



## Town of Bridgewater Energy Committee

April 18, 2023

6:30 PM

The meeting will be held virtually via Zoom.

To attend via video, click on the link below:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89812476082>

To attend via phone, dial: 1(646) 876-9923

**Meeting ID: 898 124 760 82**

### MEETING AGENDA

**Disclosure:** Pursuant to Section 20 of Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2020, An Act Relative to Extending Certain Covid-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency, and the March 31, 2025, extension granted by Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022, this meeting for the Town of Bridgewater will be fully remote and accessible to the public through remote participation to the greatest extent possible. No in-person attendance is permitted. Citizens who wish to tune in to the meeting may do so via Zoom.

**A. Call to Order**

**B. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

- a) October 10, 2022
- b) January 17, 2023

**C. Public Comment**

**D. New Business**

- a) New Fire Station - Energy Minimization Recommendation - Vote
- b) Green Committees Grant Opportunities - TBD
- c) CPTC Conference Lessons Learned
- d) Alternative Energy Development and Conservation Strategic and Implementation Plans; Professional Services (Vote)

**E. Old Business**

- a) Energy Aggregation Program - Carlton
- b) Goals & Reports Discussion - Status, Actions, Consideration of Combining, Completion Date, Recommendations to Town Council

1. Goal 1: Energy Grant Opportunities for Bridgewater
2. Goal 2: Energy Initiatives

3. Goal 3: Energy Educational Program

- c) Solar Facilities on Public Lands - Carlton
- d) Big Belly Trash Compactors
- e) Municipal Energy Tracking - MEI Changes
- f) Solar Field Supply
  - NGRID Solar Field Energy Credit Process (TBD)
- g) Small Scale Wind Energy Zoning Ordinance (TBD)
- h) PHIUS Applicability/Adoption (TBD)
  - Vote to recommend to Town Council
- i) SolSmart Designation (TBD): Should Bridgewater pursue this designation?
- j) MCAN: Goals, Opportunities (Kristin)

**F. Additional Items for Discussion**

**G. Adjournment of Meeting**



Carlton Hunt – Chair  
Thomas Carson – Vice Chair  
Kristen Zarrelli – Secretary

Academy Building - 66 Central Square  
Bridgewater, MA 02324

**Meeting Minutes for the Meeting Convening on 01/17/2023, at 6:30 PM**  
**These minutes were prepared by Carlton Hunt.**

**Link to Meeting Recording:**  
**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9LMlzdGSRms>**

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**A. Call to Order at 6:30 PM**

**B. Members in Attendance** – Carlton Hunt, Thomas Carson,

**Members not present** – Kristen Zarrelli

**C. Guests in attendance** – Mark Peterson, John P. O'Rourke; Pat Neary

**D. Minutes approval**

Oct. 18, 2022 Motion to accept; passed 2,0

**E. Public Comment**

Mark Peterson, Church St. commented on climate sustainability, specifically potential ordinances regarding tree cutting on private land and tree credits and stormwater utility zoning. He was referred to the newly formed Tree Committee for further consideration.

**F. Presentations**

John P. O'Rourke of Director of Marketing and Municipal Affairs, Good Energy, L.P., 155 Mathews Road, Conway, MA 01341 | [www.GoodEnergy.com](http://www.GoodEnergy.com) attended the meeting to present information Community Energy Aggregation and Community Solar. Information provided to the Committee is included at the end of the minutes. Mr. O'Rourke's major points were:

1) Energy Aggregation, a program voted by the Town Council for the citizen's, could reduce participant's electric bill by 10 to 15% or more depending on the electrical utility rates which can change **quarterly**.

2) Basically, the program could take up to year for the citizens to realize the rate reduction depending on the speed the Town Council and State act to approved the program for the municipality. Rate payers who purchase electricity through Community Solar or other rate reduction program have the choice to continue that program or join the Community Aggregation Program. Rate payers who do not want to join the Community Aggregation program must opt out of the program.

3) At least 175 Massachusetts’s communities have joined the Community Aggregation Program, which is accessed through a competitive bid process.

