

Northport Energy Action Taskforce, Inc.
Meeting Minutes
December 14, 2017

Members Attending: Doug and Ann McInnis, Jane Gale, Kathy and Don Frerichs, Steve Smiley, George Wellman, Joe DeFors, Jan Rygwelski, Lois Bahle, Rick Foster, Phil Von Voigtlander, Peter Wolcott, Dick Lang, Larry Mawby, Ed Reinert, Will Harper, Ernie Maas, Tom Galley, Tom Van Pelt, Sam—Wolverine, Ann Rogers, David Petrove, Dan Worth

1. **Called to order** 9:08 AM

2. **Introductions** (Board, Member or Guest)

Guests: Will Harper, Ernie Maas, Larry Mawby, Sam Hogg – (Wolverine)

3. **Approval of Agenda**

Under New Business added: New Membership Campaign

4. **Approval of Minutes**

Phil Von Voigtlander moved to approve minutes. Steve Smiley seconded. Motion passed

5. **Treasurer's Report**

Membership: Regular 31, Sustaining 11, Life 1

Accounts Summary:

Income: \$20 for new membership Expenses: \$853.64

Balance: \$5,967.18

6. **Standing Committee Reports**

1. **Projects**

Steve - Looking at areas closer to substations and sites that can accommodate a large solar array. Hopefully will be able to tie in with the proposed U of M study.

Peter – We have just submitted our application to the U of M Graduate School for Environment and Sustainability (SEAS). Should hear soon if accepted. (Note, we were notified on December 20th that our application had been accepted). We have had two previous U of M graduate projects – one a group of 6 students that developed a renewable plan for Northport/Leelanau Township and a second done by a graduate involving the PACE program. Now we are asking to expand the Northport/Leelanau Township plan for the whole county. This would be a major study and we would like to see 5 to 7 students involved. If U of M accepts our application, we would attend a school fair in Ann Arbor on January 16th to enlist graduate students for the project.

7. **Public Policy** - Peter

This Friday MEIBC will hold its monthly conference call. We are following HB 5143 that reinstates the Michigan's property tax exemption for alternative energy systems such as solar and wind systems. At the Federal level proposed tax detail has not been released. There is concern tax credits will disappear. Part of the US Fed. administration wants to get rid of renewables. May need to contact U.S. Representative Bergman and the Michigan legislature. Trying to get renewable energy wording in villages and township master plans --- may include this with the work of U of M graduate students.

Joe -- The MSU Planning & Zoning for Solar in Michigan Workshop (Joe, Peter and Lois attended) emphasized each community needs guiding language in place so that future permitting can happen in a timely matter. The workshop provided guiding language. Two planners from Leelanau County were

also at the meeting. Joe and Peter are on Northport's Dec. 19th meeting agenda to present possible master plan language that is renewable friendly.

8. Marketing and Outreach – Jane Gale

No live meetings held last month. Last month's meeting notes covers areas of possible activities/ goals such as solar tour, promoting electric vehicles, sponsorship Music in The Park and 10th anniversary of Northport Energy. Lois said the Bay Theater would be available April 22 for use with the Solar Tour.

9. Energy Audits - Doug McInnis

We conducted one energy audit earlier this week. We pointed out several basic and simple energy saving measures from switching to LED lights to reducing window air leaks. We used the infra camera to clearly show the leaks. Utilities also offer energy audits. If you use natural gas DTE will provide a free programable thermostat. Cherryland Electric also does home energy audits.

10. Old Business -- None

11. New Business – Joe DeFors

1. New look to mailings. A recent mailing through gmail resulted in all 190 coming back as undeliverable. Need a free mailing tool at a lower level up to 2,000 and 12,000 free a year. New software offers other features, identify those who open our emails, and the option to unsubscribe.

2. The Leelanau Township Community Foundation is offering a workshop entitled "Non-profit Board Governance: The Basics a Board Needs to be Effective. It is a half-day workshop to be held in Northport at the Village Arts Center. Jan. 17th or 24th dates are available.

3. New membership campaign time. We need new bodies and dollars to keep moving forward. It has been suggested to use software for membership renewals to keep track of when memberships are received but proves to be expensive. We will continue to use our simple system on a spreadsheet.

12. Comments and Announcements

Sam Hogg – Wolverine Power Coop: Wolverine is a generation cooperative providing power to 5 distribution cooperatives such as Cherryland Electric. Tom Van Pelt is on their Board. In 2000 large commercial market opened-up because of the Customer Choice Program – the supply of power opened to competitive suppliers. Currently Wolverine Power Marketing, a member cooperative, has 26 members such as universities, public schools, etc. Spartan Renewable Energy, an alternative electric supplier, works with Wolverine.

Cherryland Electric's Buy All Sell All program has been popular. To qualify you must be a CE customer. If the utility service provider for the land is unknown, you can contact the utility to see which "franchise area" the parcel is located. Can't have competing markets in and around Traverse City area. Every parcel has already been designated. Wolverine is looking at new technology, such as storage. Renewable energy is a priority – expect to be 50% carbon free including nuclear by 2018.

Dan Worth - Discussed some ideas he had about moving the region's renewable energy goals forward.

1. Smart cities stories. Write a story about Northport and how able to make things happen. Include anything and everything, such as, community outreach programs, U of M graduate study, etc. Want to include stories of other areas, such as, Suttons Bay, Glen Arbor, Empire, etc.

2. Dept. of Energy grant project: By November 2018 grants for up to 5 megawatts of solar available to communities (60% to low/middle income and 40% to nonprofits). Would like investors. Determine what are local needs.

3. Clean Energy Conference scheduled for June 21 – 23 at the Aeropark campus in T.C.

Tom Gallery - Small Farm Conference to be held on Jan. 26 & 27, 2018 the Grand Travers Resort in Acme. Largest gathering of small farmers in Michigan. Many are looking at sustainability as a major effort. Kate Thornhill is going.

Ann Rogers – NMEAC News

Environmentalist of the Year Awards. April 13, 2018 at Denno's & Milliken Auditorium.

In January NMEAC's new website will be up and running.

Next meeting: Annual meeting – elections for Board.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned 10:15 AM

Respectively submitted by Ann McInnis, Secretary