

**City of Keene**  
**New Hampshire**

**AD-HOC COMMUNITY POWER COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Friday, September 4, 2020**

**8:00 AM**

**Remote Meeting via Zoom**

**Members Present:**

Peter Hansel, Chair  
Councilor Mike Giacomo  
Dr. Ann Shedd  
Paul Roth  
Dan Belluscio

**Staff Present:**

Rhett Lamb, ACM/Community Development  
Director  
Mari Brunner, Planner

**Members Not Present:**

Jeffrey Titus

Chair Hansel called the meeting to order at 8:00 AM.

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

Chair Hansel read a statement regarding the authority of the committee to hold a remote meeting, pursuant to Executive Order #2020-04. He called the meeting to order and conducted roll call.

**2) Approval of August 7, 2020 Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Roth made a motion to adopt the minutes of August 7, 2020 as submitted. Dr. Shedd seconded the motion which carried unanimously by a roll call vote.

**3) Guest Speaker- Samuel Golding, Community Choice Partners, Inc.**

Mr. Golding introduced himself as being from Community Choice Partners and a volunteer advisor for Community Power NH. He stated that he sent a lot of information and resources in that packet as well. He plans to talk for about 10-15 minutes and then open it up to questions. Instead of jumping in to the memo he thought he would read the moderators statement that he just wrote for Radically Rural because they asked him to put together a community power aggregation panel and it does a good job framing the memo. It will take about 4 minutes and then we'll go back to the NH specific discussion.

Mr. Golding read his opening statement for Radically Rural and stated that it is a draft and would appreciate any feedback.

Chair Hansel commented that he is looking forward to seeing him at Radically Rural. Dr. Shedd stated that any community members that haven't registered for Radically Rural on September 24<sup>th</sup> will get to hear Samuel's updated version and a lot of other interesting information.

Mr. Golding stated that he will now turn to the memo and give an update on Community Power New Hampshire (CPNH). He thinks this will provide some valuable context to understand why this group is doing what it is doing. After the community power law was passed, CPNH began meeting as a group of municipalities that wanted to understand best practices and how to design a community power agency. They have been meeting since December and the current status of that is that a group of municipalities have written a joint action agreement in order to share services on a state wide basis. They have a flexible and voluntary membership structure where individual community power aggregations can pick and choose what they want to join in with and how to share costs. One of the benefits of participating in this group is that it provides an economy of scale, an economy of scope in terms of the operational capabilities and sophistication of community power agents. Some of the thinking there is that even smaller municipalities would want to be able to access sophisticated services. Another aspect of that is working together for regulatory engagement, to kind of speak with one voice. As his statement for Radically Rural pointed out, a big part of everything holding back, everything we want to be doing, is that the way we make decisions has to change. A lot of the regulatory procedures and market rules have to be modernized in order for us to do that.

Mr. Golding continued with the third aspect of community power NH, which he feels is very important, is that they are going to hire a limited number of expert staff for managing all these vendors on behalf of the members. It's a complex business and one of the best practices they put forward is you need a core source of unbiased expertise that you can rely on to help all these municipalities come up to speed with how the power industry really works. CPNH has hired lawyers to finalize the joint action agreement. They're currently drafting an electric aggregation plan for members. They're getting a lot of inquiries from other municipalities interested in participating and learning about the industry. They're heavily engaged on the rural development process for community power and aggregation. A number of them are intervening as the local government coalition in the statewide data platform docket.

Mr. Golding stated that he would like to say a few words about how he understands Keene's approach to community power aggregation, and specifically address some misconceptions about CPNH. The first is that CPNH seems to be viewed as a competing alternative to hiring a broker and going at it alone. That's not how they wanted to be perceived. It's a joint action agreement where municipalities can join voluntarily, exit voluntarily and pick and choose what they want to collaborate on together. So even if the City of Keene were to go with a separate vendor for managing wholesale procurement, the City might want to join together to deploy a certain customer care service or data management and billing services with utilities or working together on developing a regional program. He really hopes that Keene will join and participate in the collective educational process about best practices in community power design, and also to help

