

Minutes

Easton Energy & Environment Task Force

Regular meeting, Wednesday, September 21, 2022

Easton Town Hall, conference room A, 7:30 p.m.

Present: Cathy Alfandre, Heidi Armster, Lise Fleurette, Bobby Morganti

Absent: Jeff Borofsky, Katie Callahan

Also attending: Grace Foley, Diane Geisert

Cathy convened the meeting at 7:33

Minutes

Cathy asked if there were any comments on the minutes; seeing none, Bobby motioned to approve; Lise seconded. All in favor.

Solar Data

No data update this month, Bobby will prepare one for next month

Discussion about savings: The town saved \$33,267 in FY22 by having solar; somewhat lower than the previous year, mostly due to a few weeks in late 2021 where the array was down for repair. Brief discussion followed about how savings are normalized (showing how the solar system lowers high UI costs that are related to peak energy demand)

Phase I produced 98% of expected energy in July, and 94% in August

Phase II produced 92% of expected energy in July, and 100% in August

Recycling grant update/recap/to-dos

Boy Scouts have finished their work; one of the Scouts reached roughly 62% of the homes on his route; Cathy will look at the other Scout's lists, run the numbers, and report back on totals.

TF discussed ways to close the gap and aim for 80% over the next couple months, maybe use some of the remaining grant money to do so; ideas discussed:

1. Pay to have someone/several people apply stickers
2. Grace mentioned high school students who are looking for community service hours, and might be interested in volunteering to do this
3. Possible distribution of some stickers to those who request them

The recycling grant subcommittee will discuss further and make a plan for next steps. Cathy also mentioned the TF will be sending a donation to the Boy Scouts for their service to the town.

October E-recycling event

Details/to-dos:

1. Date/time: October 29, 10 to 2
2. This is a 2-in-1 event, EMS not able to participate this time
3. Katie reached out to the Senior Center to offer curbside pickup to seniors

4. Get the word out in the next week to give a month's notice: email blast, social media, The Courier

EV updates

Katie and Ed met with Control Mod, the company that installed the Easton Library charger; they suggested replacing the current charger so that the most up to date system can be put into place, including the ability to have an easy payment system installed; a summary of their meeting and proposal was sent to the First Selectman.

Lise talked to the Mercury Group, and a summary of her discussions was also sent to the First Selectman's office.

Total cost to the town would be in the neighborhood of \$2000 - \$3000, with incentives offsetting most of the cost, including 50% of equipment and 100% of installation costs.

Food Rescue recap 2022

- Diane thanked the TF for help with this pilot program, and reported it was an overall success; they were very grateful to Shaggy Coos for providing a location for drop off
- Diane compiled some results over the 15-week period: 800lbs collected, about half of which came from local farms, a quarter from home gardeners; $\frac{3}{4}$ (600lbs) went to seniors, and the remainder to an organization in Bridgeport when there was more than needed in town (they started the program with 10 seniors and expanded to 13 by the end)
- Allison Witherbee and Diane plan to meet with the town's Ag Commission for more coordinated effort next year and Allison would like to have a facility for short term storage (perhaps at old animal shelter) and maybe expand who qualifies beyond homebound seniors
- They will follow up with the Courier (for a recap of the summer and to thank the community for donations), and also connect with the Garden Club

Other

Diane shared information from a short webinar she attended concerning heat pumps:

- Presented by Abode Energy Management, the consultants for EnergizeCT
- One major take-away that may add interest is that the flexibility of options with heat pumps; they can be installed by homeowners at all different stages and levels of interest, needs and budget
- She learned heat pumps offer 100% efficiency due to no energy loss through burning
- Process starts off with a home energy audit to assess the home energy needs
- State rebates are available for heat pumps, and starting in 2023 there will also be tax incentives for increased efficiency of all kinds of systems

Cathy reported that Katie found that the New England Grassroots Fund still has small grants we can apply for. The TF should look into ideas and bring them into discussion.

Cathy mentioned the CT Energy Network - a long-running group that represents a coalition of clean energy and environment advocates - is holding an in-person meeting on Oct. 8th. If anyone at the meeting is interested in attending this or future meetings, let her know. There will also be a zoom option.

Meeting concluded; Heidi motioned to adjourn; Lise seconded. Cathy adjourned the meeting at 8:51.

Respectfully submitted,
Heidi Armster, EEETF, Secretary
9/26/22