



August 2, 2021

**To:** Portsmouth Mayor Rick Becksted and City Councilors Jim Splaine, Deaglan McEachern, Peter Whelan, Cliff Lazenby, Esther Kennedy, Petra Huda, John K. Tabor Jr., and Paige Trace

**Cc:** Portsmouth City Manager Karen Conard, Public Works Director Peter Rice, Sustainability Coordinator Peter Britz

**From:** Lebanon Assistant Mayor Clifton Below; Hanover Town Manager Julia Griffin; Cheshire County Deputy Administrator Rod Bouchard; Nashua Energy Manager Doria Brown; Harrisville

**RE:** Invitation to join the Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire

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Dear Portsmouth Mayor Rick Becksted, City Councilors and Administration,

We are writing to invite the City of Portsmouth to join Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire, a soon-to-be-incorporated public nonprofit to support Community Power programs across the state. There is no cost associated with joining the Coalition.

Since late 2019, we have collaborated to investigate national best practices for Community Power markets, with support from Samuel Golding of Community Choice Partners, Inc., who has specialized in the design of these programs for over a decade.

Through this process, we have come to understand that the “Coalition Model” for Community Power has the greatest potential to deliver long-term energy cost savings and fiscal stability, affords us the opportunity to jointly developing local clean energy projects and customer programs, and enhances our collective ability to influence state energy policy on matters that directly benefit our residents and businesses.

Under the “Coalition Model,” cities, towns, and counties establish a “Joint Action Agency” to enable joint exercise of their local authorities, in this case, specific “Community Power” or “Electric Aggregation” authorities provided for under New Hampshire RSA 53-E (*Relative to Aggregation of Electric Customers by Municipalities and Counties*).

Working with the legal firm Duncan Weinberg Genzer Pembroke PC — a firm with 50 years of national experience and expertise supporting cooperative and public power enterprises — we developed the “Joint Powers Agreement” to establish Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire, which has been approved by the NH Attorney General for conformity with NH statutes.

As of this date, nine municipalities have joined the Coalition by unanimous vote adopting the Joint Powers Agreement including: the Nashua Board of Aldermen, the City Councils of Lebanon and Dover, and the Select Boards of Hanover, Harrisville, Exeter, Rye, Warner and Walpole.



We envision two phases of Coalition membership. First, Coalition members benefit from peer-to-peer resource sharing across the state and updates on market developments, proposed legislation and regulatory initiatives at the Public Utilities Commission. Secondly, when a city or town chooses to move forward with Community Power, that Coalition member will benefit from shared services and economies of scale in terms of (1) designing, launching and operating their Community Power program by relying on the Coalition's administrative, advisory and operational support services (including energy procurement and risk management), (2) participating in joint project development opportunities (such as community solar and storage projects), and (3) jointly engaging at the Legislature and Public Utility Commission to speak with one voice on public advocacy issues related to energy and Community Power.

There is no cost to joining the Coalition and Community Power programs are self-funded through revenues received from participating customers. Once Coalition members launch Community Power programs and begin providing electric power supply to their residents and businesses, Coalition operations will be funded through revenues associated with customers' electricity purchases.

As a public nonprofit, Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire will be governed by its member communities. Up until there are more than 21 members, each member will appoint a representative to the Coalition's Board of Directors. (Thereafter, Directors will be elected by member representatives at annual meetings.) This ensures good governance, accountability, and financial transparency. If Portsmouth elects to join the Coalition, upon incorporation the City Council will appoint a primary and alternative representative to the Board. Representatives can be an elected official, staff, committee member or a volunteer selected by the City Council.

We believe Community Power and the Coalition present a significant opportunity to empower our cities and towns to realize their energy goals, including reducing and stabilizing costs, increasing customer choice and stimulating local economic development of clean energy technologies.

Our goal is to welcome thirteen New Hampshire cities, towns, and counties into the Coalition by October 1 of this year in preparation for incorporation.

Portsmouth has been a leader on energy issues, and we are pleased to invite the City to join us as a founding member of this Coalition. If you decide to do so, we recommend taking the following steps:

- Review the "Joint Powers Agreement";
- Join the Coalition by City Council vote approving the Joint Powers Agreement for adoption; and
- Consider establishing an Electric Aggregation Committee in accordance with RSA 53-E:6 (which may be a sub-committee of an existing committee).



Thank you and please do not hesitate to contact any of us for further discussion.

Sincerely,

Clifton Below, Assistant Mayor, City of Lebanon

Julia Griffin, Town Manager, Town of Hanover

Rod Bouchard, Assistant County Administrator, Cheshire County

Doria Brown, Energy Manager, City of Nashua

Andrea Hodson, Select Board Chair, Town of Harrisville

## Attachment A: Example Motion to Join Coalition

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For reference, below is Lebanon’s unanimous motion authorizing the City to (1) enter into the Coalition Joint Powers Agreement and (2) appoint primary and alternative representatives to serve on the Coalition’s Board of Directors. You can certainly customize your process for appointing a representative an alternate to the CPCNH Membership and Initial Board of Directors.

*“Councilor Bronner MOVED, that the Lebanon City Council hereby authorizes the City Manager to enter into an intermunicipal agreement known as the “Joint Powers Agreement” under the provisions of New Hampshire RSA 53-A to create the Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire (CPCNH) for the purpose of supporting member municipalities and counties in developing and implementing electric aggregation plans, pursuant to RSA 53-E, as well as related statutory authorities.*

*BE IT FURTHER MOVED, that the Mayor, in consultation with the City Manager, is authorized to appoint a City representative and an alternate to the CPCNH Membership and Board of Directors.”*

Available online at: [Lebanon City Council, 2/3/21, Item C](#)

## Attachment B: Coalition Joint Powers Agreement

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The Coalition’s Joint Powers Agreement is available on our web site at the link below, on the “About” page in the section titled “Join the Coalition” (click on the “Download the Joint Powers Agreement” button):

- <https://www.cpcnh.org/about>



**COMMUNITY  
POWER COALITION  
OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**  
*For communities, by communities.*

<https://www.cpcnh.org>  
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