speak with one voice in the regulatory development process. The difference in what they're architecting to what he reviewed in the RFP that the City released is quite different. They're creating a power agency. They're not outsourcing everything lock stock to a third party. Instead, they're going to put out a request for proposals for all the different functions that one needs to run a competitive power agency. The wholesale portfolio risk management and credit support, the data management and billing functions, data inter-changement, the utility, the customer care services and call center services and a number of supporting services. And the benefits of that are, they break down in a few ways. Instead of locking in at a single price for like a year or two, they're going to give themselves, and give communities, the same capabilities that suppliers have internally in terms of transacting in the market and managing risk and conducting sophisticated price and risk forecasting on a 24-7 basis. That has allowed community power aggregations to really understand the frontline of the commodity risk management business and how to integrate local renewables, local distributed energy, demand flexibility into a portfolio in a cost effective way to better manage risk and lower costs for customers over time. It's designed to give communities an opportunity to open the hood on how this works, and allow them to evolve the functionality of the power agency nimbly over time.

Mr. Golding commented that the RFP that was put out came from Massachusetts and that he gave a webinar on this and put it in the packet. He stated that one of the tendencies that has slowed the evolution of certain community power markets is that they've duplicated what has been done before. The Massachusetts model is about 20 years old at this point. It was created at a time when none of these challenges or broader objectives existed. Under this model, a community hires a broker to do a fixed price full requirements power contract and now it's sourced all operations to a supplier. And that's designed to achieve a limited number of short term objectives. He stated he doesn't think it should be viewed as requests for proposal for a consultant to help you develop a plan because if you read it, it's really a request for a broker to come in and do what he just described and also kind of help you market and manage the program. He then asked if we've received responses.

Ms. Brunner replied that the City is in the middle of the RFP process. They've interviewed two firms and have on the agenda later today to talk about an update on that. She stated that she had intended on giving a brief intro before Mr. Golding started talking to let the committee know a little bit about his background and where he's coming from. She commented that Mr. Golding already gave a good intro to himself but she just wants to mention to the committee members, which you've probably picked up, is that Mr. Golding works on Community Choice Aggregation, which is what Community Power is called elsewhere, in California and he's mostly doing volunteer work here in NH with CPNH. One of the reasons why they thought he would be a good resource today is he has an in depth knowledge of what's going on with the PUC rule making process. He's been involved with a lot of the legislative changes taking place. Ms. Brunner feels what staff are really looking to get out of today is for Mr. Golding to talk about some of those changes happening at the state level and for people to ask questions. Since they are right in the middle of the RFP process, she's not sure how much they would change at this point in time but Mr. Golding's comments are well taken and they really appreciate them.

Mr. Golding stated that he sees the same kind of patterns in a lot of markets, especially new markets, and he likes to point them out so that people can see what they're doing in context. He then asked if there were any questions.

Chair Hansel opened it up and asked if anyone has a question.

Mr. Belluscio asked about the older model that Mr. Golding was explaining and that they are following. What are some of the things that they need to be careful of, when they're implementing? Since it sounds like they are already down this path. What are things they need to avoid? Or what are some of the downfalls that have occurred because of this that they should be aware of?

Mr. Golding replied that the model they are pursuing doesn't change much. It doesn't move the needle. It would result in a short term power contract for a year, maybe two years. It would really outsource everything. He realizes that everyone is coming into this without understanding how to design power agencies or the complexity of these markets, which is understandable. But what you probably all do know a lot about is governments and how to exercise effective oversight, ensure transparency and make good decisions. Part of that is understanding the financial motivations of third parties that you're interacting with and relying on. So, in terms of RFP design, you've predetermined what you're going to be doing and you're hiring an entity to run it. And then you're also asking them to draft your plan for you. That introduces a bit of a conflict because the entity that you're hiring to run it is specialized in a certain model so that is going to be reflected in the plan. So one best practice is maybe to hire a separate entity, if you want to, to help you understand a business and design a plan and then go out and contract for the services necessary to implement that plan. The entity right now that you've hired is motivated to bang that out and get to work and get paid based on their mill writer. The true expertise in this contract structure is going to be the supplier. They are the ones with the commodity risk management expertise. They understand how to interface with the utilities, all the operational roles around that. The regulatory barriers as to progress at that frontline operational level. The supplier doesn't have any incentive to transfer that knowledge to you. So there's kind of a firewall there. That's from an institutional development perspective. That makes a huge difference. Those are some of the things to be aware of as you go forward. He hopes that Keene would think hard about joining the CPNH initiative. It's completely Ad-Hoc right now. The agency hasn't been formed yet so they're still meeting and discussing on a regular basis all of these considerations. The group is open to communities to participate in and help.

