



Public Facilities Committee Report

City of Newton In City Council

Wednesday, October 18, 2017

Present: Councilors Crossley (Chair), Albright, Brousal-Glaser, Danberg, Gentile, Laredo, Lappin

Also Present: Councilors Norton, Fuller, Sangiolo, Harney, Blazar, Leary, Lipof

Absent: Councilor Lennon

City staff Present: Director of Sustainability Ann Berwick

#279-17 Mayor's appointment of Miles Smith to the Solid Waste Commission

MILES SMITH, 30 Webster Street, Newton, appointed as a member of the SOLID WASTE COMMISSION for a term to expire September 30, 2020. (60 DAYS 11/4/17) [08/09/17 @ 11:19 AM]

Action: **Public Facilities Approved 6-0 (Gentile not Voting)**

Note: Committee members thanked Mr. Miles Smith for offering to serve on the Solid Waste Commission. Mr. Smith expressed his enthusiasm for the opportunity to serve on the SWC and noted that his experience includes service on the Recycling (Chair) and Household Hazardous Waste Committees in addition to the coordination of volunteers at the Recycling Depot.

A Committee member asked Mr. Smith to elaborate on his interest in composting. Mr. Smith confirmed that he is excited about the organic waste pilot program and is personally interested in working to remove organic waste from the waste stream. Mr. Smith stated that he is excited to serve on the SWC and is optimistic that the current program leadership will further develop recycling in the City. Mr. Smith noted that he would be supportive of the implementation of a permanent swap shop. Councilor Brousal-Glaser motioned to approve Mr. Smith's appointment to the SWC which carried unanimously.

#316-17 Mayor's appointment of Sunwoo Kahng to the Solid Waste Commission

SUNWOO KAHNG, 60 Garland Road, Newton Centre appointed as a member of the SOLID WASTE COMMISSION for a term to expire November 15, 2020. (60 DAYS 12/01/17) 09/27/17 @ 2:49 PM]

Action: **Public Facilities Approved 6-0 (Gentile not Voting)**

Note: Committee members thanked Ms. Kahng for volunteering to serve on the Solid Waste Commission. Ms. Kahng's experience includes serving on the Board of Green Newton in addition to helping start the Green Team at Mason Rice. The Green Team implemented a composting program for all PTO events. Ms. Kahng stated that her interest in serving on the SWC began after she realized that there is room for improvement not only in the schools, but also in the City's programs. Ms. Kahng feels strongly about citizen education and believes that the City is in need of more enhanced incentives. She noted that "Pay as you throw" has been successful in other

communities. A Committee member noted that Ms. Kahng has been a strong asset to the Polystyrene Working Group. Councilor Danberg moved approval of the item which carried unanimously.

#328-17 Verizon petition for grant of location on Bigelow Road

VERIZON petition for a grant of location to install 334± of conduit 334' from an existing handhole (HH1) in front of 133 Bigelow Road in a westerly direction to a proposed handhole (HH2) in front of 111 Bigelow Road to provide service to a new home. [(Ward 2) 10/05/2017 @ 12:00 PM]

Action: Public Facilities Approved 6-0 (Gentile not Voting)

Note: USC Representative Ms. Jo Ellen Mullen presented the petition on behalf of Verizon to extend underground conduit to provide service to house #111 in Bigelow Road. The Public Hearing was opened and closed with no member of the public wishing to speak. Councilor Albright motioned to approve the item which carried unanimously.

#329-17 National Grid petition for grant of location on Broken Tree Road

NATIONAL GRID petitioning for a grant of location to install and maintain 75'± of 4" gas main in BROKEN TREE ROAD from the existing main at #74 Broken Tree Road northerly to house #82 to provide new service. [(Ward 8) 10/05/2017 @ 12:19 PM]

Action: Public Facilities Approved 7-0

Note: National Grid Permit Representative Barbara Kelleher presented the petition to extend the gas main from the existing main in front of house #74 approximately 75' to house #82 to provide new service. Ms. Kelleher confirmed that abutters without gas service were notified by National Grid prior to submission of the petition. The Public Hearing was opened and closed with no member of the public wishing to speak. With a motion from Councilor Lappin to approve the item, Committee members voted unanimously in favor.

