

CITY OF PORTSMOUTH NH

Portsmouth Community Power Meeting

Thursday, November 16, 2023

NOTES

Attending: Councilor John Tabor (chair), Councilor Kate Cook, Kevin Charette, Tom Rooney, Peter Somssich, Ben D'Antonio. Staff: Stephanie Seacord (recording secretary). Excused: Peter Britz. Guest: Brian Callnan, CEO CPCNH and members of the Sustainability Committee: Effie Malley, Bert Cohen, Aubrey Cohen, Councilor Beth Moreau and staff City Manager Karen Conard, Deputy Health Office Kristin Shaw, Kate Homet (Planning & Sustainability Dept.)

Video recording: [11.16.2023 Portsmouth Energy Advisory Committee \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=11.16.2023)

1. Roll call and Chair remarks: 6:34 pm

Acknowledged, with sadness, the resignation of Allison Tanner, but perpetuate her memory with her design for the Portsmouth Community Power logo.

2. Minutes from September 27, 2023 – Peter S. moved and Ben D seconded the acceptance of the minutes as amended (in red):

“PEAC remains the steward of PCP and would continue to be responsible for

- Communicating rate changes
- Convincing more residents to opt-up to greener options
- Working with CPCNH on how Portsmouth's and CPCNH reserves are used

Also for understanding and vetting interest in solar energy plans and programs now that state allows 5Mgw projects, to:

- Impact the City's environmental footprint
- Help residents reduce their bills”

3. Presentation by Brian Callnan, CEO of CPCNH

Kevin then introduced PEAC guest speaker, Brian Callnan the CEO of CPCNH (full presentation deck: [PowerPoint Presentation \(cityofportsmouth.com\)](https://www.cityofportsmouth.com)) who reported he is always happy to meet CPCNH members, answer questions and help Portsmouth meet its energy goals, with Portsmouth having the advantage of having PEAC member Kevin Charette as CPCNH Vice Chair. Having completed Wave 1 and the first rounds of rate-setting, CPCNH is now preparing for the next rate setting for Feb 1, 2024, building the team and establishing a homebase in Lebanon NH while retaining the location in Concord near the State House.

The Senior Team includes:

- Henry Herndon, Member Services – with 45 members (including 1 county), 3 towns about to launch and 2 more on the horizon – 25% of the NH population – we're seeing rapid growth, a high level of interest and a high need to communicate.
- Deanna Dennis, Regulatory and Legislative Affairs
- Clifton Below
- Bobbie Jo Michael, Dir of Administration

In 2024, expect to add to the senior team:

- Director of Projects and Programs – every member already has a project in mind and many have done the legwork to incorporate more renewable energy already. “Need a person as excited as I am about the

opportunities.”

- Senior Energy Analyst – “spreadsheet jockey”
- Communications Specialist – to work with Resilient Building Group and NH Saves

Financial Reports (through August: Portsmouth went live June 1)

Reporting: Cost, Revenue, Reserves, Benefi

CPCNH Member Monthly Report* (DRAFT)															
Inception to Date, August 2023															
Community Power Aggregation	Total Revenue (\$000)	Total Costs (\$000)	Joint Reserves (\$000)	Discr. Reserves (\$000)	Customer Savings (\$000)	Comm. Benefit (\$000)	Total Accounts #	Current Accounts #	Comm. Energy MWh	Opt In %	Opt Up %	Opt Down %	Opt Out %	Granite Basic %	Granite Plus %
Canterbury	\$192	\$151	\$41	\$0	\$61	\$102	939	851	1,236	3.1%	1.3%	0.0%	2.2%	96.3%	0.1%
Enfield	\$514	\$430	\$84	\$0	\$161	\$245	2,482	2,302	3,522	0.8%	2.0%	0.0%	0.4%	97.5%	0.2%
Exeter	\$2,224	\$1,724	\$500	\$0	\$1,040	\$1,541	7,469	6,845	14,316	0.8%	1.3%	0.0%	0.6%	98.0%	0.2%
Hanover	\$882	\$754	\$128	\$0	\$252	\$380	3,139	2,681	6,051	1.1%	4.9%	2.1%	0.6%	2.5%	91.7%
Harrisville	\$112	\$90	\$22	\$0	\$23	\$45	723	668	718	2.9%	4.1%	0.0%	2.0%	93.0%	0.4%
Lebanon	\$2,361	\$2,120	\$241	\$0	\$836	\$1,077	8,827	7,300	17,625	4.1%	3.5%	0.0%	0.3%	95.9%	0.2%
Nashua	\$11,364	\$8,806	\$2,557	\$0	\$2,546	\$5,103	37,145	32,885	73,373	0.6%	0.5%	0.0%	0.4%	99.1%	0.1%
Peterborough	\$776	\$611	\$165	\$0	\$149	\$314	3,228	3,020	4,866	1.3%	1.5%	2.5%	1.2%	3.0%	93.9%
Plainfield	\$229	\$185	\$43	\$0	\$58	\$101	485	751	1,491	1.9%	1.6%	1.4%	0.8%	2.0%	95.3%
Portsmouth	\$2,907	\$2,289	\$618	\$0	\$545	\$1,163	12,727	11,281	18,855	1.0%	0.8%	0.0%	0.6%	98.3%	0.1%
Rye	\$857	\$665	\$192	\$0	\$181	\$373	2,900	2,627	5,519	2.2%	0.7%	0.0%	0.5%	98.7%	0.0%
Walpole	\$519	\$421	\$98	\$0	\$154	\$252	1,809	1,695	3,492	1.9%	0.9%	0.0%	0.5%	98.4%	0.1%
CPCNH	\$22,937	\$18,246	\$4,689	\$0	\$6,006	\$10,696	81,873	72,906	151,065	1.3%	1.2%	0.2%	0.5%	90.3%	7.9%

Question: The joint reserves are applied to debt service?