## **G. Old Business**

1. Climate Sustainability – Hazard Mitigation Plan - Energy Committee role (Town Manager)
2. Big Belly units –
  1. Status of current unit (Tom)
  2. Pursuing further units? <https://bigbelly.com/solutions/city/>
3. Bridgewater Municipal Energy Tracking
  1. Solar Field Supply
    1. NGRID Solar Field Energy Credit process (TBD)
    2. 2022 data tracking (Carlton)
  2. MEI monitored data
    1. OSLGC energy use and cost findings, who pays (Carlton)
    2. FY22/FY23 data report (Carlton)
4. Zoning
  1. Lithium Storage Batteries – Regulations/research (TBD)
  2. Tree Cutting Ordinance – Combating Climate Change/role of Tree Committee (TBD)
  3. Potential Wind Energy Ordinance (TBD)
  4. PHIUS applicability/adoption (TBD): “Phius, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, is committed to decarbonizing the built environment by making high-performance passive building the mainstream market standard. We train and certify professionals, maintain and update the Phius climate-specific passive building standard, certify and quality assure passive buildings, certify high-performance building products and conduct research to advance high-performance building.” Local application of the passive building (Carlton)
  5. SolSmart designation (TBD): Should Bridgewater pursue this designation? SolSmart is national program led by the Interstate Renewable Energy Council and the International City/County Management Association with funding from the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Energy Technologies Office. SolSmart designations are awarded based upon several criteria for removing obstacles to solar energy development.
5. Small Scale Wind system update (Carlton)
6. MCAN: goals, opportunities (Kristin)
7. Energy Aggregation program (Kristin)

## **H. New Business**

1. Reports – status and actions
  1. Goal 1: Energy Grant Opportunities for Bridgewater
  2. Goal 2 :Energy Initiatives
  3. Goal 3: Energy Educational Program
2. CY22 Energy Committee Report for Annual Town Report

**Next Meeting Date TBD**

**I. Adjourn**

**E. Next Meeting Date – January 10th, 2023**

**Adjourn** – *Carlton Hunt motioned to adjourn the meeting of the Energy Committee at 7:45 p.m. which was duly seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.*

## COMMUNITY ELECTRICITY AGGREGATION

Provided by John P. O'Rourke, of Director of Marketing and Municipal Affairs, Good Energy  
01/18/2023

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### 1. What is Community Electricity Aggregation (CEA)?

Community Electricity Aggregation, known as municipal aggregation in MGL, Chapter 164, Section 134(a), is simply the formation of a buying group composed of the residents and businesses of one or more municipalities that is typically designed, developed and managed by an aggregation consultant under the guidance of municipal officials of one or more municipalities. This gives a municipality or group of municipalities much stronger buying power than any individual resident or business has when dealing with the utility distributing the electric supply.

#### 2. Why can a municipality or group of municipalities aggregate the electricity load of the residents and businesses within its boundaries?

In 1997, Massachusetts passed the nation's first municipal aggregation law (MGL, Chapter 164, Section 134(a)) that gives municipalities the authority to act as "municipal aggregators" to aggregate the electricity load of the residents and businesses within their boundaries through a competitive bidding process for electric supply.

#### 3. How does a municipality start the process of Community Electricity Aggregation?

As stated in the municipal aggregation law, "A town may initiate a process to aggregate electrical load upon authorization by a majority vote of town meeting or town council. A city may initiate a process to authorize aggregation by a majority vote of the city council, with the approval of the mayor, or the city manager in a Plan D or Plan E city."

#### 4. What are the primary goals of Community Electricity Aggregation?

- More competitive electricity choices;
- Longer term, stable electricity rates;
- Potentially lower electricity rates (although savings cannot be guaranteed);
- More renewable electricity in the Standard (default) and optional products generated by New England renewable energy facilities;
- Increased consumer protection against unscrupulous retail marketers of electricity.

#### 5. Who can participate in the Community Electricity Aggregation?

During the required initial 30-day Customer Notification Period all Eligible Customers will receive a Customer Notification Letter approved by the Department of Public Utilities that explains the Community Electricity Aggregation. Eligible Customers primarily include Basic Service customers of the utility and do not include any customer that has already chosen a third-party electric supplier.

To participate in the Community Electricity Aggregation, Eligible Customers do not need to take any action, enrollment in the Standard (default) product is automatic. To decline participation, an opt-out card and postage paid envelope is provided for mailing to the electric supplier.

After the required initial 30-day Customer Notification Period, participants can opt-out of the Community Electricity Aggregation at any time without penalty or termination fees.

