



SUSTAINABLE ENERGY COMMITTEE

TOWN HALL • 525 WASHINGTON STREET • WELLESLEY, MA 02482-5992

Sustainable Energy Director: Marybeth Martello

SEC@wellesleyma.gov

SEC Analyst: Janet Mosley

jmosley@wellesleyma.gov

Laura Olton, Chair

Susan Morris, Vice Chair

Cindy Mahr

Ellen Korpi

Martha Collins

Fred Bungler

Lise Olney

SEC Meeting

Remote Zoom Meeting

February 17, 2021

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Laura Olton. Present were Sustainable Energy Committee (SEC) members: Laura Olton (SEC Chair), Sue Morris (SEC Vice Chair), Lise Olney, Fred Bungler, Ellen Korpi, and Martha Collins. Also present were Marybeth Martello (Sustainable Energy Director), Deed McCollum, Mary Gard, and Pamela Posey.

Citizens' Speak – None

SEC Article for Annual Town Meeting

Laura presented proposed changes to SEC Article 12 (the bylaw that created the SEC), which will be included in Article 24 for Annual Town Meeting 2021 as the second motion. Edits to SEC Article 12 focus on changing the name of the Sustainable Energy Committee to the Climate Action Committee, changing the name of the Sustainable Energy Coordinator to Sustainability Director, redefining the relevant expertise for committee members, and amending Board of Selectmen to Select Board.

Martha Collins moved to approve the amendments to the SEC Article 12 bylaw language as presented for use in the second motion of Article 24 for Annual Town Meeting. Ellen Korpi seconded the motion, and *the Committee voted to approve the language for the second motion of Article 24 for Annual Town Meeting.*

Discussion on Proposal of Change in SEC Reporting Structure

The SEC discussed an additional potential change to the Sustainable Energy Committee bylaw that would have SEC staff appointed by and reporting to the Executive Director. The change could be considered for Special Town Meeting in the fall or Annual Town Meeting 2022. Lise Olney explained that the goal of this proposed change would be to elevate the profile of the SEC so that climate action work is automatically on the executive agenda. Lise noted that the SEC should consult with the Municipal Light Plant (MLP), Select Board and Executive Director, School Committee, and Facilities Management Director to get feedback on this proposal. Ellen Korpi noted that MLP Director Don Newell was not sure if the MLP would continue to contribute to the SEC budget if SEC staff reported directly to the Select Board. SEC members expressed interest in exploring the idea of SEC staff reporting to the Executive

Director as a means to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the work of the SEC. However, several questions were raised by Laura and other members on whether the change would reduce the influence of the SEC and if it would actually result in acceleration of climate action work. Ellen recommended coordination of all community outreach and outward-facing communication on climate action from the SEC, MLP, Public Works, Natural Resources Commission, and other departments through the Town Hall as one action that could significantly improve community action to reduce greenhouse gas, but would not involve a bylaw change. Marybeth shared her support for examining the current reporting structure, identifying strengths and limitations to the current model, and envisioning how it could change to promote efficiency and effectiveness of the SEC. She noted an increase in her collaboration with Select Board staff over the past year, but that reporting to the Executive Director might create additional complexities in governance. Laura tabled the discussion to be continued at future meetings.

Climate Action Plan (CAP)

The RFP was issued on February 10, and responses from consultants are due on March 4. Marybeth is speaking to Department Heads to determine who should be on the CAP working groups. Marybeth is starting to get on department agendas. A Green Collaborative is planned for March 31, focused on the MLP's pilot heat pump incentive program. Another Green Collaborative is planned for early May as a public kick-off for the CAP process.

Additional Business

Jillian Wilson Martin, Natick's Sustainability Director, is asking that the municipal joint comments on Massachusetts 2030 Clean Energy and Climate Plan be signed by Select Boards. The SEC voted to support the joint comments, and Lise will seek to include the letter on the March 1 Select Board agenda to see if the Select Board will sign on as well. Laura explained that the value of the joint comments is to tell the state government that towns need help with funding climate change initiatives and should be given a seat at the table in the decision-making process.

Lise informed the SEC that National Grid will be summarizing the results of their quarterly leaks report at the February 18 meeting of the Multi-town Gas Leaks Initiative. National Grid will demo their new interactive gas leaks map that allows the public to get up-to-date information on specific gas leaks. National Grid will also share information on the pilot geothermal project they submitted to the Department of Public Utilities.

Adjourn

Fred Bunker motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6 p.m., seconded by Sue Morris, *and the Committee voted to adjourn.*

Exhibits Used: SEC Article 24 and Motions, SEC Article 12 Revised Draft, SEC Memo on Additional Article 12 Changes (from Laura Olton), Memo to SEC re. Article 12 (from Lise Olney), Municipal Joint Comments on Interim 2030 Clean Energy and Climate Plan - Final