Chair Hansel stated that he wants to give Mr. Lamb a chance to speak and then he has a follow up question.

Mr. Lamb pointed out to the committee that the City hasn't eliminated the potential to join CPNH sometime in the future. It's never been set in motion here that they've decided to go one way on our own while other organizations pursue a more coordinated or more joint effort. They

did have a look at this early on and there were a couple of things that led them in the direction that they're in now. First is timing. He suspects they are going to be well ahead of any organizational practice that comes forward out of the CPNH process. That was really important to them. If they end up in a one year contract with a company like the ones they're working with now, as they learn more about it and join the community power network the year after, that's a possible result. The reason they've combined the planning aspect with the potential for an actual contracting and service providing through the model the RFP provided is that they have this moment right now to figure out what they want to do with this program in the 6 month period or 4 month period while they write the plan. And if they choose and go forward to city council that's not going to work out to do the second phase of the contract, they have the possibility of turning the decision around at that point. Bottom line is, they don't want to wait and they also would write this plan so that others could opt in to join the City's aggregation process if it was fruitful for them. Mr. Lamb stated that he just wants to remind the committee that they've already tried to look at this and decided that in order to move forward quickly, this was the best way to go.

Mr. Golding commented that he does not see a significant difference in the design implementation and launch timeline of the two initiatives. He's curious how Mr. Lamb came to that judgement? Mr. Lamb asked Mr. Golding what the launch timeline is for Community Power NH.

Dr. Shedd commented that what Mr. Herndon shared with the committee last month was to have contracts going out to consumers by spring. She asked Mr. Golding to confirm and he did. She then added that this puts them no more than a couple of months behind what the City has projected. Dr. Shedd shared some concerns that the timeline for this process that this committee is in the middle of is very fast track. If the council approves the selection from the RFP process in the next month, the timeline that she's seen is that this committee that meets once a month for an hour has maybe a month to define what they want out of a community power plan and that it would be by the end of this calendar year that they would be ready to start moving through council process, which is not a lot of time to allow careful, long term planning to derive maximal benefits from a community power plan. She stated that she has had some unease about the timing that's projected and whether it can give them all that they could get out of a community power program.

Ms. Brunner thanked Dr. Shedd for sharing her concerns about the timeline. She believes that the draft timeline that was put out was meant to show a best-case scenario for the quickest they could get through this process. But they will certainly take the time that they need to come up with a good plan to make sure it's something that this committee is fully behind. She also commented that she has been trying to follow along with what CPNH is doing, but one of the other factors besides the timeline, because they weren't sure how long CPNH would take to get up and running, was the level of staff effort that it would require to participate in Community Power NH. She just wanted to put that out there that those were both factors that went in to the decision not to participate as a full active member up front. But as Mr. Lamb mentioned, they are

very interested in following along and being a part of the group down the line when they have more time to put towards it.

Mr. Golding stated that it has been very busy. He commented to Mr. Lamb that he's trying to clearly express that you can join now but participate to the degree that you want and integrate that into your plan. Part of the reason why CPNH is designing the joint action structure this way is it's a best practice, there's over 70 shared service joint action agencies in the public power industry across the country that have been doing this for a half century. It's a voluntary and flexible membership structure because what they don't want to do is constrain innovation to some sort of centralized model. That provides a check against becoming too insular. If members can pick and choose services, then they can make that judgement call and say they're going to go with this other vendor for this chunk of services. It provides competitive pressure and keeps everything nimble. They're really designing this not to have an "either/or," lock stock initiative.