#### 6. What is the cost to the municipality of developing and implementing a Community Electricity Aggregation?

There is no out of pocket cost to the municipality. The cost to design, develop, draft and submit the municipal aggregation plan; the legal expense of guiding the plan through the consultation with the

Department of Energy Resources and the approval process with the Department of Public Utilities; the cost of the informational mailing to residents and businesses; the cost of the Request for Proposals (RFP) to competitive suppliers is borne by the aggregation consultant or the electric supplier. The aggregation consultant is paid at the rate of \$0.001/kWh (one mill; 1/10 of a penny) by the electric supplier on the total electric usage of the aggregation.

**7. Is there any risk to municipal officials, residents or businesses for participating in a Community Electricity Aggregation?**

No. There is no financial or failure of service risk for the municipality. The municipality is not responsible for any payments to the electric supplier and there would never be an interruption of service due to participation in a Community Electricity Aggregation. Municipal officials can accept or reject any competitive supplier bid that does not fulfill their objectives for the Community Electricity Aggregation. Individual residents and businesses can opt-out of the Community Electricity Aggregation at any time without penalty or termination fees.

**8. If municipalities participate in a Community Electricity Aggregation, who maintains the electric system infrastructure?**

The maintenance and service of the electric system infrastructure (poles, lines, transformers, etc.) continues to be the responsibility of the utility that distributes electric supply to the municipality. Community Electricity Aggregation deals only with the electric supply that is distributed by the utility.

**9. If municipalities participate in a Community Electricity Aggregation, who bills the individual residents and businesses?**

Participants in a Community Electricity Aggregation continue to receive one bill from the utility. The only changes on the bill include the name of the electric supplier and the rate charged.

**10. If municipalities participate in a Community Electricity Aggregation, is there any risk of inferior service from the utility or that electric supply would not be delivered by the utility?**

No. Since electricity deregulation in the late 1990's, utilities have divested all generation assets, are neutral concerning the electric supplier and provide a consistent level of service across all customers. Electric supply will be delivered to all customers by the utility.

**11. Are budget billing and discount programs of the utility available to participants in a Community Electricity Aggregation?**

Yes. Any budget billing and discount programs offered by the utility continue for participants in a Community Electricity Aggregation.

**12. Can individuals with solar panels and net metering agreements or participants in community solar, participate in a Community Electricity Aggregation?**

Yes. Any net metering or community solar agreements are separate and apart from participation in a Community Electricity Aggregation. Participants will continue to receive net metering credits at the Basic Service rate of the utility.

**13. Can Community Electricity Aggregation be used to increase the amount of renewable energy offered in aggregation product options?**

Yes. Municipalities can select a Standard (default) product that has additional voluntary renewable energy through the purchase of Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) and two optional products, one (Basic) with the minimal renewable energy required by the Commonwealth and one (Plus) with 100% renewable energy.

**14. Is there a tax deduction for the purchase of renewable energy?**

Yes. When the Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) are sourced through Green Energy Consumers Alliance, a Boston-based nonprofit organization, the cost of the RECs for the optional Plus product with 100% renewable energy that is more than the cost of the Basic product, is tax deductible.

**15. Can tax exempt businesses participate in a with Community Electricity Aggregation?**

Yes. Tax exempt businesses can maintain their tax-exempt status by sending a copy of their tax exempt certificate to the electric supplier of the Community Electricity Aggregation.



Carlton Hunt – Chair  
Thomas Carson – Vice Chair  
Kristen Zarrelli – Secretary

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**B. Members in Attendance** – Carlton Hunt, Thomas Carson,

**Members not present** – Kristen Zarrelli

**C. Guests in attendance** – Mark Peterson, John P. O'Rourke; Pat Neary

**D. Minutes approval**

Oct. 18, 2022 - Postponed

**E. Public Comment**

Mark Peterson, Church St. commented on climate sustainability, specifically potential ordinances regarding tree cutting on private land and tree credits and stormwater utility zoning. He was referred to the newly formed Tree Committee for further consideration.

**F. Presentations**

John P. O'Rourke of Director of Marketing and Municipal Affairs, Good Energy, L.P., 155 Mathews Road, Conway, MA 01341 | [www.GoodEnergy.com](http://www.GoodEnergy.com) attended the meeting to present information Community Energy Aggregation and Community Solar. Information provided to the Committee is Attached. Mr. O'Rourke's major points were:

1) Energy Aggregation, a program voted by the Town Council for the citizen's, could reduce participant's electric bill by 10 to 15% or more depending on the electrical utility rates which change regularly.

