

Starksboro Energy Committee (SEC)

Monday February 12, 2024

5:30 p.m.

Virtual Teams Meeting

1. Attendees
 - a. Jeff Dunham, Rich Warren, Richard Faesy
2. Public Comments
 - a. None
3. Approve Minutes from 12/13/23 & 1/8/24 Meetings
 - a. Jeff moved, Rich seconded, approved unanimously
4. Updates from ACRPC and Bristol Addison County Energy Committee Meeting on 1/20/24
 - a. Community Training on energy topics from VEEP (Vermont Energy Education Project)
 - i. Rich reached out to Catherine at the Library to ask about scheduling an event
 1. Energy Committee stands behind this effort.
 - ii. Could potentially be combined with Food Shelf audit (see more below)
 - b. Town Planning
 - i. ACRPC is working on coming up with goals by town for planning
 - ii. Maddie Shopshire is working on updates by town
 - iii. She is working on individual goals by town for 2030 load goals and will share those with the town energy committees
5. MERP Grant Updates
 - a. As part of the ARRPC Energy Committee meeting, the [Climate Economy Action Center of Addison County \(CEAC\)](#) had offered to provide “navigator” services to help people navigate weatherization services
 - b. The SEC had hoped that Pete Antos-Ketcham could be hired with the MERP grant funds to provide this service in town, but he is only partially available to provide some support services as Rebecca spelled out in her email that outlined her suggestions for use of the funds and Pete’s role
 - c. Rebecca’s email is copied here:
 1. Implement changes to our town website energy page and resources. We have the tool available and do not need to outsource this to CEAC. (\$500-750 depending on complexity/time)
 2. Produce our own custom mailing to Starksboro residents as Pete described. I can create the brochure/flyer/postcards/posters with content provided by the committee and Pete. (\$700-1000 estimated; will check on bulk mail postage price)
 - a. Pete can serve as a first point of contact as offered below. We also have the energy@starksborovt.org address that sends messages to the committee members.
 - b. We can easily do online surveys and forms. I have [Cognito forms](#) and create custom forms as needed – no cost other than my time.

3. Any direct benefit outreach we can support via Pete or CEAC or a combination. (\$500-1000)
 4. The Food Shelf building is in dire need of some work and much is energy related. The Selectboard and I support this as a tangible area for work to be done that is applying our energy goals and standards on a building that the taxpayers support and is a community resource. The Town is investing in: painting (we are putting out an RFB for the building to be painted this year) and new entry door with keypad. We could use remaining MERP funds to seek grants & use matching funds to support the following:
 - a. Sill work around windows
 - b. Replacement of hot water heater with on-demand unit
 - c. Replace inefficient lighting fixtures
 - d. Replace old toilet
 - e. Heat pump adjustments – We have had the unit serviced but Pete reports there is still something triggering the heat too often.
 5. Idea: How about considering an active event at the Food Shelf building to draw interest in energy resources and community services? We could do something when the weather is nice – have information and advertise it – perhaps coordinate with a special food share activity or something Pete might have interest in with a group of students or NCP volunteers? A work party and learning event? Raffle? Look at these examples from [Chittenden and Reading](#).
- d. The Committee supports Rebecc’s ideas and would be interested in helping coordinate these efforts, with the following suggestions:
1. SEC recommends adding to list of improvements as part of MERP assessment for the Food Shelf building:
 1. The building envelope needs help
 1. What about insulation status (in walls and attic) and air sealing the building?
 2. This should be examined and considered as part of the assessment
 2. Consider an electric heat pump or other non-fossil fuel water heater
 3. Heat pumps
 1. Look into the control issues
 2. Has it ever been cleaned? Consider heat pump cleaning for each indoor head and the outdoor compressor
 4. Refrigeration
 1. The refrigerators and freezers are old and likely inefficient
 2. Are there resources to replace the most inefficient of those?
 3. Meter each one to see about efficiency
- e. Next steps
1. The SEC likes the team approach proposed between Pete and Rebecca
 2. We would like to know when the auditor is coming to join the visit and suggest some of the measures listed above.

