

**Tamworth Energy Committee (TEC)**  
**May 9, 2023, 2:30 pm**  
**Cook Memorial Library**

**Present:** Gabrielle Watson TEC, Ted Morgan TEC, Ellen Farnum TEC  
David Kunhardt, (remote) Willie Farnum (remote), Melissa Elander Clean Energy NH  
North County Circuit Rider, (remote)  
Theresa MacDowell Standard Power (remote) Ryan Polson Standard Power (remote)  
**Call to Order:** 2:32 pm

**Guest Speaker Melissa Elander, Clean Energy NH North Country Circuit Rider**

Melissa Elander is a staff member from Clean Energy NH. Her position is funded through the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund. Melissa offers technical assistance for energy projects in North Country municipalities and communities of Coos and northern Grafton counties primarily. Over the past several years she has helped many communities apply for grants to fund energy audits, solar arrays, and other clean energy projects.

**Grant funding**

*~Melissa responds to a question from David Kunhardt.* David has spent over 9 years in the solar industry and has experience with funding projects. He asked about accessing Inflation Reduction Funds.

Helping communities access Inflation Reduction Funds (IRA) money is part of Melissa's job. IRA grants are time limited and very competitive. Awards are usually made through tax credits. There is still money available to municipalities.

**Community Power**

Community Power can help residents in a town save money by allowing residents to jointly contract for energy services. It also allows residents to access green energy resources.

Melissa is aware of the three main entities supporting communities to set up Community Power programs in our area:

~Community Power Coalition of NH (CPCNH), a nonprofit organization. This organization likes to see communities use their savings to reinvest in other green energy projects. They offer templates and checklists and have a peer mentorship program to help communities set up their programs.

~Standard Power, private company

~Freedom Energy Logistics, private company

**Recommendation:**

Talk to all three companies.

**Further Discussion:**

**~Requirements:**

The state requires filing a plan with Community Power Aggregation NH Department of Energy. Community power aggregation committees and community power aggregation plans are required to provide certain notices and filings to the Public Utilities Commission, the appropriate electric utility, the Department of Energy and the Office of

Consumer Advocate. These plans can be a lot of work, but there are locally developed templates that are helpful.

~Tamworth could also join other communities. For example, North Country has grouped regionally, Berlin with Gorham. (The net metering law allows grouping/networking with another town.)

### **Weatherization**

Tamworth Energy Committee is interested in encouraging new weatherization projects on both municipal buildings and for private homeowners and small businesses that would reduce energy waste and save money.

Melissa discussed some resources for weatherization projects.

~Plymouth Area Renewable Energy Initiative (PAREI) will provide Button Up workshops and conduct an energy audit of private homes.

The Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA) offers 75% funding for audits. Melissa said that CDFA Director Scott Maslansky will provide a very quick turnaround for applications.

~ Resilient Building Group (RBG) is one common audit provider that offers energy audits, energy monitoring and verification, energy efficiency incentive counseling for municipalities.

### **Recommendations:**

~Melissa recommended that our Tamworth group take advantage of an energy auditor to both recommend a plan and coordinate work with Eversource.

~Melissa can also walk us through the EPA's Energy Star Portfolio Manager. The Energy Star Portfolio allows you to link with Eversource and monitor energy used and saved over time. This can provide valuable data for tightening up municipal buildings. Data can be shared with the public to demonstrate energy saved.

### **Electric Vehicle Ride Events**

Melissa described a successful event that engaged the public and provided an opportunity for people to learn more about electric vehicles: An Electric Vehicle Ride Event. She recommended reaching out to electric vehicle owners as well as dealerships. Combining the event with classical cars and promoting a dual event was also discussed. A dual event would potentially draw a larger and more diverse group of people.

### **Solar Projects:**

Melissa discussed funding resources.

~USDA Rural Development Community Facilities Grant

Tamworth could be eligible for a grant that would cover 35% of the cost of a solar project.

~Northern Borders Regional Commission

This grant is favorable to solar projects and EV chargers.

~Inflation Reduction Act:

This grant could potentially fund 30% of the cost for a solar installation.

