



## ENERGY AND CLIMATE COMMITTEE (ECC)

### AGENDA

Wednesday, February 7, 2024

8:00 AM

City Hall,  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room

#### **Members:**

Zach Luse, Chair  
Paul Roth, Vice Chair  
Diana Duffy  
Jake Pipp  
Councilor Raleigh Ormerod  
Jude Nuru  
Peter Hansel  
Clair Oursler  
Kenneth Swymer

Councilor Bryan Lake  
Lisa Maxfield  
Chuck Redfern, Alternate  
Rowland Russell, Alternate  
Michael Winograd, Alternate

#### **Staff:**

Mari Brunner, Senior Planner  
Megan Fortson, Planning Technician

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Approval of Minutes – January 3, 2024
3. Participation in 2024 Earth Fest
4. Climate Café Event
5. Update on Downtown Infrastructure Project
6. ECC Work Group Report Outs
  - a. Community Solar
  - b. Grants, Fundraising, and Partnerships
  - c. Education and Outreach
  - d. Legislative Tracking
  - e. Food Security
7. New Business
8. Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 – 8:00 am
9. Adjourn

Link to ECC Google Drive Folder:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1O1WIR0fADTNijRt13v3DU7k2FwxXDcGs?usp=sharing>

1 City of Keene  
2 New Hampshire

3  
4  
5 ENERGY AND CLIMATE COMMITTEE  
6 MEETING MINUTES  
7

Wednesday, January 3, 2023

8:00 AM

Council Chambers,  
City Hall

**Members Present:**

Zach Luse, Chair  
Paul Roth, Vice Chair  
Councilor Raleigh Ormerod  
Councilor Bryan Lake  
Diana Duffy  
Clair Oursler  
Lisa Maxfield  
Michael Winograd, Alternate  
Rowland Russell, Alternate

**Staff Present:**

Mari Brunner, Senior Planner  
Megan Fortson, Planning Technician

**Members Not Present:**

Jake Pipp  
Jude Nuru  
Kenneth Swymer  
Charles Redfern, Alternate

8 **1) Call to Order and Roll Call**  
9

10 Chair Zach Luse called the meeting to order at 8:01 AM.  
11

12 **2) Election of Chair and Vice Chair**  
13

14 Councilor Bryan Lake nominated Zach Luse for Chair and Paul Roth for Vice Chair. The  
15 motion was seconded by Councilor Raliegh Ormerod. With no discussion and all in favor, the  
16 motion was approved.  
17

18 **3) Approval of Minutes- December 6, 2023**  
19

20 Councilor Bryan Lake moved to approve the minutes of the prior meeting. Mr. Roth seconded  
21 the motion and with no opposition, the minutes from December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023, were approved.

22 4) **Presentation and Discussion on City of Keene’s participation in the U.S. Department**  
23 **of Energy Clean Energy to Communities: Planning and funding for Electric Vehicle**  
24 **Charging Infrastructure Deployment Peer Learning Cohort.**  
25

26 Ms. Brunner said David Chernak from Empire Clean Cities Coalition will be joining the meeting  
27 remotely to talk about this item. As he was not present at the start of the meeting, they proceeded  
28 to move on to the Community Power update.  
29

30 Upon completion of the Community Power update, Ms. Brunner explained that this agenda item  
31 is in regards to a free technical assistance program offered by the U.S. Department of Energy that  
32 the City of Keene participated in to learn from peer communities about electric vehicle charging.  
33 The City of Keene had to apply to participate, and they were one of fifteen communities  
34 nationwide that were accepted. The cohort met once per month from July through December and  
35 each of those cohort meetings had a specific topic that was covered. The workshops were each 2-  
36 2.5 hours long.  
37

38 Ms. Brunner noted that each community in the cohort was paired with a Clean Cities Coalition.  
39 The Granite State Clean Cities Coalition is the coalition for New Hampshire, but they did not  
40 have capacity to work with Keene on this. Therefore, they were partnered with the Empire Clean  
41 Cities Coalition, which is where Mr. Chernak is from, and they were excellent to work with.  
42 They cover New York City and the lower Hudson Valley area, so it was a different experience  
43 for them to work with a small rural community.  
44

45 Between the workshops, City staff (Mari Brunner and Chelsea North) met with the Empire Clean  
46 Cities Coalition to work on the deliverables and homework from the previous workshop. She  
47 explained the different topics that were covered. In July, they talked about the role of local  
48 governments and accelerating EV charging infrastructure deployments, which was an  
49 introductory workshop. In the memo, she highlighted the deliverable, where the Clean Cities  
50 Coalition used a tool called EVI Pro Lite to forecast the current and projected demand for EV  
51 chargers in Keene based on a few different assumptions that she will get to later.  
52

53 Workshop number two was about funding and financing for EV charging infrastructure. In that  
54 session they heard from communities about different ways that they have funded or financed  
55 charging infrastructure. The options came down to local, state, utility or federal funding. The  
56 City of Keene is planning to go after federal funding to help with this.  
57

58 Workshop number three was called “Equitable Deployment of EV Charging Infrastructure,”  
59 which covered topics such as accessibility, how to choose and prioritize charging sites, or  
60 incentivize charging to occur. Workshop four was about permitting and zoning for EV charging  
61 infrastructure as well as utility engagement. Ms. Brunner noted that the recommendations  
62 mentioned in the memo came from this workshop.  
63

64 Workshop five was about contracting with EV charging providers and setting these structures.  
65 Workshop six was a peer showcase with consulting and coaching. Each community presented to  
66 the other communities in a small breakout session and helped each other with key questions that  
67 they had.