#326-17 Request for updates on Newton Power Program

PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEE requesting an update from the Director of Sustainability and the Administration on the development of a program, known as Newton Power Choice, to aggregate the electricity demand of Newton's electric customers. [10/05/2017 @ 4:28 PM]

Action: Public Facilities held 6-0 (Gentile not Voting)

Note: In March, the City Council voted to authorize the Mayor to explore a municipal electricity aggregation program for the City, as required by statute. A staff working group was created, led by Director of Sustainability Ann Berwick, including Energy Project Manager Bill Ferguson, Chief Operating Officer Dori Zaleznik and Councilors Crossley and Rice. After a lengthy selection process, Peregrine Energy Group was selected to help develop a program for Newton. Two members of the Energy Commission, Jim Purdy and Halina Brown, joined the working group.

Ann Berwick, who is directing the effort, and Paul Gromer and Marlana Patton from Peregrine Energy Group, presented an overview of the program, regulatory process requirements and educational campaign to the Committee. The City believes that it is essential that there be a robust consumer outreach and education program and is confident that Peregrine Energy Group will provide comprehensive educational materials.

The Chair stated that while there will be public hearings in the future, consumer education must occur first. Written testimony is always welcome and has already been submitted by the Coalition Organizing for 100% Renewable Newton.

Municipal Aggregation is a group purchasing program for electricity where the City chooses an energy supplier for the community. This supplier provides energy for those residents and businesses currently receiving basic service from Eversource. Approximately 125 communities in Massachusetts have had aggregation programs approved and in recent years, some communities (including Cambridge, Brookline, Lexington, Acton and Somerville) have begun to increase the amount of “green energy” purchased. This means that a greater amount of locally sourced (New England), clean renewable energy, above what the state already requires (currently 12%), would be in the electricity supplied to Newton customers.

Ms. Berwick discussed the timeline of the municipal aggregation program, which has been renamed “Newton Power Choice”. Implementation of the program can take approximately one year because the state regulatory process includes approval by two state agencies; The Department of Energy Resources followed by the Department of Public Utilities. These agencies review the municipal aggregation plan to verify that the plan will comply with all aspects of aggregation law. In tandem with the state’s review of the City’s plan, the City will work to ensure that consumers are educated and understand their options.

Peregrine Energy Group Paul Gromer stated that there are three phases included in the plan. “Pre-launch” is the time after the aggregation plan is submitted to the DOER for review (approximately 10 months from now; the plan has been submitted). The City will work to engage residents and businesses and solicit feedback during pre-launch. This will help to inform the range of options that should be offered within the program.

The “Launch” phase begins after the DOER and DPU completes their review and approvals of the aggregation plan. During the Launch phase, the City will determine the options to be included, as well as the prices. At this point, an opt-out letter will be sent to those receiving basic service. Because the state mandates that the program is “opt-out”, consumers will be enrolled in the aggregation, unless they opt-out. While there is a mandatory opt-out period of 30 days, a resident or business can opt-out without penalty at any time. After the 30 day opt-out period, the City enters the “Post-Launch” phase. During Post-Launch, residents and businesses may continue to opt out. Ms. Berwick stated that the City intends to have a heavy emphasis on 100% opt-in, which will be more aggressive than what other communities have done so far.

Committee members questioned what the financial impact for residents will be as a result of aggregating the electricity load. Ms. Berwick noted that Eversource's "basic service" includes the Renewable Portfolio Standard, requiring 12% of the energy purchased be from renewable sources. As regulated by state law, Eversource must go out to bid every six months on a scheduled date. Because of this, Eversource lacks flexibility when purchasing energy. Under an aggregation plan, the City has the benefit of flexibility when purchasing energy. Electricity prices fluctuate daily, however the City can monitor the market with non-binding, indicative bids. While there is some risk associated with going to market to purchase energy, experience indicates that the price is likely to be less than basic service. The addition of green energy increases the cost. Customers will be able to opt up to a higher level of green energy. If the price brokered is less than Eversource's basic service rate, the addition of some green energy may result in no net changes to the monthly bill. The bids from suppliers factor in the size of the City, contract lengths and the amount of people they expect will remain in the program. Once the suppliers bid, they are committed to the price, regardless of how many residents opt-out. There is no minimum number of participants required for the program to remain in effect.

It was noted that Green Newton has coordinated volunteers to conduct a survey to find out how much extra residents would be willing to pay in order to get a higher mix of renewable energy. Ms. Berwick stated that the engagement process will help to determine what levels of green should be included as options. Additionally, it was noted that there is legislation pending that would increase the Renewable Portfolio standards from 1% per year (currently) to 2-3% per year. The Renewable Portfolio standard is the baseline for renewable energy options. Lexington received a bid that was \$3 less (average) per month for consumers. With the addition of 5% additional green, the cost savings were reduced to \$2/month. The 100% green option is significantly more. When Brookline launched, they opted for 25% extra green (selected bidder was 4/10 cent per kilowatt hour higher than basic service *or* approximately \$2.50/bill). Ms. Berwick emphasized that these prices are just examples and noted that the City will be subject to market rates at the time of bidding. She noted that another factor is the type of renewable energy being purchased. We are only looking at Class 1 recs, energy purchased from within New England, which expands the solar industry, creates jobs and improves local air quality.

