



Meeting Minutes – Final
September 21, 2017 6:30pm
120 Washington Street, 3rd Floor

Attendance: Jenna Ide (staff), Jeff Cohen, John Hayes, Lisa Kay Rosenthal, Gail Kubik

Not in attendance: Rick Nye, Jeff Barz-Snell, Chrissy Kobyljanc, Matt Rusteika

Public in attendance: Daria Scofield (intern), Kanchan Kandel (intern), and James Cassetta and a co-worker from Work, Inc.

1. Introductions. We introduced ourselves, our new member (Lisa Kay Rosenthal), two new potential interns (Daria and Kanchan), and two individuals from the public.

2. Confirmation of new name, mission statement.

A. Jenna confirmed that the name of the committee has been officially changed to Sustainability, Energy & Resiliency Committee (SERC) from its former name Renewable Energy Task Force (RETF). Both the website and Facebook page have been updated to reflect the change.

B. Jenna updated us on the possibility of becoming an official energy resources commission, as per M.G.L. Chapter 40 Sec. 81. Downside is we cannot discuss renewable energy. Upside is we would have access to more funding. Possible research area for Daria: what do other towns/cities comparable in size and sustainability goals do?

3. Interns. There are 2 new interns.

A. The first student intern (Daria, a geography major at SSU) will work on data, marketing materials, events, social media, websites, supporting sustainability, updating procedures, processes, and documents. Jeff Cohen will invite her to edit SERC Facebook page. John discussed the possibility of Daria working on wind energy FAQ page. Discussed wind turbine project on Winter Island.

B. The second student intern (Kanchan, who has a Masters from Johnson & Wales) will help with the energy database, quality control, and starting Capital Access system – inputting building energy use data. Kanchan or Daria could also aggregate information about the Mayor’s Climate Change Commitment.

4. Public comment. Two individuals representing the organization Work, Inc. presented their biofuel project to the committee. Work, Inc. is a larger employer of people with disabilities, and their project could create more jobs. The company's prototype is 80% completed and, when finished, would begin manufacturing process. Concept is a machine that would collect oil waste from local restaurants, filter/process the oil, and then produce useable biofuel for commercial and personal vehicles. Jenna commented that in downtown Salem we have many restaurants in the same area (Washington St. and Essex St.). Presenter commented that Heather Famico wanted to pursue a closed system locally for producing biofuel and that he's had similar discussions with Mayor Driscoll. Jeff asked how the company itself makes money. They explained that they have been able to reduce their production cost from 28K to 10K; they have financing they would offer the city/businesses; once finance is covered, rest is split between folks who are leasing station and the company. They just service machine once every three months. Price-wise oil would be equivalent to diesel, if not better. Jenna offered the idea that SERC, while it can't endorse an idea officially, can present it on our new website and social media account. SERC can be a conduit between the government and citizens. Jenna suggested the presenters look into the impact of municipal regulations on their project, such as the health code, planning, board of appeals, building code. Which ordinances would help them or hurt them? Jeff said we had a Green Fair that turned more into a vendor fair; he wants to make it more educational and possibly introduced new technologies, such as the biofuel project.

5. Vote on meeting minutes. Once a quorum was reached, we voted to approve two sets of minutes. The June 15, 2017 minutes were approved unanimously. The August 14, 2017 minutes were also approved unanimously.

6. Website. Jenna said that Daria will work with Chrissy and Jenna on website links and organization. Wind FAQ – John will work with Daria on that. Deadline to submit data Green Communities Act in order to be able to apply for grants is December 15.

7. Public resiliency event. Jenna said Earth Day timeframe. Come up with some ideas to raise attention of resiliency. Gail said we need to focus on awareness. John said to imagine a superstorm in Salem and how it might affect our city with major flooding and destruction. Jenna brought up point of sea level rise in 20 years and what that might look like. Jeff brought up some potential partnership with Salem Coast Watch. Public education about relationship between sustainability and resiliency. Police station is under sea level. Major utilities and first responders will be under water. Some schools that would be community shelters lie in flood zones (Gail). Gail brought up connection between solar activity and environmental disasters. Has the city done any climate change collaboration with fire chief, police chief, DPS? Jenna said she has not seen climate response plan for major catastrophe but will look into it. Some evacuation routes will flood – North St. bridge, Jefferson. Gail said we should look at facilities that could act as shelter and evaluate current status.

9. Open discussion.

A. Solar PV project, Witchcraft/Bentley update; everything moving forward as planned. Still need utility approval to energize for Bentley.

B. Jenna discussed updating ordinances (Daria could do this). Jeff brought up if someone builds development, but what if it obstructs someone's solar access?

C. John sent e-mail with link to PACE; a program that would facilitate solar energy projects in apartments and businesses. Participation requires a majority vote by City Council. Jenna said she is aware of it, there are some advantages, but it is complicated in that you need to work with assessor, etc. to make mechanism work. Need to look into details about compliance, etc. John suggested a starting point could be to look into other cities similar in size to Salem that have already adopted it.

D. Jeff reported that the lobbying organization Environment Massachusetts is having an event on November 14th from 6:30-9pm at Salem State University. They are having 30-40 local leaders representing local govt, state govt, universities, hospitals, faith communities, etc. Premise is how to get to 100% clean energy. They are looking for someone to joint host committee to help organize the event.

Meeting adjourned at 7:43 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Lisa Kay Rosenthal, September 22, 2017.

Know Your Rights Under the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. c. 39 §23B, and City Ordinance Sections 2-2028 through 2-2033. Please contact Jenna Ide at jide@salem.com or 978-619-5699 for more information.