68  
69 There were three main takeaways that they highlighted in the memo. The first, at least for her,  
70 was that the current and projected demand for EV charging is high. There were a few  
71 assumptions that went into this model that she wanted to make sure people were aware of. The  
72 tool looked at three different scenarios that all had different assumptions about the level of  
73 electrification. On the low end, it was assuming at 26.8% electrification by 2030 and on the high  
74 end it was estimating 73.1% electrification by 2030. The other main assumption was the level of  
75 at home charging in the community. The more at home charging that a community has, the fewer  
76 charging stations will need to be installed. There were only two options that could be used. It  
77 was either 100% charging at home or 50% charging at home. She is guessing that Keene is  
78 somewhere in between, but they assumed 50% and the numbers in the memo reflect that 50%.  
79 She welcomed Mr. Chernak to add to this.

80  
81 Mr. Chernak introduced himself. He lives in the Hudson Valley, but visits New Hampshire  
82 frequently and said it was nice to work with the community of Keene as he has visited a few  
83 times before. In talking about the projections, he explained that the tool used was called the EVI  
84 Pro Lite tool, which was developed by the Department of Energy to help take a model of  
85 municipality and put in the various inputs to figure out what level of EV adoption and then  
86 subsequent electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE) or charging station adoption would be  
87 needed to support those. It was developed to help model for larger cities. They used the City of  
88 Bangor, Maine as an analog for the city of Keene because it was the smallest city in the New  
89 England Northeast Region. They then adjusted to the population of Keene, which is about 40%  
90 of what Bangor is (in terms of population size). They then normalized for the number of electric  
91 vehicles that were currently in the county, which was data procured from the State of New  
92 Hampshire. It did not allow for a high level of granularity in terms of selecting what number of  
93 chargers would be used in the home versus in the public. They figured it would be somewhere in  
94 the middle. This would account for people who are commuting into Keene using electric vehicles  
95 and for people who live in multi-unit dwellings.

96  
97 Chair Luse recognized Ms. Nora Hanke. She wondered in terms of the projections, how much  
98 the non-single-family housing was taken into consideration because the whole group is unable to  
99 charge at home. Anyone who is living in a condominium complex, renting or in a retirement  
100 community are likely to have limited to no access to charging. Chair Luse said it looked like the  
101 private multifamily is factored in here, meaning apartment buildings and such.

102  
103 Ms. Brunner clarified that is an output, not an input, and that those numbers are estimating how  
104 many chargers need to be provided at multifamily properties. She did not believe there was an  
105 input for the number of multifamily units, which was a factor in choosing the 50% number for at-  
106 home charging versus 100% at home charging. Keene does have multifamily units and there are

107 a lot of rentals. This is different from communities around Keene, which would probably use  
108 100% charging at home because they have far fewer multifamily units and rentals.

109  
110 Ms. Brunner said that the last key takeaway was that during the presentation on best practices for  
111 permitting and zoning, one of the things they realized is that Keene already had taken many of  
112 those steps and have already done many of the best practices that are low-hanging fruit, which  
113 was really encouraging. There is, however, a lot more Keene could be doing, which was the  
114 purpose of the memo to summarize some of the recommendations.

115  
116 Ms. Brunner continued, stating that there are seven recommendations. The first is to update the  
117 website to better communicate the permitting process, timelines, and documents for installing  
118 EV charging. They have permitting checklists for installing EV chargers, but they are outdated.  
119 They thought it would be helpful to accompany them with a “how to” guide with a flow chart  
120 outlining the different steps to help people through the process. Some people just do not like to  
121 call for assistance and for those people, a tool like this might be beneficial.

122  
123 The second is to adopt an EV Ready code amendment for new buildings and construction. When  
124 somebody submits a building permit to construct a new building or do to a new construction such  
125 as a large addition or something that required parking, this would be an amendment that would  
126 require that the building expansion or parking expansion is something called “EV ready,”  
127 meaning that it is capable of installing an EV charging station should someone want to without  
128 having to tear up existing infrastructure to add new infrastructure. This is also in the energy plan  
129 as a recommendation.

