

Climate Change Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: December 14, 2023

Meeting Time: 7:00 p.m.

Meeting Location: Hadley Senior Center

Members Present: Jack Czajkowski, Micheal Docter, Kathy Nelson, Marian Parker, Kelly Minton. **Members Absent:** Catalina Arrubla

Also Present: Select Board liaison, Jane Nevensmith, Peter Matuzsko, Susan Melchin, Carol Kostec, Cathy Neidziela, Clair Carlson, Wally Czajkowski, Margaret Christie, Tony Fyden, Steve Szymkowitz, Jeff Moriarty, Brenda Fydekevitz and Jack Fogel

1. Call to Order - Jack Czajkowski

The Climate Committee convened an in-person meeting on Thursday, December 14, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. at the Hadley Senior Center at 46 Middle Street, Hadley, MA 01035, there and then to act on the following agenda.

2. Public Comment (*up to three minutes per speaker & 15 minutes allocated*)

Susan Melchin read excerpts from the November BoH meeting regarding comments Jane Nevensmith made. She said she felt the comments from Jane are an “abuse of position of power.”

Tony Fyden also commented on the comments Jane made during the BoH meeting and asked if Jane should resign as the Climate Committee Liaison?

Steve Szymkowitz said that he has only been to one meeting, and does not want to give up his backyard campfires. He also mentioned that wildfires are a big cause of climate change, we have to do everything to stop it. Hybrids, why aren't people going toward that?

Peter Matuzsko said he feels people on the Climate Committee should practice what they preach. Have an EV car and solar on your house.

Jeff Moriarty said I do heating work, heat pumps yes. Regarding solar, don't force me to put them into my house.

Jack Czajkowski said the committee is focused on the municipality – not so much for forcing – having the town agree –for the towns use... less to force people to do the things outlined above. Focus on the municipality. Civil liberties are important.

Wally Czajkowski asked are there rules that I don't know about? Is anyone forcing anyone to do anything about that?

Brenda Fydekevitz said I think that we all want to leave this place better than what we found. Have solar panels. This climate change has gone way too far, we have to be reasonable. The wildfires, forest management – if we had proper forest management that would help. Heavy smog from Canada from the wildfires. I have heard arguments on both sides, climate change is real and I've heard others say this is not the whole story. Reasonable expectations.

3. Updates (moved this conversation up to accommodate speakers schedule)

Farm Conversations - Margaret Christie, Special Project Director, CISA

Margaret Christie said, The farmers at Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture (CISA) worked with Wally Czajkowski in the early fall for farmer conversations, a gathering of farmers to discuss weather disasters and what resources are out there and to find out what farmers are doing to plan. The vision is to start these conversations in February or March.

Kathy Nelson asked how are farmers adapting to these changes now?

Jane Nevensmith interjected that one of the reasons you (Margaret) were invited is to prevent Hadley from reinventing the wheel.

Margaret Christie said this gathering is to provide farmers a place to have conversations so they can share thoughts and resources.

Kathy Nelson asked is this a series of meetings?

Margaret Christie said yes, some are focused on farming, some are focused on the general public, it is a series. One topic that has been discussed is the increased heat and how that affects plants, animals and people. These gatherings also provide networking - a time for farmers to speak to each other and to discuss and learn about policy changes at the State level. State agricultural resources have been great at connecting people. Impacting state policy, those of us that are not policy members, it's a big topic. It's hard to make people come up with solutions. During these discussions we can find out what other states are doing and what their policies are, new practices, insurance, relief efforts like the state provided this year. We do not know the ideas, we are presenting the ideas and then getting input. Different from what you are thinking – what you can do on your own farm, in your own field. We (CISA) would be happy to talk with you (the town of Hadley).

Kathy Nelson asked, Jack, Michael and Marion what are your thoughts?

Michael Docter said he thinks it sounds like a good idea. We like to hear from one another, share our strategies, minimize our risk, they (farmers) would also be interested to hear what the policies are.

Marian Parker said Wally you've done some gatherings with other farmers – given that we are an agricultural town, this seems like a good idea.

Jack Czajkowski said Patrick from the library said they (the Library) could host this kind of event. The policy conversation is our focus right now.

Margaret Christie said we did a fair amount of that in the Fall. The relief efforts from the State was pretty quick, they helped 347 farms, 20 million dollars. However, the losses were considerably bigger than they could fund.

Jack Czajkowski said making sure the farmers are heard is a focus.

Margaret Christie said our primary climate change person, Steven Taranta could be a speaker and a resource. Give thought on that. Target the end of February/ Early March, maybe create a subcommittee?

Jack Czajkowski asked when Steve is coming back next week?

