



Energy and Climate Committee (ECC)

Fall Retreat Agenda

October 24, 2023, 3:00-6:00 pm

Stonewall Farm, 2nd Floor Grand 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

I Call to Order & Introductions

II Guest Speaker: Sam Evans-Brown, Director, Clean Energy NH

III Ice Breaker Activity

IV Work Group Discussions

- A. Grants, Fundraising and Partnerships
- B. Community Solar
- C. Legislative Tracking
- D. Food Security
- E. Education and Outreach

Guiding Questions:

- *What have we done well?*
- *What could we improve?*
- *What are our goals for the upcoming year? How should they be prioritized?*
- *How can we make the work groups more effective?*

V Break

VI Work Group Discussions – Continued

VII Request for letter of support for NH Saves

VIII Wrap-up and Next Steps

IX Adjournment

From: [Zach Luse](#)
To: [Mari Brunner](#)
Subject: FW: ECC consideration
Date: Tuesday, October 17, 2023 1:45:07 PM
Attachments: [NHSaves Support Letter Outline \(3\).docx](#)

From: John Kondos <john@cleanenergynh.org>
Sent: Tuesday, October 17, 2023 7:37 AM
To: Zach Luse <zach@paragondigital.com>
Subject: ECC consideration

Zach,

For your committee's consideration, pls excuse if you already saw it but this needs all the support we can muster.

Thx, John

Chris wants to share the following email that he sent to his municipal contacts. If you have key folks in munis and school systems that might send a letter to DOE or the governor, please forward this along. We are hoping they will "maximally personalize" their letters.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Chris

Chris Skoglund

Director of Energy Transition

[Clean Energy NH](#) | [Drive Electric NH](#) | [2023 LES Conference](#)

Chris@cleanenergynh.org | (603) 573-9926 Ext. 702



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All -

Following up with this group as you are the nearly 100 signatories that signed a letter of support for SB68 this spring. This bill eventually became law as part of HB281 and it authorizes local governments to benefit from solar projects that are outside of their geographic boundaries but interconnected into the local distribution grid. **We are reaching out to ask that you consider submitting a personalized letter next week to the NH Department of Energy as well as the Governor asking for them to unequivocally support the NHSaves program that is soon to be considered by the NH Public Utilities Commission (PUC).**

An outline of a letter to the Department of Energy (DOE) is attached. The attached letter is

intended to provide background and ideas, but more individualized and personalized the letters will more clearly demonstrate how these programs are valuable to stakeholders and impress upon DOE the importance of the role they can play.

Please don't hesitate to reach out. I'll be watching my email this weekend as well. But you should enjoy the weekend.

Background

As you may recall the PUC dealt a traumatic blow to the NHSaves efficiency programs in the fall of 2021. This led to the total shutdown of the NH efficiency programs, upending residential, commercial, municipal, and industrial projects while also disrupting the work and incomes of many efficiency companies and their employees. The economic impact was likely very high and the NHSaves programs and the energy-efficiency workforce are still recovering. Another bad PUC order will be even more devastating.

Over the past year, the Chair of the PUC has shown considerable skepticism concerning the value of energy efficiency, and even with two recent bills passed by the legislature to clarify how the EE programs should be valued, there is deep concern that the PUC will issue another harmful order.

In talking with stakeholders, concerns have been raised about how DOE plans to support the NHSaves program at the PUC. At this time, as the utilities continue to restore programs and rebuild faith among their contractors it is imperative that the plan be approved. DOE's strong support will be instrumental in preventing the PUC from making a bad decision.

Letters from local governments and energy committees are expected to be helpful in reminding DO of the importance of these programs.

Chris

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Director of Energy Transition

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One attachment • Scanned by Gmail

NHSaves Support Letters

The NH energy utilities have submitted their newest three-year plan to the NH Public Utilities Commission (PUC). The Plan is the result of years of work and follows a historic and disastrous rejection of the prior plan in November 2021. The legislature stepped in 2022 to ensure continuity and stability for NH Saves by passing HB549, and again in 2023 by passing SB113.

However, given the PUC's track record, we feel they need to hear from communities that were affected by their order in 2021, and do not want to see disruptions to NH Saves this time around.

General guidance on drafting a letter of support to the NH Department of Energy and/or Governor Sununu.

- 1) Personalized letters that do not duplicate the language submitted by other individuals and organize will create a stronger impression.
 - a. Revise the potential language below into your own terms.
 - b. Include specific examples from your community regarding the positive impact that NHSaves has provided through efficiency projects.
 - c. Include specific examples from your community regarding the negative impact that the closure of NHSaves programs in 2021-2022 resulted in.

- 2) Preferably letters will focus on encouraging the NH Department of Energy and the Governor to fully support the program at the NH Public Utilities Commission.
 - a. Don't worry about proving that energy efficiency is worth investing in, this is broadly understood.
 - b. The concern at this time is that testimony that raises complicated questions will be used by the NH PUC Commissioners to make harmful decisions.
 - c. The more that NH DOE can emphasize that the proposed plan is beneficial and is consistent with NH State law, the less opportunity that the NH PUC will have to undermine the program.

Outline of Potential Letter to NH DOE

[Your Name]
[Your Address]
[City, State, ZIP Code]
[Email Address]
[Phone Number]

[Date]

Jared Chicoine
Commissioner
New Hampshire Department of Energy
21 South Fruit Street, Suite 10
Concord, NH 03301
Subject: Support for NHSaves Efficiency Plan at the NH Public Utilities Commission

Dear Commissioner Chicoine,

[I/We] am writing as a representative of [insert community] to express our strong support for the NHSaves Efficiency Plan currently under consideration at the New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission (NH PUC). We are writing to ask that the NH Department of Energy fully endorse this new plan.

Potential Points for First Paragraph: General Support for EE and the NHSaves Plan itself

- The importance of energy efficiency cannot be overstated, and we believe that the DOE's unwavering support at the PUC will be crucial to the plan's approval.
- Implementing the NHSaves Efficiency Plan is a crucial step towards a stronger economy through a more sustainable and energy-efficient future for our state.
- However, its approval is not certain as the entire state observed in November 2021, when the last plan was rejected. That rejection impacted projects across our community and the state by fully shutting down the NHSaves program for months.
- We understand that even though the legislature has acted to restore the plan, that the NH utilities and the rest of the efficiency community have not yet recovered from that shutdown.

Potential Points for Second Paragraph: Justification for why rejection of this new Plan would be harmful

- While the legislature may have acted, from what we have observed and heard, the current PUC commissioners remain skeptical of the value of energy efficiency and approval is not guaranteed.
- NH residents, businesses, schools, and towns cannot afford another catastrophic ruling from the PUC. Closure of the programs for any length of time will undermine remaining confidence in the program among customers. More importantly, the critical efficiency workforce may simply give up on participating in the program.
- The NHSaves programs are still recovering from the PUC's poor decisions. The state economy can't tolerate another closure of the program.

Potential Points for Third Paragraph: Personalization

- Information about how the NHSaves program has, is, or will benefit your community.

Potential Points for Closing Paragraph: Wrap up and emphasis that NH DOE must lead

- The Department of Energy must unequivocally support the plan. We hope your agency will lead on this issue.

Please feel free to reach out to [me/us] if you require any further information or if there is any way I can contribute to this important initiative.

Sincerely,

[Your Signature]

[Your Typed Name]