130  
131 The third is to revise the city code pertaining to parking restrictions and enforcement for publicly  
132 accessible EV charging stations operated by the City of Keene. This is specific to parking,  
133 operations, and enforcement. Right now, The State of New Hampshire has a law that says that  
134 drivers cannot park in a space equipped with a public electric vehicle charging station unless  
135 such person is operating a plug-in hybrid electric vehicle or battery-operated electric vehicle.  
136 There is nothing in current city code or in the practices for parking enforcement on how to  
137 enforce that law. So, the recommendation is to create some sort of process so that people on the  
138 ground doing the enforcement know what to do if they find somebody with a non-EV vehicle  
139 parking in a spot that is a public electric vehicle charging station.

140  
141 Chair Luse said he knows the permit fees and zoning issues have come up in the past and asked  
142 if there is a timeline for looking into changes for that. Ms. Brunner said that is one of the  
143 recommendations and added that would be a policy decision.

144  
145 Councilor Ormerod had a question specific to occupying the charging station. He asked if one  
146 could park there with an electric vehicle, even if they were not charging. He wondered what the  
147 intent of that was. Ms. Brunner said that was to be decided but said she would imagine that the  
148 station is to be used for those who are actively charging. She asked Mr. Chernak if he had seen  
149 other communities allow people to park their EV’s when not charging at a charging station.

150 Mr. Chernak said that, in general, communities have tried to be proactive about not allowing  
151 parking when not charging. He suggested having a conversation with the EV charging station  
152 installer to make sure they have the ability to notify the individual charging that their charging is  
153 complete and they should move to a regular space to vacate for someone else to charge. Cities  
154 have written it right into their code and enforcement, but he has not heard any stories about it  
155 needing to be enforced. It is as much an honor system as possible, but it requires getting  
156 infrastructure that can do those types of notifications and being proactive with EV drivers. Most  
157 EV drivers are used to this and know the song and dance and to be nice to other EV drivers.

158  
159 Ms. Brunner said they heard from a few other communities that base their permit fees on the cost  
160 of the overall project and how this can be a barrier for DC fast chargers, which cost quite a lot of  
161 money. Keene also bases permit fees on project cost, and in most situations this is fair. However,  
162 in some situations it may not be fair, and in talking with the building inspectors, the Plans  
163 Examiner and the Permit Technician, it sounds like when a level two charger comes in and a  
164 level three charger comes in, there is not a big difference in terms of the level of review,  
165 complexity and number of inspections required for each. If a new transformer needs to be  
166 installed or something like that, it would be an extra inspection, but the cost differential (between  
167 the permit fee for a level 2 charger versus a DC fast charger) is an order of magnitude right now.  
168 She noted that modifying the permit fee structure specifically for EV chargers in order to  
169 incentivize them would be a policy decision and would be something for City Council to discuss  
170 and consider.

171  
172 Recommendation number six is to clarify that EV charging stations at private residential  
173 properties are designated as private restricted use. Some communities ran into a few situations  
174 where someone installed a private EV charger then allowed people to use their charger for a fee,  
175 running a commercial operation out of their home where commercial operations are not allowed.  
176 This problem does not exist here to her knowledge, but it is something that could be written into  
177 the code allowing for a fallback should issues arise down the road.

178  
179 The last recommendation is to explore offering incentives beyond any minimum requirements  
180 that they might adopt. For example, if they do adopt requirements that new construction must be  
181 EV ready, can it be paired with some incentives to get the developer or property owner to install  
182 the stations or otherwise go above and beyond what the minimum requirements are. As there are  
183 no minimum requirements currently, they could just go with incentives and not have any  
184 requirements.

185  
186 Ms. Brunner opened it up for questions.

187  
188 Chair Luse recognized Nora Hanke, who suggested one incentive could be refunding the permit  
189 fee after the charger is installed.

190  
191 Chair Luse and the committee thanked Ms. Brunner.

192

193 **5) Community Power Program Update**

194

195 Mr. Luse welcomed Mr. Bob Hayden who would be providing an update on community power.  
196 Mr. Hayden shared that the community power program has been in place for a while now and it  
197 is doing well. When looking from the start of the plan to now, there has been little movement  
198 between the different electricity options within the plan. A small percent of people opted out, a  
199 small percent opted up to 50%, and a small percent opted up to 100%. Most people went with the  
200 default option and very few moved around. He recalled that the Committee did an “Opt Up”  
201 campaign on Earth Day in hopes of encouraging people to opt up to 100%. He noted that a major  
202 goal of this program is to get people to purchase and be more involved in renewables. It is  
203 illustrative of how hard it is to get people to do things, to change and to look at material. He  
204 suggested that they may want to consider doing another campaign later in the year and by then,  
205 there should be some succinct data from Good Energy regarding the internal movement within  
206 the plan over the first eight or so months.

