

Bolton Energy Committee
Meeting Minutes
January 3, 2022
Bolton Town Office

Members present: Lexie Haselton (virtual), Juliette Juillerat (virtual), Jeremy Knepper (new chair) Peter Schoen (arrived 5:12)

Members absent: None

Others: Amy Grover and Janet Metz (SB)

Clerk: Carol Devlin

1. Call to order: Jeremy Knepper called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.
2. Additions or Deletions to the Agenda: None
3. Public Comment: None
4. Recurring Business: Approve the minutes of the last meeting, December 8, 2021. Juliette Juillerat made the motion *“to accept the minutes of the last meeting.”* Lexi Haselton seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed (3-0).
5. Responses to Solar RFP, Community Benchmarks and Recommendation to the Select Board
 - Jeremy Knepper presented a summary of the responses received from Green Mountain Solar and SunCommon and his recommendation to go with SunCommon.
 - SunCommon has a lease option.
 - Originally, SunCommon had a higher price/watt because they proposed putting panels on the north side of the roof. They moved everything to the south side and resized the panels resulting in a substantial decrease in the price/watt, bringing it well below the \$2.25 threshold preferred by third-party financing.
 - Cost is the amount for purchasing the system.
 - Lease includes a 5% discount on electricity.
 - SunCommon offered an option for a 10-year lease with a \$44,000 buyout in year 10. Lease payments would be less than current electricity payments and would pay for electricity for the town buildings.
 - Juliette would like to see a comparison of lease to own and buying the system outright at the beginning. Juliette and Janet Metz have some concerns about the cost effectiveness of leasing.
 - Jeremy pointed out the with leasing there was no debt and no maintenance.
 - Lexie stated that Hinesburg has a lease that works very well; however, they are delaying additional projects to see what happens with Build Back Better legislation.
 - Jeremy stated that neither company thinks there are municipal solar incentives

- Peter reported that Jericho and Huntington also have lease programs that seem complicated.
- Juliette asked if SunCommon had done an engineering analysis. Jeremy engineering analysis would be \$1,500 which would be included in the SunCommon project. However, if the project did not move forward, the Town would have to cover the \$1,500.
- Waiting for Town Meeting 2023 would give the EC time to educate residents about solar and the project.
- The consensus was to not rush a recommendation to the Select Board and to take time to explore the questions that were raised at the meeting.
 - Comparison of buying outright and lease to own.
 - Clearer financials.
 - Detailed discussions of benchmarks from neighboring towns with solar.
 - Wait to see impact of federal legislation.
 - Questions re: engineering analysis.

6. Next Meeting:

- The next EC meeting will be Wednesday, March 9, 2022, at 5:00 p.m. Jeremy will see if SunCommon can attend the meeting.

7. Closing: Peter made the motion “*to adjourn.*” Jeremy seconded. Motion carried (4-0). The meeting adjourned at 5:32 p.m.

Attest: Carol Devlin, Clerk

Minutes are unofficial until approved. These minutes were read and approved by the Bolton Energy Committee on _____.