### **Recommendations:**

- ~ Because of NH's Net Metering policy, it is easier to begin with a smallish solar project on a municipal building rather than trying to work on an all-encompassing comprehensive plan for all the town's buildings.
- ~ smaller projects are easier for the community to support,
- ~ start with municipal buildings with high electricity use,
- ~ small projects that can be seen by the public (such as small solar arrays on buildings) help the public become familiar with solar and begin to see it as an asset to the community. Example: Colebrook is starting a solar project at their transfer station: a high visibility spot.
- ~ Check with local Select Board: they may want an open policy where each solar company has an opportunity to bid on a project.
- ~ Melissa said that it is possible to share excess electricity generated at a municipal building with other municipal buildings.
- ~ David Kunhardt suggested reviewing this solar service provider:  
<https://www.revisionenergy.com/>

### **EV Chargers:**

Most new funding for EV charging stations will probably go to support installations in well-traveled NH routes first. Melissa believes that more money will be made available in the future. Currently, you need at least 4 parking spaces to install an EV charging Station.

### **Recommendation:**

Review Hanover's Document: Accessible Publicly EV Support Equipment Business Model Request for Information (available online). This free model can be used as a template: [hlh\\_-\\_rfi\\_-\\_ev\\_chargers\\_1.pdf](#)

### **Solarize Campaigns**

Melissa mentioned some municipalities have hosted campaigns to help residents and businesses contract with solar installers. The municipality usually works with one company that it has vetted and selected which can then offer solar installations at a lower price and with basic service guarantees that the town negotiates, making the solar installation cheaper for residents and businesses than if they were doing it on their own.

### **Guest Speaker Ryan Polson, Standard Power/ Good Energy**

Ryan gave us background information on Standard Power and presented a slide show. Standard Power/Good Energy helps supply municipalities with energy procurement and Community Power programs, resulting in lower costs for residents.

The company has been in business since 2010 and is based in Nahua. Standard Power currently serves over 70 towns; our own SAU 13 has been a member since 2013.

Waterville Valley is probably the nearest community to Tamworth.

Standard Power serves as a broker for both electric and gas and more recently, since the legislature created the net metering law, has been able to incorporate renewable resources such as solar and hydro. Ryan noted that the electric suppliers and power companies did not initially support community power and fought the legislation, but the

Public Utilities Commission did promulgate regulations in late 2022. Also, the law on net metering was once again passed in 2021.

### **How the Community Power Program works:**

~Standard Power does not own any transmission equipment. If Tamworth works with Standard Power to set up a Community Power program, they would sign a contract with Eversource for distribution and transmission, while Standard Power would help contract for energy supply from electricity generators. Eversource would still appear on a customer bill.

~ The program begins with a survey. Standard Power has found that 75% of communities surveyed want at least some renewable energy in their mix.

~Standard Power has an Opt Out option for people who want to stay with Eversource as their energy supplier.

The community receives notification that the program has begun, provides the opt-out option and each resident is enrolled and given four choices on rate options. Rate options vary, depending on the proportion of renewable energy the resident wants to purchase. All options are currently and have historically been less expensive than purchasing energy supply from Eversource.

If the resident does nothing it goes to a default rate, which is a slightly higher portion of renewable energy than what Eversource supplies, but still about 9 cents lower than the current Eversource rate of 20.221 cents per kilowatt hour (KwH).

The resident can opt out of the entire program at any time.

~Standard Power can also offer an energy savings account for the municipality.

Communities can agree to add a small fee to energy bills and put the money into an account that can later be used to fund projects such as a solar array, EV chargers, etc.

~ *Question: how does the company make a profit?*

Standard Power charges 1/10 of a cent per kilowatt hour from each customer.

~ *Question: would Standard Power be interested in supporting a local hydro power project?*

At this time, the company would probably not be interested in investing in a small power generation project. They primarily purchase energy from energy suppliers.

*Question: Does Standard Power offer Time of Use charging fee structures or other incentives for residents to use energy when it is cheaper, thus saving themselves money?*

Standard Power is not set up to offer at this time but may change the policy in the future.

### **Other Business:**

**Minutes:** TEC members revised and accepted minutes from the 4-10-23 meeting

### **Button-Up Workshops**

Ted has contacted Robin Adams from the Plymouth Area Renewable Energy Initiative (PAREI). The organization has money to fund six more workshops. TEC would like to hold these in August, Ted will coordinate plans and report back to the committee.

### **Meeting Times**

TEC agreed to schedule monthly meetings on the first Monday of each month at 3:00 Pm. Meetings will be held at the Cook Memorial Library.

**Tamworth Office Audit**

The Tamworth Foundation has awarded a grant to the town of Tamworth for the 25% co-pay portion of the audit for the Town Office Building. The Tamworth Select Board has approved the Energy Committee's request that it be authorized to prepare a grant application to the Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA) for the remaining 75% of the audit costs. That application will be submitted in the coming weeks.

**Next Meeting:** June 5, 2023, 3:00 pm, Cook Memorial Library

**Meeting Adjourned 4:45**

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