Chair Hansel commented that he is concerned about the time as there are other items on the agenda that need to be accomplished. He commented that he thinks that the consultants that the City is dealing with in their proposals have also been very much involved in what's going on in the state. He does not know whether they participate in CPNH, but he knows they are working very closely with NH Clean Power. He thinks they are involved as much as they can be, at least from what they tell them, with what's happening in NH with all of the changes that Mr. Golding is trying to see brought about.

Mr. Golding asked which consultant he is referring to and Chair Hansel replied that it is Freedom Energy and Standard Power. Those are the two and they have that on their agenda for discussion. Mr. Golding confirmed that Freedom has been involved in the rule making process. He continued, saying that as a general rule, you're always going to be in situations where what you want as a community in terms of how the rules should be reformed is going to be different than what any single vendor wants reformed. This is because vendors usually approach things from their own perspective and core expertise. Individual companies will prioritize changing certain rules that they think will give them a competitive advantage and not changing other rules they think would be a competitive disadvantage for them. This is one of the reasons why CPNH is advocating for matters of policy and regulatory development to be controlled at the community level and that's who should speak in these forums representing the interest of the communities. And you definitely need technical support to be able to do that. He mentioned that as a general rule, please don't just assume that outsourcing that to a company or two will serve your best interest.

Chair Hansel asked if there are any other comments.

Mr. Roth commented to Mr. Golding that it's the immediacy of action that we want to capitalize on because that's the environment they're in. But he thinks they are driving to goals of renewable power and to get the community involved and get group buying power. He thinks they're going down parallel tracks, they're going down the track they know and they appreciate

your information but we're all learning together and he thinks some action is better than no action. They heard about this initiative. He's stated that he is not that aware of what CPNH's process is or what they are doing. He appreciates the information but their train has left the station. They're moving. They have a very aggressive timeline, and as Ms. Brunner very well said, this can change in the future, so he appreciates Mr. Goldings input and he's looking forward to the journey.

Mr. Golding responded stating that they are at a moment in time where incrementalism and the old models aren't delivering change on the scale and scope that they really need to address their problems and so again he encourages the committee to work together with CPNH. He said this committee represents a very legitimate part to a democracy and working together in joint action is supposed to accelerate those bigger picture reforms that they all know is really holding back progress.

Chair Hansel commented that he thinks that point has been made well. He thanked Mr. Golding for his presentation and addressed the full agenda ahead of them. Mr. Golding thanked the committee for their time and pointed out that his testimony has an analysis of the whole market structure in NH and the ideal business model of an aggregator and how it can lead to reforms. He hopes they have the time to read that and enjoy it.

#### **4) Community Power Consultant Selection Process Update**

Ms. Brunner stated that the City received two proposals in response to the RFP that was put out in July. The RFP was posted for about a month. One of the proposals is a joint proposal between two companies. The proposal review committee, which is comprised of 5 staff from different departments and Peter Hansel as the chair of the Community Power Committee, reviewed the written proposals and interviewed both firms. The interviews happened this week on Tuesday and Thursday. Their second interview was just yesterday on Thursday afternoon. The review committee met after that second interview and she thinks they've come to a decision. She asked Mr. Lamb if it is appropriate to disclose their decision at this point.

Mr. Lamb pointed out that the recommendations go through City Council in any case so it's a City Council decision. He thinks that the review committee's work is finished, the summaries are complete so it's fine with him to share the decision.

Ms. Brunner stated that the committee has come to a final decision. The proposal that they thought would best meet their needs is the joint proposal submitted by Good Energy and Standard Power. Good Energy is a company that has pretty extensive experience doing community choice aggregation, as it's called elsewhere, in several other states. Standard Power is a NH based company that has a lot of local experience working in the NH market. Some of you may have heard of the Monadnock Buying Group spearheaded by Peterborough. Standard Power is the company that works with them on that. They thought it was a really good proposal. The other proposal that they received from Freedom Energy was also very good. She thinks both

proposals were strong but the one they decided on really stood out to the committee. She's happy to answer any questions. She explained that the next step is checking references and then next week they'll be bringing the recommendation forward for the FOP committee to consider. If the FOP committee agrees with the proposal review committee's recommendation, hopefully they would then bring that recommendation to City Council.