3. Consider a future VEEP event at the Library and the Food Shelf with some ideas like in the examples from [Chittenden and Reading](#)
6. Allocating Solar Credits to Town Buildings
 - a. Jeff met with Rebecca and Nancy at the Town Office
 - i. Explained that solar agreement expired a year ago after 10 years
 - ii. We lost \$.06 adder and could not apply credits against anything but usage
 1. No longer credit for meter fees for buildings with little usage
 - iii. We lost all the credits that had been applied to low-using buildings
 - iv. Nancy and Rebecca were going to reach out to GMP to change the credit allocations and try to recover past lost credits
 - v. Jeff assumed they figured it out since he didn't hear anything back
 - vi. Jeff will follow up to make sure they were successful and see if they got anything back from GMP
7. Transitioning ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager to the Town
 - a. Megan offered to help with ESPM, so we should ask her to help out
 - b. Richard to reach out to Megan to schedule something after Town Meeting in March with Rebecca and Nancy
8. Grant Updates
 - a. [Act 172](#) (MERP Grant)
 - i. \$4,000 Community Event
 1. Supporting Community Liaison Access
 - ii. Building assessment is waiting to be scheduled
 1. Jerusalem Schoolhouse
 2. Food Shelf
 3. Richard ask Rebecca about the schedule
 - a. Jeff, Rich and Richard would be interested in tagging along
 - b. Seeking Other Grants
 - i. Starksboro Public Library Energy and Ventilation Project
 1. Richard to follow up with Susan Thompson and Katie AK if there are any more grants available for heat pump and ventilation
 - ii. Pavilion Solar Roof or other PV
 1. 13 kW Town Gap
 2. 8 kW Library Electrification Needs Once Converted
 3. It is now roofed with standing seam roofing
 4. We would need to find the funds to cover the costs of PV
9. Meeting House Preschool Project
 - a. No news since we did a site visit
 - b. RF reach out to Keegan to see if he found a contractor (Matt Sharpe from Efficiency Vermont did so after a conversation)
10. Robinson School Heat Pump Water Heaters
 - a. RF has received no response from the District and Joel Fitzgerald after six attempts monthly to inquire
 - b. Jeff received a ticket for the follow up request that was then deleted.
 - c. Richard will ask yet again.

11. Weatherization Campaign Plans

- a. From Rebecca's email above, she and Pete suggested the following that the Committee supports:

- i. From Rebecca:

1. Produce our own custom mailing to Starksboro residents as Pete described. I can create the brochure/flyer/postcards/posters with **content provided by the committee and Pete.** (\$700-1000 estimated; will check on bulk mail postage price)
 - a. Pete can serve as a first point of contact as offered below. We also have the energy@starksborovt.org address that sends messages to the committee members.
 - b. We can easily do online surveys and forms. I have [Cognito forms](#) and create custom forms as needed – no cost other than my time.

- ii. From Pete:

1. In terms of the MERP grant and the idea of doing targeted outreach around weatherization here is what we discussed.
 - a. My capacity to be a contractor. As my scope of work for the 2024 season has come more into focus in the last two months, it is clear that I do not have the time to do that level of work as envisioned by the Energy Committee.
 - b. How to reach out to the community. We discussed that a way we could start with outreach is to do a mailing to all residents that makes them aware of **what resources are available with all the details needed to help make it easy for them to apply.**
 - c. Point of contact. In my capacity as the [Town Services Officer](#), I could be listed as a point of contact and a resource if people had questions or needed some help and guidance to assist them with taking the next steps.
2. I guess the last thing I'll add about the outreach effort, my personal hope would be that whatever is sent out, **goes to all residents of the town, regardless of their financial station, and that we not only offer connections to weatherization, but also resources to encourage broad scale energy conservation.**
3. Because this level of outreach would not spend down the grant, we do need to think about ways that it could be utilized to address some front and center needs as have been identified with our town buildings. It may be that some of the funds get used to help cover the costs of planning for and applying for other funding that can help pay for the needed upgrades to the buildings.
4. I'd be happy to join in a meeting of the committee to talk more about how to move forward with this.

5. Rebecca - please add in anything that I may have forgotten here.

6. Thanks, Pete

b. Find out from Rebecca what she needs from us

c. Ideas for promotion:

- i. Could we use the VEEP event as a targeted outreach
- ii. <https://veep.org/education/community-workshops/>
- iii. Information on weatherization resources
- iv. Encourage weatherization
- v. Offer Pete's availability
- vi. Rich will follow up with Catherine to see about interest and scheduling
- vii. Work with Pete and Rebecca to figure out a plan and next steps

d. Content development

- i. Richard work with Pete and Rebecca to develop
- ii. Workshop promotion
- iii. Messaging:
 1. New resources available to help out
 2. Pete is available
 3. Promote incentives from EVT
 4. CVOEO services for free with shorter wait times for those who qualify
 5. Additional suggestions from Pete
 6. Make sure the message is appropriate for everyone in town

12. Town Meeting

- a. RF make an announcement if we have info
 - i. VEEP workshop
 - ii. MERP grant fund and what we plan to do with it
 - iii. Outreach announcement before the letter goes out
 - iv. Pete's availability if he is willing (his role)
 - v. Building assessments for JSH and Food Shelf

13. Energy Committee meetings timing and attendance

- a. How can we make these meeting more accessible to all Committee members?
- b. Need to ask others
- c. Rich can work with this time
- d. Robyn had said during the work day might be better
- e. Check in with Robyn and Megan to see if a lunch time meeting could work for them
- f. Consider a mid-day meeting, maybe over lunch?
- g. Monday March 11 try 12:00
 - i. Stick with 5:30 if Robyn can't commit to noon
 - ii. What is Robyn's most peachy time and go with it

14. Other business

15. Next meeting – 3/11/24

- a. Schedule for noon if Robyn can make it then
- b. If not, then back to regular 5:30 slot