

Sustainability Committee Meeting Minutes
February 6, 2024 at 7 PM

Gary Martin called meeting to order via zoom with members Pat Canonica, Keith Sampson, and Al Nierenberg, and Allison McNeill and Patrick Roche of Good Energy in attendance.

The main focus of the meeting was the Boxford Community Electricity plan that was recently approved by the DPU. Allison McNeill began the meeting by describing the four products in our plan: the Boxford Basic, the Boxford Standard (the default product), the Boxford Mid, and the Boxford 100. The difference between these products is the percentage of renewable energy in each. Boxford Standard has the minimum amount required by the Massachusetts RPS, while the other products have an increasingly higher percentage.

Next, Allison described the education and outreach plan. It will include information at public meetings, postings in Town buildings and on the Town website, as well as a postcard and letter sent to all residents. After the letter is sent, residents will have 30 days to opt out of the Boxford Standard product and either remain on National Grid's basic service or opt for a different one of the other products within the Boxford Community Electricity program. It was decided that starting the 30 day opt out period after Town Meeting on May 14 would allow us to advertise the program and provide information to the large number of residents who attend the TM.

Patrick Roche then discussed the state's minimum renewable energy requirements (which will be met in the Boxford Basic product), and the additional percentage of renewable energy in our other products. Patrick emphasized the importance of finding a balance between cost competitiveness and extra renewable content. He suggested that an additional 10% renewable content in the Boxford Standard product would likely allow it to be less expensive than National Grid's basic service rate while providing a meaningful amount of extra renewable energy.

Patrick then described the current and projected energy market. He stated that we would likely be able to obtain good pricing if we go out to bid in the April timeframe. If that doesn't work out, we could try again in early fall. Keith Sampson volunteered that he is knowledgeable and experienced in the energy market and could assist in evaluating bids.

The Committee discussed the various programs and decided to simplify the program by not offering the "Boxford Mid". There was also agreement to take Patrick's suggestion and set the extra renewable content at 10% for the "Boxford Standard".

The next topic for the meeting was consideration of partnering with Homeworks Energy to bring more awareness to residents about the Mass Save program. Abby Kessler joined the meeting and made a presentation about the success that Homeworks Energy has had in increasing Mass Save participation in the more than 30 communities that they are currently working with. It was decided to consider working with Homeworks Energy at a later meeting.

Al Nierenberg then described a Mass Audubon presentation about greening your yard. He encouraged members to view this presentation and consider pursuing this in Boxford.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15.