Jack Czajkowski said he will continue to be the point person. He said Steven and I have already spoken.

Kathy Nelson said Ellen Drews was willing to get in touch with other farmers.

Jack Czajkowski said he will get in touch with her after he talks to Steve next week.

4. Approval of November Minutes

Jack Czajkowski asked for a motion to approve the minutes from November 2023. Kelly Minton motioned to approve the minutes. Michael Docter seconded. The committee moved to vote, 4 votes yes. 1 abstained.

5. Updates continued

Solar on the Town Landfill and Senior Center, Michael Docter

Micheal Docter presented information regarding solar on the landfill and the Senior Center.

Micheal Docter said he spoke with David Fill, who in the past worked with the town administrator, Carolyn Brennan regarding solar on the Hadley landfill. He said David informed him that the regulations have changed - they make sense now. If solar on the landfill is implemented Hadley could save 3 million dollars over 25 years that is saved electric costs off our electric bill. Hadley uses 1.5 megawatts in annual consumption – the schools, sewage pumps, and pumping fresh water around. That's what we are currently buying.

Micheal Docter presented what he called "back of a napkin calculations" to the committee in a Powerpoint chart. It includes batteries and takes into consideration state smart incentives.

Jack Czajkowski, asked how would this link into the current system?

Micheal Docter said this happens at the site. The state would offset the money (initial cost). We need to incentivize this to take it (solar) off prime farmland. To run three phase electricity, it will cost .7 mile connection. It's .7 miles, if you see three phases, goes all the way down route 9. The grid has to be able to accept the electricity – Eversource will need to do a study. Don't know the final number until they finish that study to upgrade the grid.

On page two of the chart, Micheal Docter outlined sources of revenue – in year one we will get a payment from the Federal Government 27 - 28% tax credit, thanks to the inflation reduction act. This could be financed, at a 3% no interest loan. ITC has been around for at least a decade,

that is a centerpiece of the Inflation Reduction Act, it was passed by Congress. (need to get the first incentive) Municipal and Base incentives, 8 cents a watt. The town will own and maintain the solar – this is due to the tax credit. The town will take all the rewards. Maintenance, mowing, reporting anything that breaks. The annual benefits are significant. In the first year you are making a big payment because you are getting money from the IRS. Solar Renewable Energy Certificates (SRECs), are a REC that is not as valuable; the utilities will pay a certain number of these RECs at the end of the year. You can sell your RECs until the smart program is done.

Michael Docter said the town could expect 2 million dollars in savings in 25 years. We would be spending less. A lot of battery incentives that are new to this that I don't yet understand. We need to think about flooding and how it could affect the batteries.

Jane Nevensmith asked in year 21 there is a huge jump – do the RECs do that much for us?

Michael Docter said we would be paying the loan off at that point.

Micheal Docter said he spoke to Randy Izer regarding the acreage the town owns at the landfill, the town owns close to 7 acres, the top that is not being used is more than adequate for this project. We need 4 acres to do this.

Kathy Nelson mentioned Jonathan Parrot's comments regarding the landfill possibly being too close to the river

Micheal Docter said we will need to submit a line drawing to Eversource to do a study of the site.

Peter Matuzsko asked, can you go back (in the presentation) to the year where they go to zero – when these solar panels are below their value, when they have been degraded, what are those costs to dispose of it?

Micheal Docter said, they are mostly aluminum and glass so they can be recycled.

Brenda Fydekevitz said I am concerned about the Lithium batteries.

Micheal Docter said that's a good point, he has thought about inverter replacement after 20 years.

Kelly Minton asked what help do you need?

Micheal Docter said, the biggest unknown, referenced on the inputs page has to do with what it will cost the grid to accept this energy. There is not a lot of transparency on how they get to that number. We would submit a single line drawing to Eversource to find out how much load adding this would put on the system, from there they will tell us how the subsystem needs to be updated. It would be 10k out of the pocket for the town..

In the chart, Micheal Docter took the amount of energy that the town needs – he said you look at what the town needs and create a system that fits that. 21, 22, someone will need to do a better job getting those numbers. There is a certain number of megawatts per acre.

The next step is to get someone to do the single line drawing. To proceed it would be a selectboard vote. We would need to get on the selectboard agenda.

Jane Nevensmith said she would suggest that we not push for this specifically but focus on the whole use of energy for the town, as a big picture, making this part of a comprehensive plan for electricity.

Micheal Docter ended by saying he would suggest, designating part of this revenue to the general fund, money to replace energy reduction for the town, to continue the cycle.

Jack Czajkowski said we should consider inviting Carolyn after we get all the information.

Kathy Nelson said let's think about February for the next steps.