Mr. Lamb commented that if there is any hesitation from this group based on what they heard from Mr. Golding, they should probably talk about it now. They put this path in motion back in early June through the City Council. At that point in time, the schedule for CPNH was substantially different. They've been on this track, as Mari mentioned, issued the RFP and gone through the month of response period. They now have the responses that they expected and they're ready to continue to move forward with it. Mr. Lamb stated that he agrees with Mr. Roth who summarized where they are going quite appropriately but if there is a division on this committee, they can have the discussion now about whether they should be choosing a different path. They don't want to go forward to City Council with a recommendation if there isn't enough agreement on this committee to move forward.

Mr. Belluscio asked Chair Hansel permission to speak. He stated that being relatively new to this and the committee, and understanding what they are trying to accomplish as a committee, and that the train has already left, but he does not think they would be doing the full service if they didn't at least put a little time into somebody showing them a plus/delta of with or without. To him, from what he heard, every consultant that comes in will steer your company in a different direction. You can see that flavor of the month thing, he truly understands that. Because they heard that and they saw some things and in the reading, there's a lot of different options and models. He feels the way he would do that and the company, would be to put together a plus delta with a team and say okay they did do that, they looked at this and they're still on the right path with what they're doing based on all the things they're seeing and how things have changed. If the only plus was they need to do something now and now they're ahead of where they are, then that is no longer a plus for what we're trying to do. He thinks understanding that would be important.

Ms. Brunner replied that she would like to mention that maybe about six months ago they did do that exercise that Mr. Belluscio just mentioned. They worked with their consultant at the time that was helping them with their energy plan. They were doing the electricity baseline for them and helping them identify priority strategies. Community power was one of them. The City asked the consultant to help them compare and contrast these two models and they did a pretty thorough comparison between the two. It was a memo they asked them not to share publicly but she feels it could be shared with committee members if it would be helpful. So they already did that exercise. They've always recognized from the beginning that there are some real advantages to participating in CPNH at some level, but even just participating in their meetings, she feels would be a big burden on staff. There's a lot that staff is doing right now with several large projects going on concurrently, so she just wants to reiterate that one of the barriers is not just the timeline but the staff time that it would take to participate. She thinks the main advantage they

saw, just to summarize that analysis they got from their consultant Cadmus, was that if they went with this more traditional model that's been used for 10 years or so in Massachusetts, it's a very well established model, there's a lot of companies out there that know exactly what to do. When you go through the process there's some upfront time that staff have to put towards it but once the program is up and running it's very minimal staff time. It was a combination of factors not just the timeline is what she wanted to get across. But the timeline was a piece of that because they anticipated that to get the CPNH model fully up and running and operational, because it's a brand new concept and it's a little bit more complex we anticipated that it would take longer.

Mr. Lamb asked Chair Hansel if he can continue with Ms. Brunner's comments which he thinks was a good summary. He stated that another aspect of this was, at the time, the sort of organizational structure, the government structure of CPNH was a little bit less known. And so part of what attracted them, and he knows attracted the city manager, was local control over the contracts. Not that they wouldn't perhaps be able to do that as well now that CPNH's government is changing, but they have control with their contractor. A key element in that was public outreach and how they communicate about what they are doing. There are local representatives behind the choices they make where their citizens can call them up and let them know and our City Council gets to choose these things. At the time it was not at all clear that the CPNH option was providing that. So having local control over choosing the consultant and how the program was managed was also a key element in this without knowing how CPNH was going to organize.

