**Shelburne Energy Committee**

Thursday, November 17, 2022 7:00 pm

Shelburne Town Hall

**Present:** Tom Johnson, Pat Stevenson, Andrew Baker

**Absent**: George Boettner, Emily Devoto

**Guest:** Dan Post

**Staff:** Cynthia Boettner

**Meeting Minutes**: October 20 meeting minutes were unanimously approved as amended – motion by Pat Stevenson, 2nd by Andrew Baker. Minutes draft was edited to say that Pat used the town credit card to purchase postage, rather than getting reimbursed.

**MassSAVE Communities First:** Cynthia is proposing to delay the heat pump presentation from Dec. to Jan to get the outreach into the Senior Center newsletter. Says that heat pump contractors are very backed up. This coming Sunday, Nov. 20 is the Winter Farmers Market at BSE. Tom will help. Set up at 9am, starts at 11am.

Low income initiative with CAPV: CAPV is proposing to come to Shelburne in the spring for a major energy assessments initiative for low income home owners and renters. Cynthia is trying to get the income eligible people who have signed up through Communities First on the priority list. Cynthia has 8-9 people signed up, not all low income.

Cynthia recommended that we focus on helping get people into fuel assistance and energy discounts this winter so that they can get an energy assessment by spring when the backlog may ease. It takes about 6 weeks to get on fuel assistance.

Cynthia reported that Jody Lewandowski on Old Village Road is the only Shelburne resident she knows of who has successfully navigated heat pump installation this fall. She used American Installation and is a MassSAVE convert. She could be a good speaker at the heat pump presentation Cynthia has planned for January.

Cynthia says she can start planning for a program in Spring to work with the CAPV low income initiative. Will meet in December with Melissa Gonzalez and Peter Wingate at CAPV to plan. We have a total of 56 people in SalesForce who have expressed some interest in an assessment – residents, businesses, tenants, landlords. There are another 11 businesses who signed up through the Main Street initiative.

**2023:** Andrew proposed that the Energy Committee do an MOU with HomeWorks Energy to do all of the energy assessment outreach to market rate and moderate income folks. If that were in place, Cynthia would be interested in continuing as a Communities First staff person and would focus on low income customers. Tom agreed to consult with Terry Narkewicz about whether we can select HomeWorks Energy without going through a bid process. Andrew suggested also asking All In Energy. If we do go out to bid, Cynthia suggested using an RFQ model from Melrose that has the most input from All In Energy.

Eversource will meet with Cynthia on Nov. 22 at 2:30 pm to evaluate our Communities First program and will tell us whether we are eligible to apply to continue in 2023. We will tentatively schedule the planning meeting with CAPV pending the review answer we get from Eversource. Cynthia laid out a list of things she would like help with from the Committee to streamline her time going into 2023. She will send us a to do list.

Green Communities Grant: Terry is working with FRCOG to bid out the heat pump project.

Green Communities Stretch Program: Tom attended the quarterly FRCOG meeting of town energy committees. There is an additional set of stretch code requirements being developed that need to get passed at Town Meeting which would focus on electric cars, electrification capacity for the home etc. Nancy Hazard is looking for folks who have worked with MassSAVE to describe their experience at a public information program that she is planning to have in Greenfield in February.

Facebook Page: Emily Devoto mocked up a FB page to get us online. We will review at December meeting with her.

Next Meeting: December 15, 2022 at 7pm

Adjourned at 8:30 pm

Pat reported that the postcard project completed 440 postcards. The 2 middle schoolers who volunteered completed 40 postcards. Pat and a friend did the rest. Tom moved that the committee approve purchase of 460 postcard stamps – George 2nd. The motion was approved unanimously. Pat will be reimbursed by the town.

Cynthia says she will be attending the Autumn Farmers Market at BSE on Sunday, Nov. 20 to do MassSAVE promotion. Others are welcome to join Cynthia. She will use the same presentation materials she used at the Grange Fair.

Cynthia is planning a presentation on heat pumps in December and has created a Google Groups doc to collect contact info for people interested in heat pumps. Cynthia mentioned that some of the presentations are not that good and that the presenter she liked costs $600 to appear in person. Dan suggested looking on You Tube for good presentations. Need to help people adjust expectations as contractors are already backed up. The plus side is that the federal and state incentives should get clarified and will be improved by Jan. 2023.

Tom posed a number of questions that a heat pump presentation should address:

* What companies are in the area?
* How long will it likely take to get the work done?
* To what cold temp will the heat pump work?
* Breaker box needs to be evaluated to see if service upgrade is needed.
* What is the annual operating cost?
* What rebates can be expected?
* What might an average house with x insulation level require for heat pumps and what range of cost is that?

Tom mentioned that we have $600 to spend. Cynthia will reach out Mike Simons of Abode to see if he is available in December. The committee unanimously approved developing this kind of presentation and getting a date based on his availability.

Emily volunteered to set up a FaceBook group for the committee. Andrew reiterated importance of using the West County Shopper, Shelburne Falls social media sites, Falls Cable, flyers and other free outreach opportunities, along with the Shelburne e-newsletter. Need to get a December date and location approved before mid-November. Tom will explore the BSE cafeteria and library and what screen audio and distancing is.

**HPC Review:** When you plug in 01370 into the MassAVE web site you get 3 companies. Two of the 3 are comprehensive – they do energy audits, insulation and heat pumps: Energy Monster and American Insulation. John Walsh recommended going to bid so as not to show favoritism. John mentioned there are others in town who work for other HPCs – Home Works Energy is one – largest HPC in MA. Got good reviews from Springfield MassSAVE which selected them. HomeWorks Energy is already doing a lot of marketing in Shelburne so that could be a reason to select them.

Heat Pump companies: Arctic, Climates by Pomeroy, Sandri Energy, Gates HVACR

Geoff agreed to review Rouenna Altmose sample RFQ from All in Energy to adapt it for our purposes. Can explore whether FRCOG will help with RFQ.

**CAPV**: Cynthia met with Peter Wingate, energy coordinator at Community Action Pioneer Valley to learn about their program for low income folks. Suggested working with them on a Spring blitz – they come to town and go house to house. Cynthia suggested doing outreach now to help people get on fuel assistance, which then qualifies them for other energy measures. However, many are too proud to do fuel assistance. Should get the message out that SNAP makes you eligible for Fuel Assistance. Do outreach at Food Pantry & Clothes Closet.

Cynthia says next training for energy advocates in on October 26 on the topic of fuel assistance.

**Green Communities Funding:** Embargo has been lifted – we can now talk about the Cowell Gym $118,000 grant. Terry will be working with FRCOG on bidding the Cowell Gym project. More to come.

**Eversource Meeting**: George and Tom met with Matthew Secovich of Eversource and some others to explore capacity limits in the Eversource grid system in our region. They assured that for home installations there is not a problem. They have a hosting connectivity app map that one can plug an address into and it will show the line and what the remaining capacity is. They said for projects under $150 kw there is not significant pressure on the lines.

The line and sub-station hub on Colrain-Shelburne road by the highway garage is starting to max out. Can apply for an assessment – they have 10 days to respond once you apply.

**Energy Committee Membership**: Dan said he is willing to keep attending but not yet ready to officially join. Emily has her paper work in but not yet sworn in. Pat is dealing with a family health issue and may need to step back from volunteering but will stay on the committee.

**USDA Grant**: No news yet. May hear by December.

**Mohawk Trail HS Solar project:** No new news. Solect Energy is doing the engineering assessment and will submit a final proposal when that is complete.

**Next Meeting**: Thursday, November 17 at 7pm at Memorial Hall, 51 Bridge Street

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm