

**Somerville Commission on Energy Use and Climate Change**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**July 12, 2022, 2021 7:00 P.M.**  
**Virtual Meeting**

**Commissioners Attending:** Eri Furusawa, Liz Galloway, Eliza Johnston, Aladdine Joroff, Julie Wood, Larry Yu (chair), Christine Blais (ex-officio)

**Commissioners Not Attending:** Ramón Bueno

**Attendees:** Thalia Fox

**Meeting started at:** 7:02 p.m.

**Review of Minutes:** Commissioner Johnston made a MOTION to approve the June 2022 minutes at 7:07 PM. Commissioner Galloway SECONDED at 7:07 PM. The motion was PASSED UNANIMOUSLY at 7:08 PM.

**Committee's Role for 2023 Fiscal Year:**

- Reviewed priorities from June CEUCC FY 2023 Brainstorm. Priorities naturally fell into 4 sub-committees: Outreach, Building, Policy and Admin.
- Commissioner Wood asked about the sub-committee roles and frequency of meeting, etc. Commissioner Joroff asked about any concerns with open meeting law. Group decided that meeting frequency would be flexible and that ideally participation in two sub-committees.
- Director Blais explained that a goal of the sub-committees is to set up a structure to best utilize commission members time and champion a topic.
- Commissioner Johnston suggested that we identify a point person for each committee. Larry will circle back with Ramón to get his input.
  - Outreach – Eri (lead), Larry, Eliza, Ramon
  - Building – Liz (lead), Larry, Aladdine, Ramon
  - Policy – Aladdine (policy), Julie, Liz (on issues related to buildings)
  - RFP – Julie, Liz
  - Admin –Eliza (lead), Larry, Aladdine
- Near term activities for each committee
  - Outreach
    - Community Choice Electricity – Oct 22 – City will prepare a mailer, video promo. New program starts in November.
    - Climate Forward Plan – Oct 22 through May 23, begin discussing ideas
    - Community Ambassador Program – next class in the Spring, work with consultant to decide on Commission's role
    - *Comments on Stretch Energy Code – July*

**Municipal Energy Stretch Code Update**

- State has published latest draft of stretch code and opt-in specialized energy code
- Chair Yu suggested there has been some pushback on the mix-fuel (that includes gas).
- Commissioner Galloway provided some context on the mixed-fuels / natural gas inclusion and the state's position but feels that new residential construction should be possible to be net-0/gas free. Commissioner Joroff also commented on some of the renewables/solar language and suggested that the City make sure the language is clear its not a cap vs floor. Possibly Somerville could support a coordinated letter.
- Group discussed the City's role and the cost implications for builders. Christine confirmed that the Mayor's Office is considering submitting another letter to the Department of Energy Resources. Christine will work with Policy Subcommittee members on language.

## **City updates**

### **Community Choice Electricity**

- New agreement with Direct Energy, current supplier. Because of pressure on gas market, very challenging time to go out to bid, very happy with our rates compared to Eversource Residential Basic Service Rate (0.17871 cents/kWh), which is higher than all 3 of Somerville offerings – including 100% Local Green. Based on historical trends, expect Eversource winter rates to be higher than contract rates.
  - Local Green – 20% green (x2 current), 0.15654 cents/kWh (total of 40-44% Class I RECs)
  - 100% Green – 0.17714 cents/kWh
  - Basic \$0.14914 cents/kWh (20-24% Class I RECs)
  - Current CCE rates (~10 cents kWh) through November 2022.
- Next year, we can keep rates if still competitive or do a blend and extend, if rates go down and extend contract out. Director Blais explained the outreach and the video around the new rates. OSE to connect with Chair Yu on opt-up signage.

### **FY23 Budget**

- Director Blais shared increase in OSE's budget, 2 new staff positions planned (7 total), plus increased spending on initiatives (the scheduled Somerville Climate Forward update and delayed greenhouse gas inventory and consumption-based emissions inventory and analysis; developing a zero-waste plan; creating a budget for the Community Engagement Specialist; and applying priority consultant recommendations). <https://city-somerville-ma-budget-book.cleargov.com/5132/departments/office-of-sustainability-environment>

**There will be no August 2022 meeting.**

**Meeting adjourned at 8:37 PM.**