Chair Hansel asked Dr. Shedd if she has any comments. Dr. Shedd replied that, using the train analogy that she's heard a couple of times, she would like to raise the question of where the train is headed. Are they headed to Troy NH or are they headed to technologically sophisticated, as the nearest example, Boston? There are stops in between. She thinks going with what has been the Massachusetts model that's based primarily on shaving a little bit off utility bills without directing that savings towards that further progress that they would like to see happen. The transformative things in terms of more energy efficiency, program support, changes in metering practices, deployment of storage in various forms. She thinks they can get on the train and they can get off in Troy and they'll have a program that will save consumers a little bit of money. They can go a little farther on the train on the parallel track and incorporate more of that long term goal. In terms of the staff time commitment, yes a turnkey contract will save them some time now, but when that contract is over how much time will it take to negotiate a new contract, to reeducate the public about what the new contract will offer. Whether it be with another for profit entity or whether they work through CPNH. She's just trying to think longer term, she knows 2020 has been an unbelievably challenging year in every realm. She just wants to keep the destination in mind.

Chair Hansel stated that he wants to give his feedback on that because he was involved in the interviews. One of the things that they kept asking the applicants was what do they envision for innovation for the future and how are they going to handle things like low and middle income users and so forth. Particularly the one they recommended going forward with answered that in a

very positive way. If they look at just the Massachusetts experiment, they've evolved. They started 10 years ago, maybe, and the ones that are signing up now are totally different from the ones that had been signed up originally. He thinks that's an indication that they can help this whole process evolve as well. He thinks that the way they are structuring this is, the city will have a good amount of control over what the plan looks like and how it evolves in the future. He asked Mr. Lamb to confirm this and he agreed.

Mr. Lamb asked who does the outreach under the CPNH model, in the initial plan development process. Dr. Shedd replied that she is sorry there are not any CPNH people on the call. Rod Bouchard from the county has been part of their central organization. Chair Hansel commented that Mr. Golding is still on if they would like him to answer questions.

Mr. Golding joined the conversation and said that, under the CPNH model, the local municipalities would be responsible for local community outreach and getting feedback on the plan and holding a public meeting with CPNH support. The whole thing is designed to not remove local control over all the things that matter. Mr. Lamb commented that he can tell the committee that they're not doing that in the next year. They're not staffed for that. They would have to contract for that activity.

Mr. Roth asked, based on their conversation, what are the negatives to continuing on this path. Is there a serious negative that would prevent them from going down this path? They don't want to prevent themselves from going with CPNH but is there a significant negative that will not propel them to their long term goals. Like Dr. Shedd said, they want to have the correct destination in mind but they need to go somewhere. They can't just sit and wait. He thinks that was the fear they had, that they didn't want to wait. They want to do something. Is this process they're going through going to be detrimental in the long term? That's his question.

Chair Hansel commented that there is a question from an attendee.

Ms. Brunner read the question from the attendee who asked isn't it the PUC process that's dictating the timeline? Even if the City chose a broker before CPNH launched, can it really move forward without PUC rules? Ms. Brunner commented that this is a good question. It is actually one of the questions they've been asking in the interviews. She asked Chair Hansel if he would like to respond to that.

Chair Hansel replied that he has no further comment to what Ms. Brunner said. He asked who else would like to comment. Ms. Brunner stated that one of the things they really wanted to be conscious of when trying to make this decision early on as to whether they wanted to go the CPNH route or go with a more traditional contract with a broker, they asked this question of everybody that they talked to. Would they be limiting themselves by starting out with this more traditional model? Does that mean they would be locked in this model and they can't switch gears later on, or to continue the analogy, switch tracks? She doesn't think anybody told them that wouldn't be possible. The message that they got was, if we want to start with this simpler

model, one that's a little bit easier to explain to the public, a little bit easier to show examples and other communities and build that level of comfort that they were hoping to build in the community for this and build support for it. That's fine and they can always switch to a different model later on. That was one of the reasons that they felt pretty confident with going this way. She thinks it's possible for them at this stage to identify both short term and long term goals and still work towards those long term goals. It's not like this train has to stop anywhere. They always have the ability to keep moving things forward. They're not locked into a specific model by choosing one now.

Mr. Golding asked to clarify something that Mr. Lamb said. He thinks he may have given the wrong impression or gave too short of an answer. He referred to when Mr. Lamb said they did not have the capacity to handle holding a public meeting to review the plan?

