

Northport Energy Action Taskforce, Inc.
Meeting Minutes
September 8, 2016

Meeting called to order 9:05 AM

Members Attending:

Doug and Ann McInnis, Jan Rygwelski, Joe DeFors, Jane Gale, Ed Reinert, Russ and Jane Packard, Dick Lang, Rick Foster, Jay Swink, George Wellman, Tom Gallery, Peter Wolcott, Bob Babich and Sarah Jane Johnson, Don and Kathy Frerichs, Steve Smiley, Pat Scott

I. Approve Agenda

II. Treasurer Report

Northport Energy Balance: \$1,255.42 Expense: \$20.00 State of Mich. Annual Rept.

III. Renewable Energy

A. Cherryland Electric Campaign

Joe DeFors summarized the CE campaign efforts. Letters to the editor and emails seem to have had some impact explaining and educating the public on the net metering issue. However, with over a 100 people on our Northport Energy email list we had a goal of creating 6 letters a week for 6 to 8 weeks. We fell short of achieving that level. Also created a half dozen of prewritten letters so folks wouldn't have to write - no takers.

On August 22nd CE held a public meeting to discuss "Alternative solutions toward meeting renewable energy goals". About 15 people were present including representatives from Cherryland and Wolverine Power. A three-part package was presented that included: A new community solar project, buy-all/sell-all solar program and a revised solar net metering policy. Note: Joe DeFors August 27th email summarizes the three-part package.

Regarding CE's revised net metering policy even with an increase from \$0.03 to \$0.056/kWh for over production would still make the payback period for a solar installation approximately 19 years. The problem is the use of instantaneous metering in a four season climate.

CE's buy-all/sell-all program appears to be an attractive proposal for small businesses. Tom suggested a homeowner could become a producer, forming a business and take advantage of: tax credits, accelerated depreciation and perhaps a REAP grant. The payback would be 10 years or less.

CE is also abandoning existing limits to net metering (currently 1% of energy sales) and have approved a pilot size of 10 megawatts for their entire system. This could be attractive to large entities.

September 19th is CE next member meeting. An email will be sent out reminding CE customers to attend the meeting. We will also submit our Community Support Letter.

Tom Van Pelt (CE Board member) will be asked if he would like to attend our next meeting to discuss the CE's renewable energy package.

We need to continue with letters to editors, be involved at candidate forums and get candidates on record as to their position on renewable energy. The LWVLC candidate forum for County Commissioners, Districts 1 and 4 is scheduled for October 4 at the Northport Fire Hall.

B. U of M Graduate Student Project

Reese Blanchard, via phone teleconference, updated status of his project. His analysis of potential use of Thomas & Milliken scrap wood and sawdust indicates there is not a sufficient supply to generate both heat and electricity. A plant heating system might be viable. Andy Thomas considering other alternatives such as solar. Equipment is expensive, however, should qualify for the Dept. of Agriculture REAP program.

IV. Miscellaneous

A. Leelanau Uncaged

We will be present and have a table at Leelanau Uncaged to promote renewable energy and energy conservation/efficiency. Free home energy audits will be offered to Leelanau Township and Northport Village residents. The follow people have agreed to help man our table: Don and Kathy Frerichs, Russ and Jane Packard, Peter Wolcott, Jane Gale, Tom Gallery, Ann and Doug.

B. Future Event

The League of Women Voters and Northport Energy are working together to set up a solar tour for October 30th from 1:00 AM to 4 PM.

Meeting Adjourned 10:45 AM