

ENERGY AND CLIMATE ACTION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES, JUNE 18, 2025

In attendance: Liz Steel, Bill Chidsey, Blake Auchincloss, Beth Meachem
Special guest-Sarah Braese from Hardwick Electric

Meeting called to order at 6PM

Liz called for approval of minutes from January and notes from May. Beth moved to approve. Bill seconded. No discussion

Hardwick Electric Presentation:

Special guest Sarah Braese, General Manager of Hardwick Electric presented the committee with an overview of where Hardwick Electric is now and where it is headed. [Click here for full presentation](#). Highlights included mention of strategic priorities that would create a roadmap for current and future needs while balancing cost, reliability and environmental impact. HED is looking at enhancing renewable energy resources that include restoring the Wolcott hydro facility, and shared details of its residential obligations through 2035, including energy compliance. HED has a number of existing programs and services for customers, including low interest loans to commercial customers, a smart hours pilot program for residential EV charging, and rebates and incentive programs in partnership with Efficiency Vermont. In addition HED is looking at grant projects to install energy storage systems at critical municipal owned buildings and income qualifying residential customers. HED recently filed their updated Integrated Resource Plan and a proposed electricity rate increase of 13.4% with the Vermont Public Utility Commission. There is a public comment period up to 7.21.25 using the following [Case No. 25-0853-PET](#).

MERP Grant Update on Library Project:

Bill has been working on a ventilation system. Upstairs is in place; still working on downstairs. Bill expressed challenges with supply channels which is slowing down the installation of the heat pump. Bill to report to the Library Board on July 15th and August 23rd at 10AM is the tentative date for doing a community tour of work to date. Discussion to make this a family friendly event including a hands-on science project for kids, food, and strong marketing. Beth to take the lead on this. Committee to come up with a catchy title.

Residential Building Energy Standards (RBES):

Beth reported on her discussion with the Dorset Zoning Commissioner. Dorset requires a signed RBES certificate on new builds prior to receiving a certificate of occupancy. Dorset has a zoning commissioner who works three days per week. The RBES standards are a state mandate, but it has not been enforced state wide for residential buildings due to lack of manpower to oversee projects. Bill suggested that, instead of putting additional stress on local zoning/government, the oversight of the RBES standards on new builds in Greensboro could be handled by the energy committee, in collaboration with zoning/DRB. Further discussion with town will happen upon Brett's return. Liz has committed to carrying out a RBES project as part of the VCRD-sponsored Climate Catalyst Leadership Program that she is participating in this year. Blake is interested in using his experience with energy standards to help work on this initiative.

Funky Fourth:

It was decided that we will not participate in the parade but will put up our Sustainable Living Tent on the town green. If Liz ends up towing the Honeybee Steel band in the parade we will look for ways to dress up the Rivian to showcase building energy efficiency.

Town Plan Input:

As part of the Town Planning cycle, there will be the opportunity for ECAC to participate in a kickoff meeting facilitated by the NVDA. The Planning commission will be looking to each committee to do a write up on their activities moving forward. The Town Planning process will begin following the report from the Municipal Planning Grant project which will run July-November 2025.