207

208 The second part is what is happening with the rates. The electricity rates have changed  
209 dramatically (or will) on February 1<sup>st</sup>. For towns that are about to launch, it is a great concern  
210 that folks will either not sign up or choose to opt out because that is their option to opt out. That  
211 is part of the three parts of this plan that makes sense: save people money, add more renewables  
212 and provide stable rates. Those are the primary goals of the plan and within that, people can  
213 come and go. For example, he said he has always talked about a scenario with net metering (e.g.,  
214 rooftop solar) where somebody that produced fifty percent of their own electricity could be on  
215 the plan in the winter and off the plan in the summer. The program allows them to come and go.

216

217 Mr. Hayden continued, saying that they (Standard Power) spoke to ~250 people on the original  
218 launch about their net metering choices. He and Emily Mans spoke to everybody who wanted  
219 counsel on net metering.

220

221 The point is that with the rate change, they are not likely to see significant migration even though  
222 the rate will be three cents lower. The rate from Eversource on February 1<sup>st</sup> will be 8.285 cents.  
223 Right now, it is 12.5 and before that it was 20 and 22. This is the supply cost. The transmission  
224 and distribution (T&D) cost will most likely start creeping up as well. They (the utilities) have  
225 not endured the inflationary push in every aspect of their lives that everyone else has over the  
226 past eighteen months. They have been slow in catching up, but it is likely that they will petition  
227 for significant rate increases in T&D. That side of the bill will go up and is not something that  
228 can be easily dealt with. The only way to really push against it is for individuals to have solar in  
229 their home or some other form of self-generation.

230

231 Mr. Hayden stated that with community power in general, they look ahead for ways to affect  
232 some of those things to minimize them locally through additional legislation, additional  
233 flexibility with utilities and Public Utilities Commission (PUC) and Department of Energy  
234 (DOE). However, those mechanisms do not exist currently, and the software does not exist, or  
235 the hardware cannot support software to even affect those things.

236 Right now, at the PUC and DOE level, they are trying to impact grid modernization, net  
237 metering, and a couple of other elements of the system where there is currently no ability for the  
238 utility to do those sorts of things. The reason Standard Power provided personal service for  
239 everyone (with respect to net metering) is because the utility cannot provide enough data. Those  
240 are all weak points in the system on the T&D side and the ability to fix those things is incumbent  
241 upon modernizing the systems and software by our utilities so that some of those things are  
242 possible.

243  
244 The rate change will occur February 1<sup>st</sup> and last through the end of July. Mr. Hayden stated that,  
245 for people who participated in the plan's default option at launch through the end of that timeline  
246 in July, those folks will be net positive over those fifteen months. For the four towns that were  
247 the early adopters, the message is that folks have had very stable rates, and they will still be net  
248 positive but have the right to opt out if they want. If there is migration, it is incumbent upon the  
249 community power community to do the best job possible from the system and the vendor side to  
250 recapture them in six months.

251  
252 Mr. Hayden went on to discuss the February rate and why it is not expected to stay this low.  
253 Some of the data that backs that up is out of the PUC dockets. There are a few pieces that point  
254 to this being aberrational rate. They (Eversource) have a negative offset of 1.486 cents, in other  
255 words, a negative rate adjustment. That negative rate adjustment comes from overcharges when  
256 the rate was \$0.20 and then twelve cents, but during the 20-cent window. The next piece is the  
257 unusually mild winter. Coming into the building today, it is 28 degrees. Most people are thinking  
258 it is cold. However, it really is not cold for January 3<sup>rd</sup>. It is mild if you look back historically  
259 and that is how he looks at this conversation.

260  
261 He shared that he spent Christmas at his friend's house, who had been a life-long friend. They  
262 talked about how they used to play ice hockey on New Year's Day when they were in their 20s.  
263 At current temperatures, there is no way you can play ice hockey right now and that was  
264 illustrative of the temperature difference.

265  
266 The upshot of the mild winter last year and (so far) this year is that while natural gas production  
267 has continued to rise across the country, the storage (amount of storage available for natural gas)  
268 has stayed level. There is no storage available anymore for natural gas. The forward market is at  
269 a very low point and was at a low point on the day this electricity was bought, which was at 2.33  
270 cents per dekatherm. He noted that this does not even illustrate parts of the market that are not  
271 long-term buys. There is a spot market right now for natural gas that is incredibly low. He  
272 explained that if he and another person owned a natural gas turbine somewhere and the market  
273 price said that it was 2.3 or even 2.36, they might be able to find somebody in their network of  
274 pipes that has extra. They might have spot extra and could buy it for \$1.75 because the spot  
275 market is a daily market of what is available on that day. While Eversource cannot bet on that, it  
276 does affect the general market if the spot market continues to suppress the long-term market.  
277 That gets deep in the minutiae, but the reality is that Eversource has an excellent rate. The rate of  
278 8.285 includes the 1.5 cent write down. The large meters (second to largest class- over 1,000kw)

279 have monthly variable rates that range from a low of \$0.09 to a high of over \$0.18 during the  
280 same time for an average of over \$0.11. That does not include a write down. So, when he says he  
281 believes that this is a short-term thing for Eversource, it is based on that large meter rate that  
282 does not have the same write-downs as the GNR rates. In the marketplace now, if he were  
283 talking to someone commercially, he would suggest they may want to go to the utility for those  
284 six months because it is a very low rate. If he were buying community power pricing today for  
285 this group because the vendor direct has kept it active, it would be \$0.09.

