**Shelburne Energy Committee**

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 22, 2022 5:00 pm

Shelburne Town Hall

**Present:** Tom Johnson, Pat Stevenson, George Boettner (on zoom), Andrew Baker, Emily DeVoto

Staff: Cynthia Boettner

**Minutes** of the August 25 and August 31 meetings were reviewed and unanimously approved. Pat Stevenson Moved, Geoff Boettner seconded.

**Old Business:**

**MassSAVE Communities First Grant:**

Cynthia Boettner reported that the MassSAVE Main St. Initiative sent Energy Resources Inc. – an energy services company – to offer energy audits to Shelburne Falls businesses. They spent a few days door knocking in early August and got 12 businesses to sign up for audits. Cynthia has since heard anecdotally that at least one business has gotten energy efficient lights installed. Cynthia may coordinate with them on follow up to encourage people to implement the audit recommendations.

Cynthia noted that the Shelburne Grange Fair felt successful – many people played the “spinner game” and got info on heat pumps and solar. About 7 people signed up to receive more info. Cynthia handed out her card to others.

Planning a Heat Pump presentation in December. Seeking to connect with Mike Simons at Abode to come and make a presentation – he has a good video. If he is not available we could show the video. Possible locations – Memorial Hall (need to confirm elevator is working), Shelburne Buckland Community Center, BSE Library, Shelburne Grange. May bring in Falls Cable to video it – Pat will contact them through Senior Center.

Natalie Reeder, our MassSAVE program manager at All in Energy is stopping in for a visit on Sept. 28 for a few hours on her way to Williamstown for an event put on by their Energy Committee.

Schedule of Events:

Shelburne Senior Center: Cynthia will make a presentation on Energy Assessments. Limit 20 people. Tuesday, October 4 at 5 – 6:30 pm.

November – Winter Farmers Market at BSE in week before Thanksgiving – Cynthia will contact Barbara Goodchiled about it and use the materials and props she developed for the Grange Fair.

Andrew recommended getting events scheduled far enough ahead of time to get into the West County Shopper monthly – which has a good calendar. Mid-month deadline.

MOU: Cynthia ran the MOU by Rouwenna Altemose at All in Energy – she said it may be confusing to have Shelburne Energy Committee partner with more than one Home Performance Contractor – most communities choose one. A single contractor would be more likely to invest in outreach within the community.

The 3 HPCs that come up on the MassSAVE web site are American Installations, Energy Monster and a 3rd. HomeWorks Energy is another HPC that is marketing in Shelburne. Pat will review HPCs and report back – she will check with John Walsh to see if he has advice. Cynthia noted that company reputations can vary by region and by energy auditor. Andrew suggested bringing in 3 companies to our next meeting and interviewing them. Tom will work with Pat to see if we can find a date that works for the 3 companies.

Postcard Project: Pat is still waiting to hear from her Mohawk Trail contact – she will follow up.

**Mohawk Trail Solar Project:** Andrew reported that the School Committee voted unanimously to sign a letter of intent with Solect Energy to move forward with evaluating the feasibility of installing a 250kw solar system on Mohawk’s pitched roofs.

**Grid Capacity:** Geoff will meet with Matthew Secovich of Eversource to gather more info about the existing capacity of the power lines and sub-stations in our area to accommodate more solar without upgrades. Need to find out whether sub-stations can be expanded and what it will cost and how the cost will be shared. Question also as to whether federal infrastructure money can go to grid modernization. Geoff thinks we are close to max grid capacity in Shelburne Falls.

**Energy Committee Membership:** The committee welcomed new member, Emily DeVoto. The committee also welcomed Dan Post, who is considering re-joining the Energy Committee. Dan was a member of a previous Shelburne Energy Committee that was active in 2010-2011. Dan is also a board member for Northeast Biodiesel. The committee now has 5 members and could grow to 7.

**USDA Grant Update:** Geoff has not heard any new news. If awarded, will provide $200,000 to install solar on the town’s new 40 x 80 pole barn at the Highway Garage and on ground mounted arrays adjacent. UMASS is coordinating a regional proposal which includes 5 towns. Shelburne would also receive an additional $50,000 to deal with project management, legal and other costs. River Strong

**UMASS Solar Planning Initiative:** This would be a class project. Contact is Zara Dowling, who works with River Strong. Geoff will follow up.

**Green Communities Round 2 Grant:** Tom inquired with Mark Rabinsky – he thinks award announcement will be made public by end of September. Still embargoed.

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, October 20 at 7:00. Tentative – Tom will confirm after speaking with HPC contractors.

Meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm

Notes by Andrew Baker