

Meeting Minutes 20151020

Town of Underhill
Energy Committee
20 October 2015

DRAFT MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Jerry Adams, Pete Bennett, Peter Duval, Chris Miller, Tom Moore, and Steve Webster in attendance and constituting a quorum, the special meeting was called to order at 6:39pm in the Town Hall Kitchen, with Chris in the chair and Peter D. recording minutes as secretary. The public in attendance included: Dave Rogers, Cliff Peterson, and Sandy Wilmot.

Agenda

Review Veve proposal for a landfill solar farm

Public Comment

None

Landfill Solar Farm

Chris introduced the proposal by Will Veve, approximately 150kW solar farm at the town landfill, which was circulated to the committee.

Pete B. had some concern about the proposer.
Steve Webster said the proposal was sketchy and he had questions about the details, but that a reasonable contractor can choose good equipment and do the work correctly.

Jerry felt the biggest risk is non-completion.

Dave asked if the project would penetrate the cap.

Jerry said no, the system would be ballasted, and checked the price of ballast concrete blocks from Harrison (\$35 + delivery). He also talked to the Alburgh town clerk and determined that their project is further along.

Chris said that the reason for our special meeting is the race to participate in net metering.

Dave said the landfill was one of the last landfills to be closed and

that the testing from the latest report indicated some contamination and that, as a result, testing will be continued for several years. He expressed concern about equipment being driven on top of the cap.

Discussion about the weight of concrete blocks.

Tom said that Veve will have some answers for the committee's questions, but he is an entrepreneur making the connection, and that if things get serious the committee would discuss the project directly with the company in Massachusetts. He checked with a Bronta Solar and their reaction was that as long as the company's track record was good, then it is likely that the project would work out.

Pete B. asked if there is a deadline. Chris said that Will Veve did not give one.

Jerry said that Westman Farm has 2x500kW proposal proposed.

Pete B. listed a number of likely steps to go forward, and estimated 2 months of work for the town to give an answer to the proposal.

Dave said we would have our engineer look at it.

Cliff said that the lawyer would have to look at it, too.

Dave mentioned that the budget process is just starting and would consume selectboard time.

Steve said that the tax incentive deadline is real, and described the effort to construct the solar farm at his house in time for the end of the year.

Tom suggested that the committee should just inform Will Veve that the project would not go forward.

Cliff said that the structure of the deal would make a difference in how the town would respond to the proposal. Discussion ensued about land lease versus owning the project and other issues.

Dave asked about the nameplate capacity; 150kW would be taxable.

Steve said that Veve had stated that all of the development costs would be borne by the developer.

Discussion about the net-metering structure.

Dave suggested putting panels on the roof of the garage. Discussion ensued.

Pete B. said that the due diligence would take time.

Chris said that it wasn't clear that the Veves had completed any projects of any type. He also felt that the deadline was a risk.

Tom said the proposal was informative, but it doesn't seem like there is enough time and the committee should decline the project.

Steve said that if it was two years ago the committee would have enough time to do this, but it doesn't

Pete B. said that the committee could blame it on the selectboard, for a laugh, and then there were several reasons given why that was true.

Dave said that the project was so big that it would have to go to a town vote.

MOTION

Chris MOVED, and Pete B. SECONDED to decline the project as there is

no reasonable chance to do the project on any timetable commensurate with the needs. The motion passed UNANIMOUSLY.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION

Pete B. MOVED, and Steve SECONDED to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed UNANIMOUSLY at 7:12pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Peter Duval, Secretary

Approved _____
date:_____

Chris Miller, Chair