286

287 Mr. Peter Hansel asked if they had gotten any large commercial options. Mr. Hayden responded  
288 that he thought they may have been one or two. Mr. Roth asked if the G rate was higher than the  
289 residential (R) rate at this point. Mr. Hayden explained G and R are the same.

290

291 Mr. Hansel asked how should this committee get ahead of this information as he is sure it will be  
292 in the Sentinel. For example, should they put out some explanation on the need to be looking  
293 ahead long term rather than responding to the immediate situation. Mr. Hayden suggested that it  
294 would be a cogent message to send to whoever the reporter is who may be asking about this. He  
295 asked if the committee had a website for this kind of information. Ms. Brunner shared that  
296 Keene Community Power has a website.

297

298 Mr. Hayden said they (Standard Power) have been a little concerned about the municipal level  
299 participation in that message. If the municipality does some information sessions or other  
300 information every time the rate changes, it set an expectation that they will do the exact same  
301 thing every time the rate changes, which would impact the municipal budget. He said they try not  
302 to impact the municipal budget. He explained that their opinion, but the bottom line is that it is  
303 their committee, their town.

304

305 Ms. Diana Duffy wondered if anything in the renewables market affects the change in rate. She  
306 believed there was more wind that came into New Hampshire, and she was not sure if it was  
307 affecting the prices in New Hampshire for renewables. She wondered if there were any other  
308 reason renewables might have gone down.

309

310 Mr. Hayden explained that the price that they can capture has gone down. He posited if they  
311 were building a municipal solar project at 5 megawatts that was dependent on net metering and  
312 dependent on the G or R rates (the current low rate we're discussing), they would, as a  
313 developer, have seen their values statement go from something around \$0.18 down to less than  
314 either. Their ability to build that project may be diminished and significantly so. He said to add a  
315 little color to this, the ability to connect a big solar project is significant and difficult. Each  
316 project is almost unique because of the unique nature of the grid. Over the last couple of years in  
317 Maine and Massachusetts, they have reached a saturation point. There is no way to add more  
318 solar easily without major expenses.

319

320 Ms. Duffy clarified that he was speaking about utility scale projects. Mr. Hayden responded that  
321 he is talking about projects that are five megawatts. It is not utility scale yet. That is what is

322 happening here (in NH) because of the municipal solar law which allows for up to five  
323 megawatts for municipal projects, which gives the best return on investment because it is based  
324 on the default service rate for net metering.

325  
326 He explained they were inundated with developers coming in from Massachusetts and Maine  
327 talking about all these towns they wanted to do business with that Standard Power and Freedom  
328 Logistics happened to have as customers. Those same developers that were calling daily have  
329 gotten quiet over the past ten days. They know the same information he does, that this is likely to  
330 be an aberration, but that base price is low enough that it is down. He explained that if someone  
331 was depending on the range of the last two rates (12 and 20), they may have been expecting  
332 fifteen. Now it is down to seven cents and the adder might be two or three. It is still a small  
333 number.

334  
335 To get back to the wind, he does think it will be impacted. Wind stands on its own because it is  
336 efficient at, or rather cost effective at, lower efficiencies in comparison to solar.

337  
338 Chair Luse wanted to circle back to Mr. Hansel's question about communicating this. He said it  
339 seemed to him that if someone is chasing rates and going to switch and opt out, they would  
340 continue to do that with future rate changes.

341  
342 Mr. Hayden said the reason he started with how much movement there was from the default was  
343 because of that exact point. He thinks that 10% of people might look, of those half might  
344 complain, and of those half will do something. Unfortunately, those are the statistics that  
345 companies and committees will try hard to eke out because it is hard to know. They already  
346 know how many people did anything different at the initial mailing. They got two mailers and  
347 information sessions and still it was hardly anybody who did anything.

348  
349 Ms. Brunner said the slide they were viewing is the recommendation that they got from Good  
350 Energy for messaging, and she thinks the city is planning to respond to inquiries with the  
351 appropriate information and post this information on their website. As Mr. Hayden was  
352 suggesting, she did not think they wanted to set a precedent or expectation that every six months  
353 when the utility rate changes, they are going to do a big publicity effort. Should they ever drop  
354 the ball, the public would be rather upset with them. She suggested this committee should think  
355 about what they want to do on the education side.

356  
357 Mr. Hayden said if people opted out, during that six-month term, they would receive at least two  
358 cards offering them the chance to get back in. There is at least a quarterly sweep of data, and it is  
359 in the suppliers' interest to do it monthly if there is an attrition to get people to come back.

