

Energy Futures Task Force 1/05/17 – recorded by Trish Ng, Scribe
Minutes Approved: 1/19/17

Attending: Pam Hill, Chair, John Dalton, Brian Foulds, Dan Gainsboro, Wally Johnston, Elise Woodward, Alice Kaufman, Select Board Liaison
Citizens: Laura Scott, CMLP Liaison, Rebecca Woodward, Charles Parker, Sue Richardson, Brad Hubbard-Nelson, Fran Cummings
Guest: Dave Wood, CMLP Director

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 am.
The minutes will be reviewed at the next meeting.

Pam welcomed Dave Wood and thanked the CMLP for its involvement and stressed importance of continuing conversations with EFTF.

Dan and John have met with CMLP to understand issues and develop recommendations. Dan asked Dave to voice concerns or challenges he sees and expand dialog re: EFTF recommendations.

Dave Wood has met 4 or 5 times with EFTF representatives for candid conversations. The big task was acknowledged. Dave supports GHG part of recommendation and noted it is important to measure GHG. This is also included in the CMLP strategic work now underway. CMLP expects electric use to increase (due to new EV and other devices).

Possible concerns regarding EFTF proposals are:

1. Sale of RECs and impact on electric rates – suggests we understand the implications before we implement.
2. Concern about request for additional staff member (proposed Director of Energy). CMLP already has 2 energy staff people in town and for Concord's size this seems too much to add.
3. Hitting the targets by date may be unrealistic; many actions may be out of our control. Specifically, renewable % by 2030 seems unrealistic today. If we buy RECs it may be achievable but effect on rates is not known yet.

Achieving this goal is dependent on cost to rate-payers. CMLP doesn't want to have the most expensive rate in state. Right now we are in half to top third of rates in state.

Need full analysis of REC purchase and sales to see how it will impact rates. Dave estimates 1 - 2 months will be required to estimate effect on electricity rates from RECs sales.

CMLP doesn't hear from commercial customers, but doesn't want to drive businesses out of town. Rates in NE are highest in country.

The committee discussed challenges that face EFTF including 1) issues of thinking about GHG emissions reductions as an integrated system – not just electricity rates but changes to the whole system, 2) energy director is strategic position not staff, 3) it has been assumed that the CMLP current energy staff may not have the ability or time for this strategic policy position, 4) implementation tactics should focus on how can we achieve these reductions, not why can't we do it, 5) what will it cost to implement, 6) span of control and authority for Director of Energy may not be in CMLP current roles, 7) agricultural emissions for example wouldn't come under CMLP, Director position could be a resource to CMLP for strategy.

Dave doesn't have need for this role in his organization, but other town departments may use this role.

The focus on emissions is part of EFTF's recommendation to move our fuel consumption in Concord to electric. This seems to be the best chance to reduce fossil fuels usage across the board because CMLP has control over the characteristics of the electricity in Town. Municipal uses least amount of electricity and residential and commercial the most.

What does CMLP want to see in report that would benefit CMLP and assure its viability? Dave noted it will be advantageous to all rate payers to move to more electric usage. We need to identify metrics for GHG reductions. CMLP promotes conservation. The message may need to change to move toward electric/clean energy.

Regarding CMLP's strategic planning process, Dave noted the consultant is pulling together goals similar to EFTF although it is early in process of understanding. It will be beneficial to align EFTF outcomes and CMLP strategic plan and to align goals and metrics and to share thoughts on reductions, targets, reducing operating costs, GHG. It will be important to have goals that are achievable, unlike solar and renewable energy strategies that were not achievable in the timeframes recommended by earlier committees. The tension points are mainly schedule related.

Dave has made a recommendation to employ smart meters. There will be a Town Meeting article for borrowing \$2M to purchase and outsource installation. The plan is to upgrade CMLP software for billing, financial software and meter data. Public works and water/sewer may also plan to upgrade to smart meters.

Brian asked how will CMLP differ in 2030?