2) Basically, the program could take up to a year for the citizens to realize the rate reduction depending on the speed the Town Council and State act to approve the program for the municipality. Rate payers who purchase electricity through Community Solar or other rate reduction program such as Constellation have the choice to continue that program or join the

Community Aggregation Program. Rate payers who do not want to join the Community Aggregation program must opt out of the program.

3) At least 175 Massachusetts's communities have joined the Community Aggregation Program, which is accessed through a competitive bid process.

See included documents.

## G. Old Business

1. Climate Sustainability – Hazard Mitigation Plan - Energy Committee role (Town Manager) – No discussion, pending Town Manager attendance
2. Big Belly units – Current unit at the Regional School is not functioning due to jam. Supplier has no record of the Town's purchase. Unit is old (acquired in about 2005) but could be repaired. Parks and recreation would accept one at Marathon Park. Committee will research unit history more. Discussion indicated several recreational areas could benefit from having these units available on site. Committee discussed possibility of applying for Green Communities Grant to purchase more units. Unit cost is about \$1 to \$2 thousand dollars. Chair to discuss with Town Manager.
3. Bridgewater Municipal Energy Tracking
  - a) Solar Field Supply -
  - b) NGRID Solar Field Energy Credit process – no update
4. MEI data
  1. OSLGC energy use and cost findings, who pays – Carlton reported the OSLGC energy costs are now covered by the Management Company. These data will no longer be included in the MEI database as Town cost.
  2. FY22/FY23 data report – Town is using about three percent more energy in 2022 than in 2009 against a Green Communities goal of 20% reduction. Building energy consumption is 15-20 percent lower than in 2009, the baseline year but is offset by increased vehicle fuel use. Streetlight electricity use and cost (~85%) is significant less than pre-LED light conversion. Vehicle fuel use for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Q of 2023 is not yet available.
5. Zoning
  - a) Lithium Storage Batteries – Regulations/research (TBD)
  - b) Tree Cutting Ordinance – Combating Climate Change/role of Tree Committee; see above citizen input.
  - c) Potential Wind Energy Ordinance - No discussion
  - d) PHIUS applicability/adoption: PHIUS is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, is committed to decarbonizing the built environment by making high-performance passive building the mainstream market standard. The organization trains and certifies professionals, maintains and updates the Phius climate-specific passive building standard, certifies and quality assures passive buildings, certifies high-performance building products and conducts research to advance high-performance buildings. Application of PHIUS principles to the new building the McElwain development resulted in significant improvement to measures of building tightness per the char visit to the complex in January. Committee to follow up and consider recommending the guidance as a Town Policy.
  - e) SolSmart designation: Should Bridgewater pursue this designation?  
The committee briefly considered this is national program led by the Interstate Renewable Energy Council and the International City/County Management

Association with funding from the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Energy Technologies Office. No actions were taken.

6. Small Scale Wind system update – Committee briefly consider small wind energy generation but took no action.
7. MCAN: goals, opportunities – no update
8. Energy Aggregation program - See presentation summary

#### **H. New Business**

##### **1. Reports**

Drafts of two reports were distributed to the committee for review, comment, additions. The committee discussion discussed possible solarization of Town and District owned parking lots (canopies) sustainability and Town revenue; chair to discuss with Town Manager. The Chair indicated he would ask for a meeting with the Town Manager to discuss the draft policy recommendations such as those listed below:

- Consider Municipal Electric Aggregation as an ordinance.
- Encourage residents to convert to community solar.
- Adopt P.H.I.U.S guidance for building construction on Bridgewater.
- Consider development of solar installations on Town-owned parcels for community solar
- Lease Town parcels for solar installation development for participation in Community Solar by residents.
- Encourage BRRSD electrical energy production through parking lot solarization on District Properties
- Update zoning to enable small to medium scale wind generators as special permits.

2. CY22 Energy Committee Report for Annual Town Report: Chairman Hunt reported he drafted the 2022 Annual Report and submitted it to the Town Clerk. See above MEI data.

#### **I. Next Meeting Date – TBD**

#### **J. Adjourn**

No further business being brought up Carlton Hunt declared the meeting adjourned @ 7:01 p.m..

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