

FRANCONIA ENERGY COMMISSION

MINUTES

April 18, 2023, 4:30 PM

In attendance: Fitz, Eric M, Chris D

Guest: Tom Ganse, Franconia Soaring Foundation President

Minutes from the March Energy Commission Meeting were not available for approval.

Tom Ganse presented an update on the new Soaring Foundation building.

- His update included architectural drawings, a color rendering of the building and an energy analysis.
- The goal for the new building is to be net-zero energy. The year-round, energy efficient two-story design features heat pumps and a solar energy system providing 45,587 kWh/year. The energy plan does not include any fossil fuel heating.
- Construction will be completed in three phases, with the solar system installation planned for the third phase.
- The Foundation received a Northern Border Regional Commission Grant for construction of the building and is pursuing other grant opportunities to fund its net-zero energy plan. Pursuant to this the Foundation is requesting a letter of support from the FEC. Tom will send a draft.
- The Soaring Foundation is teaming with the Hugh Gallen CTC in Littleton to include training in fields like EMS/EMT, glider training and flight simulator instruction.
- It was suggested that the Foundation have a booth/kiosk at Franconia Old Home Day on July 8 to publicize their work and building plan.

Franconia Municipal Town Hall Solar Energy System update was presented by Chris D.

- Paperwork for the system, including the Building Inspector Report and pictures of the system, was submitted by Derek Chase of Mains Electric, electrician for Barrington Power, and Jack Bingham of Barrington Power, to Eversource around March 12.
- In a reply to an email sent to Derek April 12 inquiring about a timeline with Eversource, he said “Sometimes it takes less than a month and other times well over a month. I know right now they are swamped with paperwork and processing solar installs. I have Cc’d Jack Bingham in this email. He has been inquiring with Eversource trying to get answers for us.”

Electric school bus demonstration was presented by Fitz

- Fitz rode on the electric bus, along with people from WMRHS. He noted that the bus is ~ 3x the cost of a fossil fueled bus, probably putting their acquisition out of reach.

Fitz is soliciting ARPA funds for Franconia energy projects from Grafton County

NHSaves program was saved. See news article

https://edition.pagesuite.com/popovers/dynamic_article_popover.aspx?artguid=371118f0-63a1-4850-b329-ef1d409cbc0b. NHSaves provides rebates for home weatherization and efficient appliances.

Lafayette Regional School Solar System update presented by Chris D.

- Chris D. attended the LRS School Board meeting April 13 to discuss a proposal for pursuing a solar energy system for the school, with a target date of installation in summer 2024.
- The array could be located on the flat roof portion of the building, or possibly on the grounds. The roof is scheduled to be replaced in summer 2023.

- The Board is open to the idea of pursuing a solar system, however, it was stressed that the board is in a state of transition because of a new Board Chair (Amy Mullins) and the start of a new Principal in July. Several members expressed interest in participating in a committee, consisting of a few Board members and a few FEC members, to pursue this project. The interested Board members will reach out to the FEC in the future.

Ice rink solar energy system awning

- This project has considerable appeal to the Commission as a means of providing additional municipal renewable energy and as a means of reducing maintenance of the rink during winter use. The awning would eliminate the need to clear the rink after snowfall.

Fox Ridge Trailer Park Cooperative solar energy system

- Eric will talk with Victoria Staunch, who is head of the Resident-Owned Coop (ROC).
- Chris D. reached out to Melissa Elander about funding for such a project. Melissa's reply: Here is the information on the [LMI solar grant](#). The ROC in Bethlehem began the application process last fall but couldn't quite pull together an application in time. Unfortunately, one of the board members was super enthusiastic but the rest of the board wasn't as keen. They went through the RFP process for a 100 kW array and the proposals were all around \$400,000. The project would have been 100% funded by the grant, and it was really a shame to see the lack of support from the board.
- Unfortunately, the 2023 Low-Moderate Income Solar Grant Program deadlines have passed.

Next meeting: May 16, 2023

Meeting Adjourned 5:55 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Dubé