

TOMPKINS COUNTY ENERGY TASK FORCE
Thursday, December 14, 2017
TCPL Borg Warner Conference Room
Final Minutes

Attendance

Member		Member		Member	
Sharon Anderson	P	Curt Gooch	E	Irene Weiser	P
Martha Armstrong	P	Bob Howarth	P	Gordon Woodcock	E
Cliff Babson	P	Tim Mount	P	Sarah Zemanick	P
Fernando de Aragón	P	Megan Pulver	P		
Jerry Dietz	E	Martha Robertson	P	Staff	
Brian Eden	P	Brice Smith	P	Katie Borgella	P
Todd Fox	E	Jennifer Tavares	P	Kristin McCarthy	P
Nick Goldsmith	P				

Guests – Joe Wilson, Anne Koreman and Sarah Hess.

Welcome, Introductions – Chair Sharon Anderson called the meeting to order at 9:35 am. Sharon led everyone in a round of applause for Katie on her appointment as Commissioner of Planning and Sustainability.

Comment from the Public – Joe Wilson and Anne Koreman introduced themselves. (Sarah arrived a bit later in the meeting.) Nick Goldsmith suggested that members of the public be allowed to speak at the end of the meeting as well.

Action: Nick **moved**, and another member seconded, to allow the public to speak at the end of meetings if time allows. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Approval of October minutes –Bob Howarth **moved to approve** the October 12, 2017, minutes. Martha Armstrong seconded. The minutes **were approved** by the members in attendance.

Refocusing Work of ETF: Executive Committee Recommendations – Katie Borgella/Sharon Anderson

- The group went over the Executive Committee’s proposed changes to the structure of ETF meetings and responsibilities of ETF members. A main recommendation was to hold only the originally envisioned six meetings per year starting in February 2018 and to do away with “focused discussion meetings.”
- The committee also recommended that the task force stop working through the chapters of the 2030 Energy Strategy and instead act more as a pool of energy experts. Their recommendations also included a list of possible topics for the ETF to advise on in 2018. Martha Robertson suggested that “state policies” be added to the list, and Brice Smith recommended “municipal solar developments” be included as well.
- Bob asked if it would be possible to change the meeting time in 2018 because it conflicts with his teaching schedule at Cornell. Kristin will send out a Doodle poll in mid-January to assess everyone’s availability.

Action: A **motion** by Sharon Anderson, seconded by Bob Howarth, to recommend that for now the ETF return to meeting every other month and dispense with focused discussions **was approved unanimously.**

Report: November ETF Focused Discussion on High Efficiency Space Conditioning and Electric Water Heating – Katie Borgella/Brian Eden

Brian Eden summarized the work done on this chapter between formal meetings. The chapter was discussed in detail at the November focused discussion; Brian asked for feedback from ETF members who weren’t able to

attend that informal meeting and welcomed members who had attended to provide additional input. In particular, he asked for opinions on the weight allocated to actions and goal statements throughout the draft document. Some highlights from the discussion include the following comments:

- 1) Under Individual and Business Support, Jennifer Tavares and Martha R. asked if specific policy or program examples could be added to the “split incentive” action for renters and landlords. Sharon mentioned that Cooperative Extension and other organizations have discussed implementing initiatives such as an energy conservation certification program for prospective renters to take to landlords as a negotiating tool.
- 2) Jennifer suggested incorporating language that can support grant applications or persuade municipal officials to fund projects.
- 3) In regards to utility and grid-level support, as an aside Irene Weiser commented that ConEd has filed a petition to explore nonpipe alternatives throughout their service territory. Comments are due to the Public Service Commission (PSC) by January 11. She will circulate it to the group.
- 4) Tim Mount cautioned that consideration must be given to how heat pumps and other green technologies will increase peak demand and affect distribution systems. Complementing their use with thermal storage may alleviate some of the impact.
- 5) Brice mentioned the need to re-evaluate the electric customer revenue-decoupling mechanism to incentivize utility customers to choose more energy efficient options. Also, we should be sure to include actions aimed at influencing NYISO, as they are a key player in driving change.
- 6) Nick Goldsmith stated that equity should be a guiding principle for the Energy Strategy and perhaps pulled out as its own stand-alone chapter.