A: Joint reserves build CPCNH balance sheet, hoping to get own line of credit after building to 180 days of operating funds. Then extra would supplement discretionary reserves each member might collect on top of rate payments.

CPCNH projected 60 day reserves collected within 3 years – achieved in first year. Anticipate 120 days in 5 years.

Question: With new towns/members being added, doesn't that push the '180 days of operating funds' indefinitely?

A. Yes although the whole entity is also an expanding contributor.

Question: Portsmouth should be doing better on opt-ups to more renewables.

A. Some towns set 50% as the base rate but PEAC did not want to risk have Portsmouth Community Power rates come in higher than Eversource. We want them to get comfortable with the program and maximize their savings at first, while promoting the options through outreach efforts, such as:

- Incentives eg NH Saves messaging
- Greenhouse gas reduction certificates e.g. Climate Action Plan “Granite Plus = # tons of carbon emissions avoided”
- “I opted up” campaign (lawn signs – without adding more plastic to the environment)

Regulatory & Legislative Update:

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- ✦ Net Energy Metering 3.0
- ✦ Bill Ready Billing Waiver
- ✦ EDI Working Group
- ✦ Data Platform
- ✦ Liberty Distribution Rate Case
- ✦ Harrisville/CPCNH Complaint
- ✦ Purchase of Receivables
- ✦ Leg. Service Request- RSA 362
- ✦ Load Settlement Petition
- ✦ And More....



EDI Working Group to solve Net Metering issue – technology currently can't measure reverse flow (a “negative number”): an energy export just looks like 0 to meter. Seeking the sales and purchases data from Eversource so CPCNH can avoid enrolling them until a solution is found. There were 59 people from Portsmouth – makes for a poor customer service experience although all issues were ultimately resolved. PUC. DOE and the utilities are meeting to figure out the load settlement. Once the net metering is sorted out there is room for additional innovation such as ‘time of use’ rates and encouraging reduced use during high demand times.

Note: Of the 120,000 enrolled customers, 3000 were 3rd party supplier customers and 178 were net metered. We're hoping in 2024 to have this issue behind us. As Portsmouth has a seat at the CPCNH table, resolving our issue helps the whole state not just Portsmouth. The Liberty and Harrisville RSA53E complaints filed by CPCNH are to get the issue resolved.

Rate Setting for Feb 1, 2024

CPCNH tries to set rates right after the utilities announce them so that ours can be lower, making it easier for consumers to see the savings over the same period. CPCNH will know the next rates effective Feb 1, 2024 in December 2023.

Question: How can CPCNH buy more renewables to pass on options to consumers, eg. provide a market for solar

- A. Right now only energy capacity is considered, not other costs such as transmission or storage which are valuable
- B. What about solarizing the community? Vendors offer to set everything up and pay the city. CPCNH is interested in larger facilities that benefit more of the state.

Question: We're focused on electricity which is 30% of energy use, but what about efforts to reduce heating and transportation energy use.

- A. As a member you can ask CPCNH to explore that and use of reserves for weatherization, EV charging, low-income assistance, through the Director of Programs & Projects. Portsmouth helps CPCNH with strategy through your board representation.

Question: How about moving churches off the demand charge burden.

- A. Definitely part of the innovation that will become possible as the program evolves.

Councilor Tabor: Portsmouth Community power is a success for our citizens. Exciting to be part of a successful

startup. CPCNH is doing a terrific job.

A. Give yourselves a round of applause. What you're doing is what make CPCNH successful.

4. Future of PEAC

The city needs the expertise of PEAC members. We want to be on the leading edge of energy transformation and free up infrastructure for more innovation – PEAC charged with finding those opportunities.

Our role is to find the balance in reducing our carbon footprint while keeping the price low – a great public service to the community.

The committee sunsets December 31, 2023. In January we could explore our scope and goals. Should we continue?

Kevin – Yes. It makes sense to continue. There is no lack of future opportunities.

Kate – Yes, continue. PEAC is valuable. We should ensure there's a member of the Sustainability Committee on PEAC. (2 openings with departures of Allison and Becca)

Peter – Yes, it makes sense because the issue is not going away and our role has the opportunity to grow more interesting and complicated.

John – Might we consider permanent standing – through an ordinance we would define our mission and scope.

Tom moved and Peter seconded the motion that PEAC recommends that the Mayor reappoint the members of the Portsmouth Energy Advisory Blue Ribbon Committee, including a member of the Sustainability Committee. Approved unanimously.

5. Old Business: Notes from the Clean Energy National Conference, attended by Councilor Tabor, Effie Malley and Kate Homet. Also Brian Callan.

Session on Community Power (NY, CA and Cape Cod compact) – many communities still using the broker model but the coalition portfolio is offering more sophisticated aggregation than the broker model

Aggregation in NY defaults to solar supply, saving 10% of total energy use. Brian: that aggregation is 10 years old so more mature and able to take on the more complicated process to get that.

The conference suggested avenues for us to get benefits for our residents. The CPCNH director of projects wants to consult with communities on projects like this – a free consulting opportunity for these initiatives.

Solar: Joint power coalition with the clout and expertise has the ability to be a market maker. Councilors are looking at how to allow large scale solar in line with zoning districting. Other projects include a Clipper Foundation grant for the Middle School to install 5 panels, saving the City money in the School budget.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.