



Minutes

Climate Smart Task Force of Saratoga Springs

October, 18th 2023

In Attendance: Chair Laura Faulk, Rayna Caldwell, Dan Barusch, Ben Foster, James Gallagher, Deirdre Ladd, Anita Morzillo, Jennifer Ferris, Brooke McConnell (Pitney Meadows), Tara Donadio (CDRPC), Jacob Gardner (NY Rural Water Association)

City Staff in Attendance: Beige Berryman, Brooke VanBuskirk, Jessie House

Absent: Jamil Khan

MEETING MINUTES ARE NOT A WORD-FOR-WORD TRANSCRIPT.

II. Public Comment – 5 Minutes: There were no public comments.

III. Approval of September and October Meeting Minutes: The revised minutes for September and the minutes for October were both approved.

IV. Waste Management Update

Composting of Food Waste: Brooke McConnell introduced herself to the committee. She is the new Executive Director of Pitney Meadows and is interested in working with the Task Force. She said that Pitney Meadows would be happy to receive community food waste for composting. They are looking for grants and have already started having conversations with the high school and hospital. She will check on the quantity of food waste they could accommodate.

Chowderfest: Chair Faulk reported that Sustainable Saratoga is purchasing reuseable mugs for use at Chowder Fest and is working with local organizations that have commercial dishwashers for use during the event. Volunteers will staff the return and pickup stations and coordinate washing. It was suggested that people pay a deposit with an option to keep their mugs as a keepsake. Chair Faulk will pass that suggestion along to Sustainable Saratoga.

Downtown Recycling: DPW is expecting delivery of a divided waste hauling truck that can accommodate trash and recycling. Brooke VanBuskirk will check on the estimated delivery date of the truck.

V. Climate Action Plan

The City is awaiting additional insurance information from the consultants to finalize the contract.

VI. LED Streetlight Project

The streetlight purchase is complete! Brooke VanBuskirk reported that conversion to LED lights is expected to be complete by June. The new lights will be dark-sky and Smart City compliant. Estimated yearly savings is expected to be \$270,820. Congratulations to everyone who worked on this project!

VII. Champlain Hudson Power Express Community Benefit

Beige Berryman reported that pursuit of additional benefits from CHPE such as funding for Complete Streets will be discussed with the new administration in 2024. The CSTF will continue to evaluate the Green Economy Fund benefits for workforce development and training with the hope that local organizations may receive some of the funding. A meeting with CHPE regarding that fund still needs to be scheduled.

VIII. DPW 2023 Capital Budget: \$225,000 EV infrastructure and equipment funds

Brooke VanBuskirk reported that the current capital funding will be used for EV charging stations and electric landscape equipment. Chair Faulk said that municipalities are eligible to receive Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) incentives for qualifying electric riding mowers through the IRA's direct pay provision. She will send information to Brooke on those incentives.

IX. Grant Match Funding Sources

a. LED Streetlight Savings, Cohoes Model

This model will not work for Saratoga Springs because the City did not fund the streetlight purchase in the same way as Cohoes and the savings are needed to pay down the cost.

b. **National Grid, invitation to November 15 meeting:** See detailed report below.

c. CHPE Saratoga County PILOT disbursement, projected start 2027

Consideration of designating the use of these funds for grant matching and sustainability projects will be postponed until the new administration is in place.

X. NYSERDA Solar Canopies for Parking Lot Build Ready Programs

A meeting will be scheduled with NYSERDA to learn more about this program.

XI. Social Media and Press Releases

a. **DPW EV infrastructure and equipment electrification: Jessie, Brooke, Rayna**

b. **LED Streetlight Conversion – Jessie House completed the press and media release.**

National Grid Guest Speakers

Scott Gresens, Customer and Community Account Manager

Energy efficiency incentives are available for projects that save at least 1kW of electricity or 1 therm of gas. NG can help the City assign credits from the Weibel Ave. solar farm to City accounts.

Kate Carleo, EV Program Manager

NG offers an electric ready fleet assessment free of charge to local governments. It includes an analysis of electric capacity at locations where fleet charging infrastructure might be installed as well as rate impact analysis. There will be a new rate class for EV charging sometime in 2024. NG can help fund infrastructure related to EV charging but the funding doesn't cover the charger itself or electric vehicles. They may also be able to help with funding for building electrification. Time of Use (TOU) discounted rates are not available for municipalities. Community EV charging infrastructure is covered under a

different program and we did not get into details about what NG offers. National Grid received a \$50 million grant from the DEC to assist with new infrastructure rollout over the next 10 years.

Amanda Vitullo, Senior Economic Developer

Most applicants to the grant programs that she administers are private developers but innovate projects that introduce new technologies to NY such as Cohoes' floating solar array may also qualify for funding. There might be funding available for thermal energy networks (TENS). Vacant buildings that are undergoing adaptive reuse may also qualify.

Brooke McConnell pointed out that Pitney Meadows is installing a 34.56 kilowatt solar array on the roof of their new pole barn. The project is being funded with \$150,000 from the City through the Mayor's Non-Profit Grant Program.

Jim Gallagher suggested that the City and CSTF should have a follow up meeting with National Grid to explore their offerings in more detail. Scott Gresens suggested that the City should prioritize what they want to discuss and let them know beforehand so that the right people from NG can be in the meeting. Chair Faulk will ask Jen Dunn to schedule the meeting.

XII. Next Meeting Date

The Task Force agreed to hold December's meeting on the 13th at 9am. Chair Faulk will send out a calendar invitation.