Eff VT have training materials to share for mentoring recommendation (who is following up?)
 - Does the town have a summary checklist that is given to contractors with new construction guidelines? (Jeannie follow up)
 - Does a recommendation on tree planting fit in? (Marsh rec, some discussion)

Efficiency VT Renter Information: Follow up item. Jeannie and Deanna will identify Eff VT tips for renters and work with Madison to put in brochure form.

Action Items for Next Time:

- Madison to invite Stephanie Lane from Shires Housing to next meeting
- Michael will update draft recommendations
- Deanna and Jeannie will work on Eff VT materials with Madison
- Jeannie will connect Allison and Dave LaChance
- Bruce follow up with Window Dressers as our liaison

Meeting adjourned at 8:15. Bruce moved and Deanna seconded motion.