360  
361 Chair Luse recognized Mr. Mike Winograd, who said he did not think it was the committee's  
362 place to make any comments one way or another if asked, providing that type of information is  
363 perfect. People can monitor, they can see what is going on and they can act if they want, but he  
364 agreed with Mr. Hayden that they are likely to not do anything.

365 Chair Luse agreed and said when they are asked, having a clear message is important. He  
366 questioned the likelihood of people doing anything, especially given the volatility chart showing  
367 that there is still a net gain for anyone on community power.

368

369 Mr. Roth mentioned the lag in the net metering resulting in losing a month to month and a half  
370 and commented that it is a lot of work.

371

372 Ms. Duffy wondered, independent of this development and with Keene having its net zero goal,  
373 whether this committee or the council had any formal plan for upping the default over time and  
374 what that schedule is. Mr. Roth wondered if she meant upping the amount of renewable in the  
375 default to which Ms. Duffy responded in the affirmative.

376

377 Chair Luse said he did not believe that could happen until the end of the contract at 30 months.

378 Mr. Hayden would interject that if asked and an addendum was made to that contract, that it  
379 could be done.

380

381 Ms. Brunner said in the community power plan, it talks about ramping up over time to try and  
382 get to that 2030 goal and added what was envisioned was that each time a contract was renewed,  
383 it would go up.

384

385 Mr. Hayden said an opportunity mid-contract could be explored. It is not his contract, so he  
386 cannot guarantee anything.

387

388 With no more to add and no further questions, Chair Luse thanked Mr. Hayden.

389

390 **6) 2024 Energy Fair Collaboration with the Monadnock Sustainability Hub**

391

392 Chair Luse said he would address this item under the work group report-out for the Education  
393 and Outreach work group.

394

395 **7) ECC Work Group Report Outs**

396 **A) Community Solar**

397 Peter Hansel said he had nothing to add to the summary in the agenda packet. He mentioned that  
398 one of the projects that they have been monitoring is the five-megawatt project down near the  
399 airport. He wondered if that is going to be affected by some of the things that got brought up  
400 today about the difficulty in pursuing some of these bigger projects. It may be something  
401 councilors want to explore with the city manager.

402

403 **B) Grants, Fundraising, and Partnerships**

404 Mr. Ken Swymer and Mr. Charles Redfern were not present, but Chair Luse shared that he talked  
405 to Mr. Redfern who said he is exploring Portland Maine who has utilized AmeriCorps to get  
406 additional help with their energy initiatives.

407 In addition to that, he is going to jump into this workgroup and explore other pathways or  
408 research into other models and come back with Mr. Redfern to make a recommendation on what  
409 paths they may want to explore in trying to get additional resources to further their efforts.

410

411 **C) Education and Outreach**

412 Chair Luse shared that the education and outreach workgroup discussed supporting an energy  
413 fair that Ms. Ann Shedd is here to talk about. Before she talks, he explained that the workgroup  
414 had discussed the effort that goes into Keene Energy week and the return on investment on that  
415 annual event, and has decided that they are not going to do a Keene Energy week this year and  
416 will put their energy into supporting other events and showing up at events like Earth Day. Ann  
417 Shedd has proposed collaborating with the sustainability hub and others to do an energy fair. His  
418 work group is recommending that the committee cosponsor and collaborate with them on that  
419 project. Chair Luse then opened the floor to Ms. Ann Shedd.

420

421 Ms. Shedd explained that she was a former member of this committee back during the years that  
422 the city adopted its 100% sustainability energy goals and adopted the energy plan. She  
423 commented on how good it was to see those plans being implemented now.

424

425 She shared that she came to the committee as a member of the board of the Monadnock  
426 Sustainability Hub (the “Hub”), which Nora Hanke is program manager of. They have been  
427 interested in expanding their existing EV expos that they have been doing since 2018. They do  
428 them twice a year on Earth Day and again in the fall. Last year, they did exploration of  
429 expanding from just the EV focus to a clean energy fair, explaining that those have happened in  
430 other parts of the country.

431

432 Ms. Hanke and one other board member visited energy fairs at a couple of different scales in  
433 Vermont and in the fall, they did their first launch of a clean energy fair in Peterborough. It was a  
434 collaborative effort with the Peterborough Renewable Energy Plan (PREP), which is their  
435 Implementation Committee for their energy plan. Both the Hub and PREP were actively  
436 involved in the planning for the event, but with the long-range picture of alternating between  
437 Peterborough and Keene over the next several years.

438

439 The attendance was two hundred people. They had counters for those entering the event, but  
440 there were people who came to the outside EV expo but did not go inside to the eighteen  
441 vendors/exhibitors representing weatherization, heat pump contractors, solar contractors, non-  
442 profits and even one geothermal company. Exhibitors had follow-up surveys with an almost 50%  
443 return. At least one stated that they got twenty-five new leads for home visits for heat pump  
444 installations. In terms of impact, she believed it was well-attended and resulted in active pursuit  
445 of progress in clean energy in the region.

