

Newton Citizen's Commission on Energy

Minutes of Meeting of Wednesday July 13, 2017, 7:30 p.m.

Newton City Hall Room 204

Present: Halina Brown, Fred Brustman, Michael Gevelber, Ira Krepchin, Jim Purdy; Ed Craddock, Councilor Deb Crossley

Vice Chairman Halina Brown called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. The minutes of the May 2017 meeting were reviewed and approved with revisions.

1. Report on the July 13 meeting this morning on community choice aggregation with Ann Berwick and Deb Crossley (Jonathan Kantar, Cory Alperstein and Halina attended)

Halina gave a summary of the morning's meeting, at which the question of the appropriate default level of Class 1 renewables was discussed but not decided.

2. Strategy for the EC participation in the Aggregation Program

There was a discussion among NCCE members of the potential cost per kWh for class 1 RECs, as well as the fee charged by aggregation broker.

The big question to be determined is default the level of Class 1 Renewables. Brookline's program which is going into effect this summer is a model: they have three plans – the default is 25% additional renewables, but also an opt-in plan for 100% renewables, and a "Brookline Basic" plan that people can opt down to and save money compared to Eversource rates.

Michael noted that Newton uses 40% more electric than Brookline: average consumption is 716 kWh per month in Newton. This number reflects a re-examination of Michael's study of electricity consumption in Newton by zipcode, after correcting for the portions of the Chestnut Hill zipcode area that are in Brookline and Boston.

Michael proposed that the NCCE should provide numbers for advocates of a higher default level to use.

Halina suggested that we produce a table for three levels of use based on today's prices and use this information in a survey of Newton residents.

The key question in the survey would be how much would people be willing to pay for a higher level of "green" energy. Brookline conducted a door-to-door survey of this type and concluded that the average household would be willing to pay an additional \$7 per month. The survey should provide information on cost for various levels of consumption. The question could be posed for "a program that was vetted by the city" for additional "green content." Jim said that it would be better to avoid getting into a discussion of RECs unless we're asked, because it just takes too much time to explain; the whole survey process should take only a couple of minutes of we expect to get a good response rate.

Michael offered the opinion that it would be sufficient to survey about 400 households.

Jim suggested that Green Newton would probably volunteer to conduct the survey so as to keep an arm's length from the City.

Deb Crossley noted that the next Public Facilities Committee meeting is Sept 6 and aggregation will be on the agenda.

One question to consider would be whether the default level of green would affect the negotiation with the broker.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m. Respectfully submitted, Jim Purdy.