

# WINDHAM ENERGY COMMISSION

## Minutes for Monday, October 24, 2016

Windham Town Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Meeting Room, 979 Main Street, Willimantic, CT

### 1. Call to Order

J. deSmet called the meeting to order at 6:06pm. **Voting Members Present:** Jean de Smet, Tom Markland, Elizabeth Ostwald; Grace Adams **Voting Members Absent:** Chris Mezzarone, Corey Krohn. **Voting Members Excused:** Richard Bloomer, **Guests Present:** None **Staff Present:** Dagmar Noll, Clerk, James Finger, Town Planner **Public Present:** None

### 2. Citizens and Delegations - None.

### 3. Acceptance of Minutes of August 29, 2016 and September 12, 2016

Review of the August 29, 2016 meeting minutes are postponed until next meeting. E. Ostwald MOVED to approve the minutes of the September 12, 2016 Windham Energy Commission meeting. T. Markland SECONDED. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

### 4. Streetlight Recommendations and possible actions

Chair de Smet noted that the Town's contract with Eversource is limited to "converting all cobra head street lights to LED town wide" and does not commit us to any length of time. Option #2, to purchase the fixtures, will likely be out of the question, as Eversource will increase the purchase price when the new heads are installed to recoup labor and material costs. Option #3, solar lighting, remains viable under this contract, and remains the most viable for the future as it offers the largest cost savings.

Discussion about presenting option #3 \$250,000/yr cost savings for twenty-five years to the Windham Town Council Committee on Administration, Finance, Development and Health & Human Services.

Discussion about suggesting language to the Town Council for a resolution mandating that all energy-related issues go through the Energy Commission Meeting before any subcommittees. J. Finger will research the parallel language used by the Conservation, Open Space & Agriculture Commission to this effect. Discussion about how Commissions and Committees can report to the Town Council as needed.

Discussion about moving forward on the footbridge lighting project. E. Ostwald MOVED to recommend that the Town Council pull the footbridge lighting plan out of the Municipal Lighting Consortium RFP and award that design contract. T. Markland SECONDED. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

The committee decided by consensus to add Analysis of Willimantic Police and Fire Emergency Communications and Power next on the agenda.

### 5. Analysis of Willimantic Police and Fire Emergency Communications and Power

T. Markland reported that they are in excellent shape. Consensus to look at the Markland report at the next meeting and submit it to the media.

**6. Next Steps**

**a) Schools: geothermal and LEDs**

All school lighting was recently changed to T-8s, so any change at this time is unlikely to be cost-effective. There are also some LEDs in place on the exterior of the high school. The long-term goal is to replace the fixtures themselves to fixtures designed to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of LED lighting.

**b) Assistance from Paul Torcellini, Eastern’s Endowed Chair for Sustainable Energy, re: GIS, Benchmarking, other**

ECSU Environmental Earth Science students are available to assist with the GIS mapping of streetlights in town and to review our benchmarking in Portfolio Manager and help us understand the data. Eversource will enter energy consumption data beginning in 2017; currently we have a contract with Celtic Energy for 2 more years for this service, which will need to be revised.

**c) Updating Local Energy Assurance Plan, Municipal Energy Action Plan, website**

Report discussed in item 5 will be used to address c.

**d) Municipal Utility**

The Commission will put a presentation together for the Windham Town Council Committee on Administration, Finance, Development and Health & Human Services on municipal utilities.

**e) Future funding sources**

Discussion.

**7. Report on REEBA Municipal Energy Summit in Cromwell**

No report.

**8. Updates & Announcements: Anti-fracking ordinance, micro-grid, fuel cell**

The fracking waste ordinance was voted in unanimously by the Town Council.

**9. Other Business**

Discussion about C-TECSOLAR’s Virtual Net Metering recommendation and questions why other subscribers have pulled out of this deal. Chair de Smet MOVED to issue a Recommendation for Council Action (RAC) to direct Staff to follow up with C-TECSOLAR under the advice of REEBA. E. Ostwald SECONDED. MOTION PASSED unanimously. The Town Council should be made aware that the Town has a contract to purchase a certain amount of electricity with Titan Energy through November of 2017.

E. Ostwald reported that Norwich’s Municipal Utility had them breaking even after \$7.4 million payment to the city. J. de Smet will look up the municipal utility struggle in Boulder, CO for reference.

**10. Citizens and delegations**

D. Noll shared that Ashford is holding a Town Meeting on a fracking waste ban where citizens will have an opportunity to vote on their ordinance.

**11. Adjournment - Meeting adjourned at 7:52pm.**