446

447 She came to the committee asking for the committee’s co-sponsorship of an event to be planned  
448 for this fall. This committee has co-sponsored a number of other events such as some of the EV  
449 expos. Having the sponsorship gives extra credibility to the public and may help with processes

450 in terms of getting permits. She stated they would be delighted if the committee was interested at  
451 a minimum in cosponsoring the event.

452  
453 Beyond that, in terms of active engagement of the committee, she welcomed interested parties to  
454 participate and said there are a couple of specific touch points where it might be helpful. The  
455 venues in Keene that have been considered thus far include their airport, which does not have a  
456 big indoor space and is a limitation in terms of having space for the vendors. Other than that,  
457 they could tie in tours of the solar facility at the end of the airport, there is plenty of parking,  
458 room to do the EV test drives, room to potentially do an electric lawn care event. There is a nice  
459 model for that in Vermont, where they bring in both commercial and residential scale lawn care  
460 equipment with vendors. She believed there was a lot of potential there with some concern about  
461 the indoor space limitation.

462  
463 The Blastos Room at 350 Marlborough has also been considered. The very first expo was held  
464 there and has potential. The Rec center is also an option.

465  
466 Chair Luse recognized Councilor Ormerod, who said the airport just presented to some of the  
467 committees and they are in marketing mode. Tents can also be put up there, which is a benefit.  
468 He suggested connecting with Mr. David Hickling.

469  
470 Ms. Shedd said when she spoke to Mr. Hickling in the spring, one of the limitations was that for  
471 any non-aviation use of the airport, he needs approval from the State Department of  
472 Transportation and from the Federal Aviation Administration, which he said may be a lengthy  
473 process. One exciting potential tie-in that he is excited about is the possibility of getting an  
474 electric aviation company up in Burlington called Beta Technologies that has been producing  
475 and flying a vertical take-off and landing and conventional takeoff electric vehicle to attend.  
476 They have started installing charging stations strategically around the country. If he could lure  
477 them into coming to that event, she thought it would draw in more people and make it an  
478 aviation related event. If the airport is in consideration, the time needs to be pinned down. She  
479 has been trying to obtain the date of the business expo from the city so as not to coincide with  
480 that. Vendors for the energy expo this past year were charged a pittance, and it was orders of  
481 magnitude less than what is charged for the home show in the spring and for the Chamber's  
482 business expo.

483  
484 Chair Luse and Ms. Duffy asked for clarification on what cosponsoring means. It is not financial  
485 assistance, rather the committee would provide support with volunteers, and it provides access to  
486 city resources like places to have the event, signage, etc.

487  
488 Ms. Brunner added that there is some limitation to that. In the past, the committee would co-  
489 sponsor events and then then we took that as the city co-sponsoring, which is not the case. If  
490 desired, the Council can certainly be asked to cosponsor, which would provide the highest level  
491 of access and waive any sort of room fees. Committee sponsorship would be more in the form of  
492 promotion, volunteers, and things along those lines.

493 Ms. Shedd asked if there is potential that this committee could vote to cosponsor and make a  
494 recommendation to the Council. She added that the Hub's budget will get voted on in a couple of  
495 weeks, but they have allotted \$5,000. They have also been doing private fundraising. She noted  
496 that the \$5,000 figure under-represents what was spent for the event last fall, but they may be  
497 able to up the fees for vendors and recruit more commercial sponsors to underwrite the cost of  
498 the event. She said the biggest single cost was running an ad on NPR, which was surprisingly  
499 expensive.

500

501 Chair Luse said it sounds like they have a motion. Councilor Lake made a motion to cosponsor  
502 the 2024 Energy Expo event and make a recommendation to the City Council to sponsor the  
503 event on behalf of the city. Paul Roth seconded the motion. With no discussion and all in favor,  
504 the motion was approved.

505

506 Ms. Shedd thanked the committee and said they would be in touch as soon as they clarified the  
507 date of the business expo. They offered to keep everyone in the loop about conversations with  
508 Mr. Hickling and about the potential to use the airport as an event site.

509

#### 510 **D) Legislative Tracking**

511 Councilor Lake shared that their work group put together a list of about twenty bills that are at  
512 the Statehouse now that they will be keeping an eye on. There is one about parking on EV  
513 spaces, one about nuclear power, one on net metering. He added that there are additional  
514 suggestions coming out of that memo Ms. Brunner sent to look at. They will discuss which of  
515 those, if any, make sense to explore at this time.

516

517 Ms. Hanke pointed out that the New Hampshire Network is sponsoring a virtual meeting at 4pm  
518 today with Chris Children. She will send the link to Councilor Lake.

