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## +Local Energy Committee Minutes April 1, 2025

6 – 7:30 PM, Nesmith Library & Teams

Meeting called to order by Chairman, Mark Kovacs @ 6:05PM.

Attendees: Allen Reed, DJ Withee, Pat Manzo, and Mark Kovacs in the Conference Room; Swapnil Saket and John Gage via TEAMS.

### 1. Old Business

a. Minutes for February 18, 25 LEC meeting approved by a vote (5-0-1)

b. Status of Community Power – Allen Reed

Market electricity rates remain unfavorable compared to current Eversource and Liberty Utilities default rates, thereby delaying the initiation of Windham's Community Power program. Allen reported that Windham and many NH communities are in a similar "hold pattern" since both Eversource and Liberty Utilities have been purchasing their electricity on the open market. Although the introduction of the Windham Community Aggregation Plan is delayed, the Town residents are probably benefiting from the default suppliers maintaining electric rates low.

c. Streetlighting Upgrade Project – J. Gage

John will report on street lighting electric bills in May since the upgrade occurred only recently (in late February); this should provide adequate time for the anticipated lower street lighting usage to be reflected in the billing.

d. Transfer of Nesmith Library electric supplier – DJ Withee

The LEC is considering recommending to the new Town Administrator, Michael Branley, that the Nesmith electric supplier should be switched from Constellation Energy to Eversource. This would allow the Nesmith Library to



receive credit for the energy delivered to the grid which Constellation Energy does not provide. DJ has been in contact with Mr. Branley who – having started employment with the Town on March 1 - is still familiarizing himself with the Town operations. DJ and Pat will approach Mr. Branley later in April.

- e. Review NH DOE Request for Comment on Future Solar Energy RFP – Allen Reed

The NH Department of Energy is seeking comments on a revised Request for Proposal format for future solar power solicitations; they are requesting comments from interested parties by April 18, 2025. Allen has made an initial review of the proposed format changes and distributed those to LEC members. He is requesting Committee member comments be returned to him by April 12. The Committee – by a vote of 6-0 – authorized Allen to collect and edit Committee comments and send them along to the DOE. Allen will distribute his summary to the LEC prior to sending them to the DOE.

## 2. New Business

- a. Future Solar Generation – Pat Manzo and Mark Kovacs

Pat described modeling of several solar system concepts for the Police and Fire Departments and one to provide sufficient energy for the entire Town's municipal usage. The modeling entailed projections for solar system requirements to meet the annual needs of each facility and estimating the associated system costs including system acquisition and maintenance plus the future monthly electric bills. Pat reported using the System Advisor Model (SAM), developed by the US Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory and an LEC-developed electricity pricing model.

Pat reported that the larger system – one to provide the approximately 570,000 KWH used by the municipality – was more cost effective than smaller systems to deliver the electricity required by the Police and Fire



stations. Pat and Mark said that they needed to refine these estimates which are in general agreement with the idea that there are economy-of-scale benefits for larger systems.

Pat also reported that a large system would require, at least, 4-5 acres with a reasonably close-by connection point to Eversource or Liberty Utilities grid. Mark will distribute a list of Town-owned parcels including acreage to the members as start to a search for potential solar system sites. Eversource has an on-line map of its power lines and capacities; this map is in GIS (Geospatial Information Systems) format which – if imported into the Town's GIS property map - could facilitate this search. Swapnil agreed to investigate the possibility of merging these two GIS maps.

During this conversation several members commented that the recently announced, affordable, senior-housing project should consider including both solar-power and a geothermal HVAC system in their design. Mark, who is a member of the Windham Housing Authority (WHA) co-sponsoring this project, will make these recommendations at an upcoming WHA meeting.

**b. Re-investigation of "Solar Farms" – Mark Kovacs**

Mark was contacted recently by Mr. Robert Folloni of Solar on Earth company regarding their "solar farm" program which appeared to have more favorable compensation for joining their "solar farm" project. Swapnil agreed to investigate further after receiving contact information from Mark.

**3. Adjourn; Meeting adjourned at 6:59 PM by a vote of 6-0.**