

CLEAN ENERGY TASK FORCE MINUTES
SUBJECT TO APPROVAL
May 8, 2017
REGULAR MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 6:40 p.m. by Commissioner Ray in the Room 103 of Simsbury Town Hall, with the following members present: Jim Ray, Mark Scully, Susan Van Kleef and Bob Beinstein.

1. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MEETING ON MARCH 13th, 2017:

The minutes from the March 13th meeting were reviewed by all. Commissioner Scully made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Commissioner Van Kleef seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

Amendments agreed are noted as follows:

- Amendment to page 1, line 34. Change "infra-red" to "infrared"
- Amendment to page 2, line 77. Change "through the People's" to "through People's"

2. PUBLIC AUDIENCE:

Commissioner Ray opened the floor for public audience.

Mr. Clinton Plummer and Mr. Dylan Levings of DeepWaterWind (DWW), Ms. Susan Moberg of VHB, and Mr. Tim Lescalleet of Griffin Industrial Reality were in attendance to discuss their planned Tobacco Valley Solar Farm in Simsbury. Also in attendance for the discussion was Mr. Tom Roy, Simsbury Director of Public Works, Ms. Regina Pynn and Ms. Susan Masino. Initially an overview of the project was given. DWW was selected for this project based on a joint Connecticut, Massachusetts & Rhode Island Request for Proposal (RFP). The RFP requested large scale projects above 20 MW in size. As a state project, it does not need local approval, but input will be sought from Simsbury as part of the state's final approval process. It is DWW's aim to work within the community to address its desires both from the town and the citizens. In this regard, an open public meeting is being held on May 11th. DWW will have their CEO, Mr. Jeff Grybowski do an overview and have various stations where their experts will be able to answer any questions in various areas like: environmental, screenings, noise, safety, specific layouts of panels, wetlands, etc. The project will be located on about 175 acres of a 280 acre site along County and Hoskins Roads which had prior use as tobacco fields. The plans are for a 26 MW AC facility that will produce enough electricity to power approximately 5,000 homes. The site is basically flat and is adjacent to an Eversource power station behind the Dorset Crossing development which will allow ready access to connecting to the grid. The basis of the RFP provides for at least 20 years of electricity production and possibly longer as the solar panels are considered to have a life of at least 25 years. At the end of the agreed to period with the state, the site will be cleared of all equipment and returned to farmland if that is the ultimate desire from the state at that time. Since this is general power going into the grid, there is not a directed use within Simsbury, but due to its proximity, ultimately a lot of the generated power will be used locally which includes Simsbury. The most direct benefit from the installation to Simsbury will be a substantial increase in the taxes as it will move from tax on farmland to the solar usage. Taxes will be determined later but it is on the order of current \$26k per year to somewhere in the \$300k range. Since the project is at still at the initial planning stages, changes can be readily made to address concerns, needs and other things that will make it a beneficial project for Simsbury. All participated in further discussion about the project and some possibilities that would add further benefits beside the clean power generation. In regard to the town, all road access, needs for underground cabling under roads, all fire, safety, and emergency requirements, etc are being discussed with the associated town personnel. For other benefits, discussions included a myriad of ideas such as: a. Access for local walking trails around the solar installations, b. Use of pollinators for the ground cover under the panels, c. Use of a website or other means to show the power being generated along with other information about solar that could be tied into educational programs, d. A general maintenance plan that also covered control of invasive species, and e. Possible educational signs/kiosks around the trails that could cover again the solar aspects plus any related environmental aspects associated with wetlands, flora and fauna. Several members provided DWW some input of the type of questions/concerns that will be raised at the open meeting as a means to prepare them for the session. This discussion and planning will be an evolving process and CETF indicated that they will support the project and stay in touch with DWW as the planning continues. With no other comments or discussion for the public record, the public audience closed.

54 **3. BRIGHT IDEA GRANT – DISCUSSION OF PLANS FOR SECOND GRANT:**
55 Commissioner Van Kleef moved that the discussion on Bright Idea grant be tabled until the next meeting.
56 Commissioner Scully seconded. All voted in favor.
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58 **4. HIGH SCHOOL SOLAR PANEL INSTALLATION STATUS UPDATE:**
59 Mr. Roy has indicated that solar panels were delivered to start the installation this past week. Approval from
60 Eversource to attach the system to the grid still has not been received, but Mr. Roy will help in coordinating that effort.
61
62 **5. SMALL BUSINESS ENERGY ADVANTAGE PLANS/STATUS DISCUSSION:**
63 Commissioner Butler is still working with one of the contractors to finalize a case study that will be added to the
64 website when completed. No further updates to the status were available for this meeting.
65
66 **6. 100% SIMSBURY PLAN:**
67 Based on the formal endorsement by the Board of Selectman of the CETF proposed resolution and the subsequent
68 letter sent by Simsbury First Selectman, Ms. Lisa Heavner, Eversource has indicated willingness to continue
69 discussion of a community micro-grid. Also in working through People's Action for Clean Energy (PACE), PACE has
70 received a grant of \$40k from the Common Sense fund and \$25k of that has been provided to Clean Coalition to begin
71 preparation of a plan in that regard. Commissioner Scully will provide information as to future meetings with Clean
72 Coalition and/or Eversource as this evolves. Efforts are also continuing in regard to the energy related data gathering
73 effort to support the 100% plan.
74
75 **7. SIMSBURY PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT (POCD) DISCUSSION:**
76 Commissioner Scully indicated that the input from CETF has been completed and the draft POCD is available for
77 viewing on the Town website on the Planning Commission page.
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79 **8. OPEN FORUM:**
80 No additional topics were discussed.
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82 **9. NEXT MEETING**
83 The next regularly scheduled meeting is June 12th.
84
85 **10. ADJOURNMENT**
86 Commissioner Scully motioned to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:45 p.m. The motion was seconded by
87 Commissioner Van Kleef and unanimously approved.