



## Willington Sustainable Energy Committee

### Regular Meeting Minutes of the Willington Sustainable Energy Committee (WiSE)

**Monday April 8, 2024 at 7 P.M.** (A virtual meeting, via Zoom)

**PRESENT:** Chairman John Tehan, Commissioner William Bunnell; Secretary Donald Berg. Member Pam Wheeler was absent. Ralph Tulis, a town resident, was present to speak.

1. **Call to order** – The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm. It was recorded on Zoom.
2. J. Tehan discussed the writing of a letter to the selectmen regarding the solar proposal by DownEast Renewable Energy, LLC. DownEast's offered a proposal to lease Willington land for a large solar array or the possibility that Willington could self-finance a large solar system and utilize DownEast's consulting services. J. Tehan had proposed to write the letter and asked for assistance in that matter. W. Bunnell offered to write that letter that J. Tehan started and D. Berg offered to assist. The letter would include information on the value of grant monies, solar tax credits and credits for selling the energy produced.
3. D. Berg made a "motion to amend the agenda to include Present to Speak". J. Tehan seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.
4. D. Berg discussed how we should add New Business to the agenda for future months. J. Tehan and W. Bunnell agreed.
5. **Discuss meeting dates**- D. Berg discussed having meetings on dates that don't conflict with the Selectman's meetings. The Selectmen meet on the first and third Mondays of the month. J. Tehan suggested we move next months meeting to the second Monday of the month and W. Bunnell agreed to "try it out." J. Tehan made a "motion that we move out next meeting date to May 13<sup>th</sup>". W. Bunnell seconded. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.
6. J. Tehan discussed a letter we should write to the BOS about air-source heat pumps for Town Heating Upgrades. His recommendation is that the selectmen use a heat-pump to both heat and cool a bay at one of the firehouses, versus buying a new oil heater. He provided the committee with cost comparisons to oil and he discussed how heat pumps are cheaper to buy and to own, especially when rebates on the equipment are included in the purchase cost. Also, if the Town were to install a sufficiently sized solar PV system, then we would not have to pay for fuel. D. Berg added that a heat pump would be more carbon neutral and would align with the State's goal of carbon neutrality. W. Bunnell asked J. Tehan for more heat pump and oil burner cost and efficiency information.
7. **Present to speak** – R. Tulis expressed his concern to the commission about the Town paying for a heater at the firehouse and suggested that we get more information since our present information is preliminary.
8. **Community compost discussion**- J. Tehan asked for comments – R. Tulis reminded the committee that the Town has a Solid Waste Advisory (committee) that should be addressing community composting. Also, the public needs more education. D. Berg suggested composting leaves and food waste without employing special equipment other than heavy equipment to mix it up.

9. **Approval of minutes from prior meeting** (March 9, 2024). J. Tehan made a motion to approve the minutes as written, W. Bunnell seconded. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.
10. D. Berg made a motion to adjourn the meeting, J. Tehan seconded. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 7:39 pm

Submitted by Secretary, Don Berg

*Don Berg*

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TOWN CLERK