519

#### 520 **E) Food Security**

521 Mr. Rowland Russell said the next session is scheduled for January 29<sup>th</sup> at 6pm. They are trying  
522 something different this time as it is a meetup with farmers around economic opportunities for  
523 farmers. Anyone from the committee is invited to attend. It is a public space but reserved for this  
524 purpose. He plans to invite Jude to talk about agrivoltaics (solar integrated with farming)  
525 opportunities. They have been collaborating with Southwest Region Planning Commission and  
526 Monadnock Farm and Community Coalition. They have been able to amplify the outreach and  
527 the final report to this group will include the asset mapping that they are doing together along  
528 with the strategic plan that Southwest Region Planning is putting together. It will be  
529 supplemented with additional notes from the work group's sessions and work that he has been  
530 doing with the committee.

531

#### 532 **8) Adoption of 2024 Meeting Schedule**

533

534 Chair Luse said the meeting schedule looked good except for July 3<sup>rd</sup>. Ms. Brunner explained  
535 that typically on the second Wednesday of the month there is another committee that meets in

536 the room during that time. So, it cannot simply be pushed out a week, but she did not know of  
537 any conflicts for other days. It could be moved to a Monday or Tuesday of the following week.

538  
539 Chair Luse asked if Monday, July 1<sup>st</sup> worked. Ms. Lisa Maxfield said she would prefer to avoid  
540 a Monday. Ms. Duffy asked if this needed to be done now and suggested waiting until June.  
541 Chair Luse said a decision did not need to be made today. The schedule could be adopted as is  
542 now and the change could be decided upon and made later.

543  
544 Councilor Lake moved to approve the annual meeting schedule as presented. Councilor  
545 Ormerod seconded the motion. With no discussion and all in favor, the motion was approved.

546  
547 **9) NH Climate Action Plan Update**  
548  
549 Chair Luse reported that the State’s Climate Action Plan is being updated and there are a number  
550 of opportunities, both in person and remote, to get involved with this effort. If anyone is  
551 interested, the information is all in the packet as a link on the agenda.

552  
553 **10) New Business**  
554  
555 No new business was raised.

556  
557 **11) Next Meeting: Wednesday, February 7, 2024- 8:00 am**

558  
559 **12) Adjournment**  
560  
561 There being no further business, Chair Luse adjourned the meeting at 9:17 AM.

562  
563 Respectfully submitted by,  
564 Amanda Trask, Minute Taker

565  
566 Reviewed and edited by,  
567 Mari Brunner, Senior Planner

Concerned about our  
overheating planet?

**CLIMATE**

**CAFE**

**CLIMATE +  
NH LAND & WATER**

**THURS, FEB 15  
6:30-8:00PM**

**KEENE PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
60 Winter Street  
Heberton Hall

**Special Focus: Land & Water in NH**

Climate Cafes are open spaces for sharing experiences and supporting solutions. Featuring special guest Professor Michael Simpson of Antioch University, presenting research on local and regional impacts. Come be a part of the conversation!

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**Keene Climate Cafe**

Concerned about our  
overheating planet?

**CLIMATE**

**CAFE**

**CONVERSATIONS  
THAT MATTER**

- FEBRUARY 15:** **Climate + NH Land & Water**
- MARCH 14:** **Climate + Advocacy**
- APRIL 14:** **Climate + Faith (3-6pm,  
UCC Church in Keene)**
- MAY (TBD):** **Climate + Biodiversity**

**6:30 - 8:00pm, Keene Public Library**

Climate Cafes are open spaces for sharing experiences and supporting solutions. Come be a part of the conversation!

**LISTEN. BE HEARD. CONNECT.**

**FREE REGISTRATION ON EVENTBRITE  
CONTACT: MATTHEWMYERBOULTON@GMAIL.COM**

**Keene Climate Cafe**



## ECC Work Group Monthly report-out form

INSTRUCTIONS: Please fill out this form no later than the Monday of the week before the ECC meeting and email to Mari at [mbrunner@keenenh.gov](mailto:mbrunner@keenenh.gov). If you have any supporting materials to share with the ECC (e.g. completed grant application, letter to the editor draft, articles/reports to share, etc.), please attach them to the email.

1. Name of Work Group: Community Solar Work Group
2. Date(s) that the work group met this month: 01/10/2024
3. Recommendation(s)  
*(List any requested actions here. If no action is needed, you can put "informational")*  
  
Informational
4. Monthly Update  
*(describe any topics the work group discussed, any activities/actions that were taken, guest speakers you heard from, research conducted, etc. here)*

**Group Activities:** We discussed the following items:

1. Partner with CENH and Monadnock Sustainability Hub (MSH) at a joint event (TBD) to have an in-person presentation on the solar coaching program. This event may likely happen in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2024.
2. Create additional publicity for the solar coaching program by working through MSH to get the Greater Keene-Peterborough Chamber of Commerce involved in promoting the solar coaching program.
3. Help the City of Keene to get ready to apply for the NH Municipal Solar Grant up to 60KW AC.

**Action Items:** We then discussed the following action items:

1. Finalize assessment of shortlisted city-owned sites in readiness for the NH Municipal Solar Grant RFP.
2. Make contacts with MSH and CENH to get specific dates for the in-person solar event.