Mr. Lamb replied that as far as he's concerned writing a community power plan is more than holding a public meeting. The contracts for the RFP proposals that they've received have hundreds of hours dedicated to public outreach to help this community learn what this program is, how it will benefit them, to give them an understanding of how it works, how they could make choices within their ability inside the program. It also has an extensive public input process so that the community gets behind the idea of doing this in the first place. What he's suggesting is that the totality of the public outreach process is a substantial amount of work and time and this staff in the community development department has way too many things on their plate at the moment to contemplate that for upwards of 12 months. Mr. Golding replied that they're anticipating the local outreach process a little bit differently.

Mr. Belluscio interrupted to excuse himself from the meeting as the hour is up and he needs to go.

Chair Hansel then reminded everyone that things need to move along. He asked Mari to continue with her updates on the Community Power Consultant Selection Process. Ms. Brunner replied that she is all done with that but is happy to answer any questions.

Chair Hansel asked Mr. Lamb if he has any other comments.

Mr. Lamb commented that unless this committee has strong objections, they are going to move forward to City Council with the recommendation that Mari described next week at the FOP committee meeting.

Chair Hansel replied that just to be clear, they're not outsourcing all of the responsibility on this. This committee here will be involved very heavily in designing this program, this plan. They will have help from the consultant. A lot of help, hopefully. But they have the responsibility ultimately to design the plan and then send it to the City Council for approval.

Mr. Lamb agreed and commented that is absolutely right. It really is ultimately their job to write this plan. They will have staff assistance from Ms. Brunner and himself and the heavy lifting coming from the consulting firm. If they don't like what they've written or prepared for them they send it back and they do it again the way they like it.

Dr. Shedd asked if an hour in October and an hour in November be enough to carefully write that plan. She stated that they need to extend the timeline for this committee.

Chair Hansel stated that they will have to find out what the consultant says about that. If they need to meet more often or extend the timeline that is certainly an option. He stated the selection committee that met yesterday was unanimous in the selection of the firm that they selected. They're very impressed not only with the written application but also with the interview process that they went through. A lot of these questions were asked of them. He feels very confident that they selected the right firm. He stated he was a little nervous about only having two applicants but both applicants were very strong.

Mr. Roth asked if the next step is the reference process or if that has begun.

Ms. Brunner replied that she has started reaching out but hasn't actually spoken to any references yet. She just started leaving voice mails yesterday and hopes to hear back before going to FOP.

#### **5) Public Outreach**

Ms. Brunner stated that this could probably wait until the next meeting. She just wants to make sure that this committee is aware that they have a community power page on the energy plan website, [www.KeeneEnergyPlan.com](http://www.KeeneEnergyPlan.com).

Ms. Brunner said this website was developed by a sustainability fellow that they worked with from UNH. She did a podcast episode on community power that gives a really good overview of what community power is. There's an FAQ page and an interview with the Sustainability Director from Greenfield, MA. She also wanted to mention that the Energy and Climate Committee is currently working on an energy plan which includes community power as a strategy and the ECC is organizing a community workshop or forum of sorts on October 20<sup>th</sup>. There's going to be a breakout session on community power. That might be something this committee could consider attending or being a part of.

Mr. Lamb stated that they've been able to hire back the young woman who put together the website for us on community power to continue to provide them assistance with writing the energy plan. She's coming in as an intern. Chair Hansel commented that she does a terrific job.

Dr. Shedd commented that there is a late question from Councilor Clark.

Chair Hansel read the question from Councilor Clark. Considering what they have learned from Mr. Golding, shouldn't the committee include an option for the City Council of joining CPNH as well as the option of going out on our own rather than just focusing on a City effort? Immediacy is important, but getting a program that will serve their best interest and actually changing the current power industry system is more important.

Mr. Lamb stated that this is the Community Power Committee. This is not the group that made the selection for the consultant. So, yes that is certainly within the committee's realm. This group has been set up to evaluate community power.

Chair Hansel asked the committee members their thoughts.