6. New Items

Speaker series

Kathy Nelson spoke about Steven Roof who is a professor of earth and environmental studies at Hampshire College as a possible speaker. She heard him talk about the state's response to climate change. His presentation was clear. the time is now, we need to stop burning so many fossil fuels. He does a great job of explaining what should happen. Kathy will talk to him about doing a public forum so he can further explain the States plan for decarbonization.

Kathy Nelson also talked about the Specialized Stretch code, that Chris Mason, has found us an energy code specialist who will come thoroughly explain the Specialized Stretch Code. The two of them will be here for our next meeting in January.

Micheal Docter asked for a point of clarification, this is regarding new construction or replacing something that is broken, correct. It's for new buildings and renovations. The opt in specialized stretch code, is for new construction only. It does not require anyone to do anything, it does not say anything about campfires, correct?

Kathy Nelson said she attended a webinar hosted by the MMA (Mass Municipal Association) about how to run a good committee meeting. The speakers, past and present Select Board members, suggested following the same format every meeting and cautioned against deliberating outside meetings. They also cautioned that chairpersons of committees and boards, your role is the facilitator during meetings, you are not the king or queen of the committee.

7. Items Not Anticipated at the time of the meeting

Jack Czajkowski said Patrick Berazo shared Library use, patron visits by month. The numbers have significantly increased, 71% increase in total annual usage. Total circulation – 33% increase.

Jack Czajkowski said Mara Schulman, lawyer with the state legislature, asked if the Hadley Climate Change committee could provide some of the data from the spring clean up day she would appreciate it. And can she share this when she goes to Boston? The committee voted on this and the vote was unanimously agreed upon.

Peter Matuzsko asked if we could find out what the electric bill is for the library?

Jane Nevinsmith said she will get that information. Ground source heat pumps are three times as efficient. It's the White Elephant. How efficient are heat pumps vs. fossil fuels?

Steve Szymkowitz asked do we have an adopt a highway program?

Jane Nevinsmith said she will look this up.

8. Jack Czajkowski adjourned the meeting at 8:23 p.m.

Documents used during this meeting are attached.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kelly Minton

Hadley Public Library
Patron Visits By Month

CY2019 CY2023

JANUARY	1595	2270
FEBRUARY	1585	2416
MARCH	1936	2830
APRIL	1725	2312
MAY	1647	2456
JUNE	1741	2858
JULY	1367	2352
AUGUST	1897	2508
SEPTEMBER	1088	2828
OCTOBER	1098	2716
NOVEMBER	1077	2628
DECEMBER	990	2138*
Total	17746	30312

* figure for December 2022 used.

Represents a 71% increase in total annual usage

Total Circulation Activity (Physical Items Only)

FY2019 42,736 Items Loaned

FY2023 56,909 Items Loaned

Represents a 33% increase in circulation of physical materials

"Back of the Envelope" Feasibility Analysis for Solar on Hadley Land Fill					
3 Phase Electric extension cost approx \$600,000 per mile					
The distance is approx .7 mile		best case	worst case		
The estimated cost is		\$420,000	\$600,000		
Town of Hadley Annual electrical useage			1,715,299	kWh/yr	
	Use/capacity factor		1.13		
Size of system needed to cover total town electric useage			1,517,963	kWh/yr	
Assuming 4-5 acres needed per Megawatt					
		best case	worst case		
The Current Cost to install on Landfill:		\$1.75	\$2.50	(Per Watt)	assuming this means per kilowatt hour?
		\$2,656,436	\$3,794,908		
Grid/substation upgrade		\$500,000	\$1,000,000	Completely unknown until Utility responds to a Proposal/Line Drawing--Costs under \$10,000 to prepare/submit	
Total:		\$3,576,436	\$5,394,908		
less .27 from IRS Inv Tax Credit		\$2,610,798	\$3,938,283		
Loan Rate	0.03 ?				
Term in yrs	15 ?				
Annual Loan Payment if loan compounds annually		\$218,698	\$329,896		Formula assumes payments at the end of the year (1st payment paid 1 year after loan issue, change last term to 1 to change)
Annual Loan Payment if loan compounds continuously		\$176,225	\$265,828	[Static, for now]	
Value of Electricity saved		\$291,601	\$291,601	\$0.17	??
Municipally Owned 'Adder' incentive		\$65,867	\$65,867	\$0.038	??
Landfill Site 'Adder' Incentive		\$68,612	\$68,612	\$0.04	??
REC income		\$240,142	\$240,142	0.14	variable
		\$666,222	\$666,222	Way TGTBTrue	What have I missed here....
Will Eversource pay the adders if the bill for distribution plus useage is less					

Approved