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**Meeting Minutes of Belmont Energy Committee
June 20, 2013**

Attending: Roger Colton, Ian Todreas, Chris McVay, Tony Barnes, Lauri Mancinelli, and Jan Kruse. Guest: Jacob Knowles.

8:06am: Co-chair Ian Todreas opened the meeting and welcomed Tony Barnes on his appointment to the Energy Committee (filling one of the residential vacancies). Ian also welcomed guest Jacob Knowles, who has applied to fill the remaining residential vacancy.

Next on the agenda was a brief update from co-chair Roger Colton re: reappointments. He noted that he (Roger) Jan Kruse, and Peter Castanino have all applied to be reappointed to the Committee.

Ian introduced the topic of the mini-split pump initiative to help Belmont homeowners who heat with fuel, electricity or propane to obtain better energy efficiency. We are moving forward on this latest addition to the Better Homes Belmont residential energy efficiency program. Ian noted that there are about 2,100 homes (1-4 unit owner-occupied) that heat with oil or propane. The Energy Committee is consulting with Next Step Living (NSL) to launch this program that will run mid-July through December, 2013. The program will be open to anyone in town that would like to obtain greater heating and air conditioning efficiency, but oil, propane, and electric heat customers will be of greatest interest. The goal is 200 assessments with 50 installations. If this was achieved, approximately 37 tons of carbon would be avoided annually. Jan and Tony noted that 50 installs for 200 assessments was an aggressive goal.

Ian said that NSL will send a letter to the targeted homeowners signed by the Energy Committee and one of the Selectmen (hopefully). NSL canvassers will follow up by home visits to explain the program and encourage homeowners to sign up for an energy assessment. NSL will create a Better Homes Belmont website to explain the program and assist with other marketing, including paying for the initial mailer and tables at events. The Energy Committee will assist with outreach and marketing to local media outlets and unofficial town listserv.

Ian noted that materials still need to be approved; Tony Barnes and Jan Kruse offered to review. He also noted that NSL needs a list of people who have already had or signed up for a home energy assessment as they would need to receive a different type of letter.

Ian also said that he had spoken with John Massie at NSL to discuss NSL Belmont customer complaints to date. Jan wanted to know what measures NSL had taken to improve communication between NSL and third-party vendors. Ian noted several steps that NSL have taken, including additional training of CSRs, to address this issue. Tony asked if we could see customer reviews in real-time so if there are complaints going forward they can be addressed quickly. Everyone thought that was a great idea and Ian said he's address with John Massie.

Jan asked if the Commonwealth would give us money for a pilot program so people could get a deeper discount for installing the mini-split pumps. Ian said we were told no because Belmont is not a Green Community.

Lauri Mancinelli said that she had taken a DOER webinar on becoming a Green Community. To become a Green Community, Belmont would need to join the State's Renewable Energy Trust, which would require a small surcharge to each Belmont Light customer. She said that Belmont Light's rates are being changed now to reflect the assessment for the new substation and those rates will be in place until 2017. She did say that there were a few customers in Belmont receiving electricity from NSTAR and that might allow us to temporarily qualify.

Roger Colton offered to email the group the pros and cons of joining the Renewable Energy Trust. We'll decide if we might wish to apply at our next meeting. Roger also offered to speak with Ralph Jones to see if our new arrangement with NSTAR re: the new substation line might allow us to qualify.

Tony agreed to assist Ian with the NSL mini-split program.

Roger Colton adjourned the meeting at 9:09am.

Minutes written by Jan Kruse.