Mr. Roth stated that he doesn't think that going the way they are going precludes them from the other model. It's not limiting their options. They're going forward. He doesn't know how quick the other group is going to go. Do they need to meet again before the next meeting on October 2<sup>nd</sup> or not? He's been a broker in energy for 30 years in hospitals and it's a bold, tried and true method. It's not changing anything major but they've gotten benefit from it. He thinks the community is going to benefit from where they are going. He's excited but doesn't know what is involved. They can go forward and still be part of the other group.

Mr. Lamb asked if, given the comments and he knows that the committees are struggling with this question, understandably, would it be okay with the committee that as they go forward through the FOP process, that Mari or himself, whoever is going to give the presentation, perhaps Peter would help them, they would certainly put on the table the subject of CPNH. That they set themselves in motion to select a consultant and during this process they've learned more information about CPNH so they could at least let the community know that that's out there and if Councilor Clark and other councilors want to learn more about it they can direct them to do that.

Chair Hansel stated that he agrees with that. He doesn't see the two processes as mutually exclusive but he thinks they need to let the City Council know that option is out there. Dr. Shedd commented that she thinks that in the name of conformed consent, letting them know about that model would be important. Chair Hansel asked if there are comments from anyone else.

Councilor Giacomo commented that he agrees that it is important to keep both options on the table. However, he also thinks that they want to avoid muddying the water. They are trying to move forward with something. This is going to create change and if that change is the residents of Keene are able to pay less for their power, then great. That is a positive change for us. If we're trying to make broader change as to the way that whole energy systems work, great, that's a noble goal. But he thinks that they need to make sure that when these two options are presented they are not necessarily exclusive options. They need to make sure it's done in a way that they don't create too much confusion among the council. They present what's been done, what

they're going to accomplish with this and what they could accomplish, potentially, with community power.

Dr. Shedd commented that she thinks that when it is presented to council and eventually to the public, that it would be helpful to at least model some real numbers. So, take the default electrical rate of the moment and share what that is. And share under the model, say its 7 ½ cents a kilowatt hour or whatever the number works out to be. Of that 7 ½ cents, where is it going? How much will continue to be the transmission distribution charges. How much will be going to the middle man. Make the numbers real and what would the impact be on the average residential bill. Is it going to be \$1.50 a month? Or is it going to be \$25 a month? She thinks that would make it much easier for everybody to understand what this model can provide.

Chair Hansel stated that he believes that is what they told us they would do. But they'll make sure that is clear.

Mr. Lamb asked if he can clarify. He asked Dr. Shedd if what she is asking is for this type of analysis be presented for the discussion about choosing to go with a consultant or make a shift to CPNH. Or, is she talking about doing that as part of the community power plan? Dr. Shedd stated that she is not sure that she understands the question. She feels that in terms of general education making the numbers real will be tremendously helpful to everybody.

Mr. Lamb commented that he does too. What he is suggesting is that could be a key component of what they do during their outreach while the committee is writing the community power plan. That would be hard to do between now and next Thursday night in front of City Council. That's what he is suggesting.

Ms. Brunner stated that they definitely have that information for the consultant that they're proposing to bring forward as the recommended consultant. She does not think that they have the capacity to do a direct comparison to what CPNH is doing. Time wise, if FOP is next week, they would be getting out the memo, hopefully today, into the system. So they don't have a lot of time to do that type of analysis. And even if they had more time she would personally not be able to do it.

Dr. Shedd commented that she thinks to draw from examples of other communities that have adopted this, just as an example, by the presentation next week might be helpful. Mr. Lamb stated that all the examples will be out of state examples. Ms. Brunner asked Dr. Shedd if she is specifically talking about CPNH's model. Dr. Shedd replied no. Ms. Brunner commented that she can definitely share examples of what other communities have done.

Chair Hansel asked if there is anything else. He stated that they would carry the suggestions from Councilor Clark in our comments to the city council.

## 6) New Business

No new business at this time

**7) Next Meeting: Friday October 2, 2020 at 8:00 AM**

There being no further business, Chair Hansel adjourned the meeting at 9:18 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Amanda Burdick, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by Mari Brunner, Planner