+ Solar Committee Meeting Minutes

April 16-2020

ZOOM Meeting

Attendance: Hannah Strack

Charlie Pace

Wayne Mandel

Phil Rose

Meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm

March’s meeting minutes were approved by W. Mandel, Seconded by P. Rose

Tax assessment information was not obtained. The Town of Fenner’s assessor has been unreachable, committee is looking into other options to get assessment questions answered. A May 1st deadline has been set, at which time, the committee will seek another option.

No new information on decommissioning or community benefit plan at this time.

C. Pace discussed our new budget – which seems at best tentative and called “rolling” by the Governor, as it will be reevaluated every 3 months. An accelerated renewable energy plan will be put in place by a new committee being formed (in place of DEC handling it). This committee is streamlining the time frame for the application process. It appears that the new law will affect project 10 megawatts and larger.

The committee agreed that the NYSERDA book would serve as a nice guideline for us but, it clearly states it is applicable to small scale solar farms. H. Strack is looking into guidelines for larger scale projects.

State and Local control. - we talked at length about the power of the state and our own power to determine our own future when it came to renewables. There is much unknown here and is still being changed and delivered. This includes many decisions about funding. Once this is clear that we need to develop a strong and clear policy that reflects what we want for Fenner. This protects us in the future if there is a battle between state demands and home rule. At least we will be on record for what we stand for and want. Policies like how many mega-watts will be allowed are still unclear.

Due to the current situation with Corona-19 and budget uncertainty the committee has decided to take a somewhat broader look at how they want to proceed and how they want the town to look in the future. The compressive plan will be looked at and serve as a basis for moving forward.

The committee feels that Fenner is already supporting renewable energy with the windmills.

Hannah reminded of us of our charge from the Town Board.

After months of research, the committee will be documenting opinions and thoughts on how to amend the comprehensive plan, zoning laws and general feelings on how to move forward. This will eventually be presented to the Town Board.

Phil will continue to work on assessment questions.

Wayne will look into decommissioning and town/community benefits

Hannah will look into more specific from NYSERDA

Charlie – will keep tabs on the Environmental Bond Act, the new committee being formed in Albany

Dave Jones will be in touch with the town attorney regarding new laws and what actions town can legally put into place. Dave Jones will contact our tax assessor to get needed information from both perspectives.  They will be asked to either submit a report to us or join us at our next meeting to report on their findings and answer questions. Lisa will send Phil Rhonda's e-mail address and he will also follow up with her.

Members were asked to have documents to L. Dolan by May 7th so they can be prepared for the next meeting on May 14th at 7:00 pm

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 P. Rose, seconded by W. Mandel

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Dolan