Dave answered CMLP must continue to be stable, reliable, reasonably priced. The Industry will change, new distribution methods. The strategic planning group is looking at all these issues – the business used to be about selling as much electric as possible...not anymore. Recouping fixed costs is challenged by dropping sales.

Pam thanked CMLP and Dave for his involvement and expertise, and his openness to working with EFTF. The EFTF hopes for support from CMLP for its report and asked for Dave's review and input.

Dave Wood left the meeting at 8:10 am.

Discussion followed on plans to meet with Light Board next week and also in February.

Dan reported that he and John met with Jim Terry (CMLP light board member) who suggested scheduling 20-30 minutes with CMLP board to review draft report with a specific request that members review it. The EFTF needs to understand the CMLP Board's point of view.

EFTF members will attend CMLP meeting next week with oral report of the EFTF's progress and will request comments from the Light Board.

Topic : Director of Energy Position Description (PD)

A discussion of the Position Description for the Energy Director followed.

The edited description was reviewed and discussion followed.

Relative to the implications for a subsequent task force (EFTF 2) it was suggested that a tactical group of citizens would be useful for the new endeavor of GHG emission reduction, and to build citizen awareness. Committee members questioned EFTF2 and its role in the recommendations. This PD is recommending a second advisory committee to guide and shape policy with Energy director. The Select Board is responsible for looking at recommendations

and determining actions. It seems appropriate to recommend interaction from Director with a citizens committee. A clear statement will be added to the report.

Pam reported that the Town Manager verbally supports group to increase citizen participation and awareness of this complex issue.

The schedule of task force meetings and key dates was reviewed. In addition to discussion of the draft report at each meeting, there will be brief discussions of key topics such as Net Zero, Sectors, Behaviors, Personal Responsibility, etc.

The Public Meeting was confirmed for February 1 at 7:30 PM in the Hearing Room of the Town House.

Topic : Warrant Article – explanatory text

Explanatory text was reviewed and discussion followed suggesting 1) adding an explanation of benefit, and how it may be achieved, 2) removing CMLP reduction of GHG in electricity, 3) similar language restating the article, 4) the Select Board approved informally. It was agreed to retain the language of the draft and to send it to the Town Manager for publishing.

Topic : Draft of Working Document

Pam asked Wally to submit public comment and interactions summary, and survey results.

Wally will organize information and summarize themes from public survey and submit draft.

Elise suggests notes from public meetings be included in appendices.

Pam mentions government charter study committee format by Sally Schnitzer as good example of capturing public comment in appendices.

Wally has additions to executive summary and barriers to achievability section and perhaps a bolder statement of perils and challenge of global warming.

Brian may have input to barriers after doing measurements section.

Cursory review of sections and progress was reviewed. A suggestion was made to add Links to legislative acts, etc. Individual comments should be sent directly to author of section.

Executive summary (or conclusion?) should frame report as a snapshot in time and acknowledge there will be “new realities” new technology evolving.

Also comments to focus on what can be done to achieve goals as opposed to why it isn't achievable should be added.

Discussion topic for another meeting is behaviors and “other sectors”.

It was agreed that Elise will discuss Open Meeting Law requirements with the Town Clerk for committee to work jointly in an electronic document.

It was agreed to publish Draft to public by 1/25/17.

Public Comment

1) Comments re: sectors is a concern about focus in a small town – transformation of energy economy is huge undertaking, including net zero, building codes, bylaws etc.

Urges the EFTF to maintain focus.

Land use, carbon sinks, agriculture domains are hard to manage and dilute focus as a town.

Hold back on these and focus on energy – don't get lost on all these issues “You can't do everything”.

2) Impression after listening to CMLP (Dave Wood) that his frame of mind is towards stability – facing tension between sustainability and stability. We can't disrupt so much that things fall apart but have to take bold actions.

Director of Energy position needs to be about sustainability. Call it a Director of Sustainability not energy.

3) Members of the public will be happy to review any advance sections of the report.

Meeting adjourned 9:33 AM