Update on Electric Vehicle Deployment Community – Fernando de Aragón

- Energetics Inc., the consulting firm that worked with the County to create the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Plan, received a second NYSERDA grant to accelerate the deployment of electrical vehicles in two communities. They have selected Tompkins County as one of the two communities.
- As part of the NYSERDA grant, eleven additional charging stations were installed in the County in 2017. The next stage is marketing and coordinating programs to encourage people to use EVs during 2018.
- Fernando, Katie, and a few other ETF members attended a meeting of key stakeholders in the Electric Vehicle Deployment community, including representatives from Maguire and many other interested people.
- Sarah asked if there is a website to find a list of charging stations in the County. Katie thought plugshare.com might have one. Bob asked if the EV Deployment Community is looking beyond electric vehicles, and Fernando answered that TCAT officials are exploring funding for electric buses through the Volkswagen settlement.

Update: NYSEG’s Compressor Solution & Upcoming RFP for Non-pipeline Alternatives – Irene Weiser

- Irene spoke to the group about recent developments with NYSEG’s proposal to explore alternatives to the West Dryden pipeline. The proposal, which contains two parts, was approved at the November 16th PSC meeting. The first part involves installing four small compressor stations to ensure the gas reliability issue is addressed. They would operate when temperatures fall below 20 degrees F for a series of days. The goal is to have the compressors installed by Winter 2018.
- The second part of the proposal is for NYSEG to issue an RFP to solicit third-party solutions to reduce natural gas use by current customers to free up supply for new customers who need to utilize natural gas. NYSEG has set the following tentative schedule: RFP to be issued on December 18th; pre-bid conference on January 12th, a question-and-answer period will run through mid-March, and proposals are due in mid-April. The RFP will be technology/fuel neutral as NYSEG recognizes a combination of solutions might be

necessary. NYSEG will be evaluating the cost-benefit analysis when reviewing the proposals as well as the qualifications of the installers and capacity of their teams to carry out the project to scale.

- Brian added that partners are needed to collaborate with local stakeholders to make bids on the project. Irene said it would be great for the Chamber of Commerce and TCAD to get word out to commercial enterprises.

Member Announcements

- Bob had two updates: First, New York State Attorney General Eric Schneiderman has invited him to speak on methane accounting at a press conference next Tuesday, Dec. 19th, to promote the 100% Renewable Energy bill passed by the New York State Assembly last June. Second, the Governor's Office is pushing NYSERDA to accelerate the adoption of a 100% renewables plan statewide. Bob is serving as an academic advisor. The goal is to release a draft plan for public review next month and have the final version ready by March.
- Katie reported that Tompkins County was awarded \$250,000 in funding through the NYSERDA Clean Energy Community initiative. The funds will be allocated over the next three years to green the County's vehicle fleet and to pay for a portion of the new Business Energy Navigator position in the Department of Planning and Sustainability.
- Brice relayed that the new interconnection standards will likely be published December 26th, which will then trigger the 45-day public comment period.
- Fernando asked his fellow members to please help get the word out that the Planning and Sustainability Department and Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council are both hiring.
- Nick remarked that a number of municipalities, led by the City of Ithaca, are working to convert their streetlights to high-efficiency LED fixtures.
- Irene said the Tompkins County Council of Governments (TCCOG) is exploring community-choice aggregation. The vision is to procure cheaper energy for residents and promote local renewable development.
- Sarah announced there is an IDA meeting today (12/14) at 4pm to discuss pilot projects such as Dryden Solar. Moreover, later tonight the Town of Dryden is holding a public hearing to discuss possible revisions to the town's zoning laws that could benefit solar projects there.

Visitor Comments

- Sarah Hess attended a stakeholders meeting related to the EV promotion taking place next year. At the meeting, it was mentioned that in terms of impact on the grid the best way to charge an EV is at home. She asked the members to keep that in mind when talking up EVs.
- Anne Koreman said she is talking informally with the developers of the proposed Hamilton Square mixed-income housing project in Trumansburg about not putting in a natural gas pipeline.
- Sharon added that through the Energy Smart Community Program, NYSEG is looking at ways to incentivize EV home chargers.

Adjournment – Fernando de Aragón adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:25 am.

These draft minutes will be formally considered by the Energy Task Force at its next meeting, and corrections or notations will be incorporated at that time. Prepared by Kristin McCarthy, Tompkins County Planning and Sustainability Department. Approved by the Energy Task Force: February 8, 2018.