**Shelburne Energy Committee**

Thursday, November 18, 2021 7:00 pm

Present: Tom Johnson, George (Geoff) Boettner, Pat Stevenson, Andrew Baker

Absent: John Walsh

Guest: Mark Rabinsky – Green Communities Program – Western Mass. Regional Coordinator

**Meeting Minutes**

**Minutes:** The group unanimously approved the minutes of the October 22 and Nov.

**Mark Rabinsky** – Noted that he works closely with Town energy committees and relies on them to assist town administrators and town government to keep energy projects moving forward. Terry Narkewicz is Shelburne’s Green Communities rep. Mark offered to send Shelburne a sample letter on how the town Select Board could authorize sharing of log in info with the Energy Committee for Mass Energy Insight – the reporting web site – so that the energy committee can see what data is gathered there. Mark reviewed the MEI data with the group showing how data is gathered on town government energy use.

Mark noted that the towns that are Green Communities could also authorize groups like Power Options to access MEI data to aggregate town electric usage for a project such as the one being explored at Mohawk Trail regional school. He also noted that the current focus of Green Communities is on energy reduction and electrification, and has not focused on renewables generation.

GC grants are funded by the carbon auctions utilities participate in through REGGI – the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

Next deadline for the competitive round GC grants will be announced in January and applications will be due in March, if last year’s pattern is replicated. Grants are capped at $200,000. Shelburne received about $165,000 for its first round GC designation grant. Terry submitted the annual report on first round projects this week, so we are in good position now to begin developing projects for a competitive round grant.

Mark noted that the Highway Garage is a good candidate for air source heat pumps, as are other town buildings currently heating with oil such as Shelburne Free Library. Buildings have to be part of the original energy reduction plan to be eligible for energy reduction measures. We could also apply for competitive grants on behalf of Fire/Water districts and School Districts as either a 2-town or multi-town consortium. Consortium grants can be for up to $600,000. Towns would need to re-write its energy reduction plan to bring in new buildings in water districts or school districts.

MGL 25A – the enabling legislation that created GC- allows Towns to work directly with utilities on projects under $100,000 without going out to bid. For the Cowell Gym, we used a META grant to pay for consulting help to develop bid specs. Can also get advice from vendors. We also have funding through FRCOG to write competitive grant apps for towns. Alison Gage is the FRCOG rep.

**Cowell Gym** – Not much to say until we see the consultant report

**MassSAVE Communities First Partnership Program** – Tom sent our draft app to the consultant who assists with proposals to see if our case for $22k is valid. The consultants advised against that amount. FRCOG just sent out our request for multi-town participation. So far, Ashfield is the only town to express interest in collaboration but their rep, Karen Jones, thought they might not be a competitive town demographically. She suggested reaching out to Bob Armstrong in Conway also. Andrew noted that he will need to get the Select Board to approve amending the letter of support they already approved in order to add another town and a revised budget.