A Committee member asked how a resident with solar would be affected. For a resident meeting 100% of their energy demands with solar, they would not be impacted. For those receiving a percentage of energy from Eversource, they would have the option of being in the program for the percentage of energy not satisfied by their solar credits.

It was noted that Peregrine Energy is compensated by a percentage of the per kilowatt hour charge that residents pay. While the DPU has allowed an additional percentage to be added to fund City personnel, Ms. Berwick does not anticipate that the City will do this. Ms. Berwick noted that she is not aware of any community that has implemented an aggregation program without a consultant. The Executive Office will collaborate with the working group and Peregrine Energy Group on behalf of the City. Ms. Patton reiterated that the ten months prior to the launch phase are essential for public outreach. She stated that after the contract is signed, it takes approximately 6-8 weeks to enroll participants. It was noted that Newton is working faster than other

communities have. Ms. Berwick noted that Peregrine Energy has submitted a draft schedule for the engagement process that will be reviewed and distributed to the Committee.

Councilors were supportive of the emphasis on 100% opt-in and noted that residents will want to know what the financial impact will be. It was noted that the decisions will have to balance achieving maximum clean energy in the electricity supply with not burdening residents. With a motion from Councilor Laredo, Committee members voted unanimously to hold the item.

#327-17 Request for updates on rate case hearings

COUNCILOR CROSSLEY requesting an update from the Director of Sustainability and Public Buildings about the City's involvement in the recent rate case hearings, anticipated results and how this may impact future municipal solar photovoltaic installation. [10/10/2017 @ 11:03 AM]

Action: Public Facilities Voted No Action Necessary 6-0 (Gentile not Voting)

Note: Director of Sustainability Ann Berwick provided an overview of the rate case with Eversource utility company. The City receives compensation for a portion of solar credits from municipal projects. The City negotiated a contract for value of the credits, based on prior rates. Eversource has proposed a significant rate increase which would decrease the value of these credits by approximately 40%. Ms. Berwick stated that is uncommon to have rate changes of this magnitude and noted that customers have historically been grandfathered. Ms. Berwick confirmed that if the Department of Utilities approves the rate changes, the City would lose approximately \$10 million dollars over the life of the contract. She noted that residences would not be impacted. Newton has intervened on behalf of the City and a number of neighboring communities, who do not otherwise have the expertise. Ms. Berwick noted that Public Buildings Project Manager Bill Ferguson and Associate City Solicitor Alan Mandl have been working diligently to fight the rate increase so that it will not apply to previously installed municipal solar projects. It is expected that the City will have a decision in late November or early December. Councilor Albright moved No Action Necessary which carried unanimously.

Referred To Public Facilities and Finance Committees

#320-17 Request to construct fence around Rumford Avenue solar site

COUNCILORS SANGIOLO, HARNEY AND GENTILE requesting that His Honor the Mayor take the necessary steps to construct a 9½' chain link fence with ivy around the exterior of the Rumford Avenue solar site. [09/29/17 @ 2:18 PM]

Action: Public Facilities held 6-0 (Gentile not Voting)

Note: Councilor Albright motioned to hold this item until November 8, 2017. Committee members voted unanimously in favor.

#166-17 Resolution that the City become 100% renewable by 2027

COUNCILORS SANGIOLO, NORTON & BROUSAL-GLASER requesting a resolution from the City Council urging the Newton Legislative Delegation in the State Legislature to do everything in its power to bring Massachusetts closer to 100% renewable energy

by 2027 and ensure that the benefits of renewable energy are realized by Massachusetts residents from all walks of life. The Resolution should also include a statement that the City Council supports a goal of using 100% clean and renewable energy citywide by 2027. [05/19/17 @3:17 PM]

Action: **Public Facilities held 6-0 (Gentile not Voting)**

Note: Councilor Norton presented the Resolution for the City to support a goal of 100% renewable energy by 2027. She stated that the resolution was drafted in response to the community and is part of a larger effort on behalf of local communities to take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Councilor Norton stated that Massachusetts uses 50% of the electricity in New England and noted that Newton is a leader for progress in energy efficiency amongst Greater Boston communities. Councilor Norton provided the attached chart outlining steps toward converting to electricity and satisfying that need using 100% clean energy, with corresponding suggested time frames. It was noted that certain measures might reach 100% renewable in different time frames, based on difficulty and cost (some costs not provided). Councilor Norton noted that the resolution can be used to pressure the City to create and implement a strategy for reaching 100% renewable. Councilor Norton stated that Co-Directors of Sustainability Ann Berwick and Andrew Savitz and Public Buildings Project Manager Bill Ferguson continue to work on the details.

