

**Town of Boscawen  
ENERGY COMMITTEE  
Boscawen Municipal Complex  
FINAL MEETING MINUTES  
Monday, November 8, 2021 6:00 P.M.**

**Members Present:** Edward J. Cherian Jr.; Charles Niebling; Scott Maltzie PHD; Gary Tillman; Nate Presinendorfer; Paul Dickey

**Guests:** Madeline Mineau— Chief Operating Officer of Briar Hydro

**Staff:** Kellee Jo Easler— Planning and Community Development Director; Crystal Tuttle— Planning and Community Development Clerk & Recording Secretary; Alan H. Hardy— Town Administrator

Director Easler opened the meeting at 6:00 P.M.

**Mr. Niebling nominated Mr. Cherian to be the Chair of the Energy Committee, seconded by Mr. Tillman. Mr. Cherian agreed and nominated Mr. Niebling as Vice Chair. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Chair Cherian suggested the committee adopt the rules of procedure first. No questions or comments. Mr. Tillman motioned to adopt the rules of procedure. Seconded by Mr. Maltzie. All in favor. None Opposed.**

Director Easler presented the statement of authorization from the Select Board. Chair Cherian commented that the Committee will have five members, three must be present for a quorum. The energy committee answers to the Select Board and is not an independent entity, therefore can make recommendations to the Select Board in an advisory capacity.

Chair Cherian recommended discussing the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance at a later meeting in order to allow COO Mineau to present the Briar Hydro Net Metering Program.

COO Mineau stated that due to recent changes in the Law, Upper and Lower falls and the Rolfe Canal are all eligible for group net metering benefits. This Law enables renewable energy sources to now generate up to 5 megawatts as long as the members are public entities, and so the Town would be a great member. The members must all be located in the same utility area, so the Town is located within Unutil territory along with some schools etc. Group net metering is when a renewable resource shares net metering credits with members of a group. The requirement for group net metering is that the members must consume the same amount of power that is generated by the resource on a yearly basis, in this case the resource being the Lower Falls. The Lower Falls generates 20 million kilowatt hours per year, and so the members of the net metering group must consume this same amount of energy. Briar Hydro would not directly supply the energy, so the Town can stay on its current supply provider. The credits received are for energy only, and not the distribution of power. 15% of the credits Briar Hydro receives will be given back to members proportionately to the amount, or load, the member uses. The Town currently consumes 250,000 kilowatt hours per year. After December 1, 2022 this could mean \$5,625 per year paid back to the Town because of the payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT)

agreement the Town has with Briar Hydro. Rolfe Canal will be available as a group net metering source after its current contract is up in May 2022. Briar Hydro has been talking to the City of Concord, the Merrimack Valley School District, and a broker with existing customers to become members of this group. COO Mineau has reached out to Merrimack County Nursing home and would like them to be a member, as they generate 7.5 Million Kilowatt hours in one year.

COO Mineau continued that there is an annual true-up, which would analyze how much Briar Hydro generated and how much the members consumed. If this number fell under what was generated, Briar would pay a penalty. If a large generation member dropped out of the program, Briar would either pay a penalty or lose their host status. There is no risk to the Town, yet Briar Hydro does not guarantee a rebate payment from generation. This situation is likely if there is a severe drought or if a major equipment failure would occur. Members would never be without power, as power is still supplied by Unitil. Unitil buys and sells power at the same price, the way they make revenue is from distribution via wires, poles etc.

Vice Chair Niebling questioned what the Town's administrative burden would be for becoming a member of this group. COO Mineau answered that Briar would need access to documentation of the Town's utility bills. She also stated that payments from net metering would be provided once a month. There is no minimum requirement for length of term for membership to the net metering program. Members can be substituted between the three net metering groups located in this area, with notice to the members. She would like to have a contract signed by the end of the year.

TA Hardy stated that the Town's power purchase agreement is up at the end of December. Chair Cheria said that the net metering agreement would not affect the power purchase agreement, as power is purchased from separate utilities. TA Hardy stated that a community power warrant article has been drafted for Town meeting. If the Town entered into an agreement with Briar Hydro for net metering, this would prevent the Town from participating in community power for the Town buildings themselves, but residents could still participate in community power. TA Hardy would like a recommendation for how long the Town should enter into a power purchase agreement, as the rates differed with the contract. Vice Chair Niebling stated that this is a dynamic time in energy policy, so he recommended keeping our purchase to 11-12 months to see what the market does. Vice Chair Niebling recommended that the community power warrant be postponed for a few years to see how it does in other towns, as this is very new to New Hampshire. COO Mineau explained community power in a short discussion.

**Mr. Maltzie motioned to ask the Select Board to reconsider putting Community Power on the warrant for Town Meeting. Seconded by Vice Chair Niebling. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Vice Chair Niebling motioned to recommend to the Select Board that the Town enter into a 5 year agreement with Briar Hydro for Net Metering. Mr. Maltzie seconded. All in favor. None opposed.**

Mr. Maltzie recommended that the schedule be discussed next and stated that the second Monday of the month worked best for everyone. Chair Cheria stated that the committee can

meet the second Monday of every month at 5:30 p.m. The Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance will be discussed at the next meeting.

The power purchase discussion was had considering the rates of each of the terms.

**Vice Chair Niebling motioned to recommend the Town sign an eleven month contract with Constellation Power. Chair Cherian seconded. All in favor. None opposed.**

Mr. Maltzie asked about the AARPA money and how that has been allotted. TA Hardy stated that the money allowed for this year has been spoken for, but that recommendations for projects for next year can be made. The focus for this year is the HVAC system in the municipal building, as this building has experienced many failures.

**Vice Chair Niebling motioned to adjourn. Chair Cherian seconded. All in favor. None opposed.**

**The next meeting will be held December 13, 2021 at 5:30 P.M.**

*Respectfully submitted by Crystal Tuttle.*