The Chair noted that the resolution for 100% Renewable energy by 2027 is an aggressive goal, requiring deeper understanding and an unknown but enormous amount of resources. She provided the example of the 96% energy efficient boilers with a lifespan of approximately 30 years valued at \$250,000 A piece that have been installed in many municipal buildings over the course of a dozen years. It does not make sense to replace these within ten years. She emphasized the high cost associated with converting all City facilities to electric and attaining 100% and noted that without significant subsidy, the goals would be unattainable. The Chair noted that the resolution does not recognize that a key step toward 100% clean energy is to reduce energy waste in our old buildings and facilities, and that we can ask the City to continue to work to develop a plan to achieve 100% renewable energy, work together with local expertise, identify technological and resource challenges we face and seek ways to overcome them, but not set or demand from others, unachievable goals.

Some Councilors agree that the City is socially obligated to push 100% renewable energy sourcing forward to address climate change and stated that establishing a time frame will help the City work more aggressively to meet that goal. Some Committee members were in agreement that setting a date certain for the resolution might not be prudent, as technology and information is evolving at a rapid rate. One Committee member noted that there are private corporations that could assist the City in developing a plan. Councilors were in agreement that while achieving 100% renewable is supportable goal, an aggressive time frame should not be set without a concrete plan. With a motion from Councilor Laredo to hold the item, Committee members voted unanimously in favor.

Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees

#385-16 Discussion about the Community Solar Share Program

PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEE requesting discussion with the Administration and Public Buildings Department about the Community Solar Share Program, which intends to provide credits resulting from solar power generated at 70 Elliot Street to qualifying low income residents. [10/26/16 @ 4:20 PM]

Action: Public Facilities Voted No Action Necessary 6-0 (Gentile not Voting)

Referred to Public Facilities and Finance Committees

#56-17 Request to increase the Public Works Department by one full-time position

HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to add one full-time employee within the Public Works Department to manage all detail requests submitted to the Police Detail Coordinator. [02/27/17 @ 2:42 PM]

Action: Public Facilities Voted No Action Necessary 6-0 (Gentile not Voting)

Referred to Public Safety & Transportation, Public Facilities, and Finance Committees

#179-17 Request for parking meter pilot(s)

COUNCILORS ALBRIGHT, KALIS, LAREDO AND LEARY requesting a parking meter pilot or multiple pilots in Fiscal Year 2018 using the latest technology, which allows payment by credit card and other features, such as monitoring meter usage, providing feedback to administrators, information to drivers, and allowing time-based fee adjustment. 05/22/17 @ 9:15 AM]

Action: Public Facilities Voted No Action Necessary 6-0 (Gentile not Voting)

Note: Committee members unanimously voted No Action Necessary for items #385-16, #56-17 and #179-17.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah J. Crossley, Chair

100% Renewable Newton

Municipal

<u>Energy Type</u>	<u>Target & Timeline</u>	<u>Considerations</u>
Electricity	2020	Solar, munic aggregation
Heat	2037	Must move from gas and oil to electric heat pump (ground source or air source). Replacement cycle for heating systems >10 years
Transportation	2030	Must move from gas, diesel and CNG to electric

Residential/Small Business

<u>Energy Type</u>	<u>Target and Timeline</u>	<u>Considerations</u>
Electricity	2025	Solar, munic aggregation.
Heat	25% by 2025, 100% by 2050	Must move from gas and oil to electric heat pump or geothermal
Transportation	50% by 2030, 100% by 2050	Must move from gas to electric or no car

Large Business/Institutions

<u>Energy Type</u>	<u>Target and Timeline</u>	<u>Considerations</u>
Electricity	2025	Solar, munic aggregation
Heat	25% by 2025, 100% by 2050	Must move from gas and oil to electric heat pump or geothermal
Transportation	50% by 2030, 100% by 2050	Must move from gas, diesel and CNG to electric