



**CITY OF PORTSMOUTH NH**  
**Portsmouth Energy Advisory Committee**  
**Wednesday, October 2, 2024 at 6:30 pm**

**Meeting recording:** <https://youtu.be/Qw5m0RuiVHY>

Attending: Councilor John Tabor, Herb Lloyd, Tom Rooney, Tracey Cameron, Peter Somssich, Ben D'Antonio. Staff: Jillian Harris, Stephanie Seacord (recording secretary) Not attending: Kevin Charette, Councilor Cook, Betsy Blaisdell.

**Roll call** – Chair Tabor called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm.

1. **Chairman's Remarks** – Revisiting the prioritized goals set by PEAC in February, progress has been made on solar education, supporting CPCNH and maximizing opt-up selections. Tonight's meeting looks at maximizing the energy efficiency of municipal buildings and starts the consideration of a community solar project. Would like to plan a work session on assessing the capped Jones Avenue landfill site for placement of a solar array. What brains need to be at that table?
2. **Approval of Minutes** – August minutes approved on a motion by Ben D'Antonio, seconded by Peter Somssich.
3. **Presentation and discussion by City energy consultants from EEI: Kerri Warms, Certified Energy Manager and Adam Jenness. Complete presentation: [Microsoft PowerPoint - Powerpoint Portsmouth Energy Advisory 9-30-24 \(cityofportsmouth.com\)](#)**

Based in Merrimack, New Hampshire, Energy Efficient Investments Inc. (EEI) was founded in 2007 and specializes in Performance Contracting in New Hampshire. Along with their parent company ENE Systems, Inc. EEI has over seventy years of experience in building control systems, security, automation and energy efficiency.

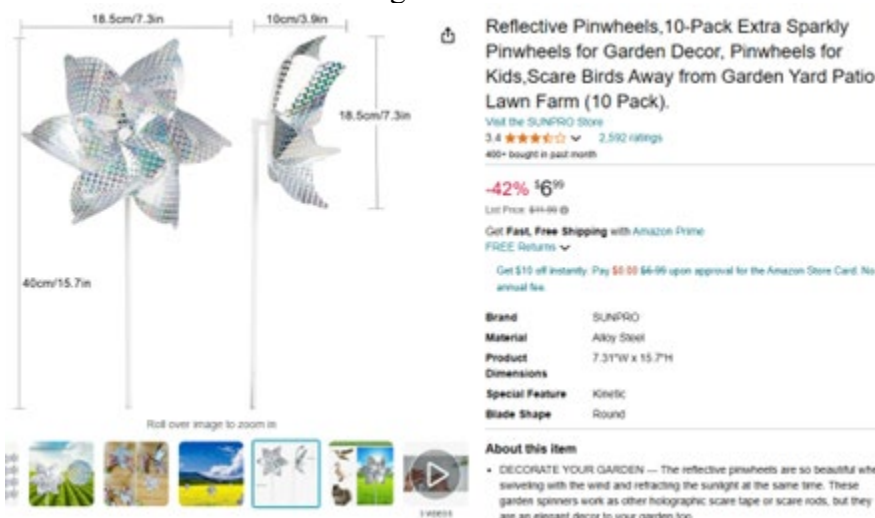
Kerri explained that their process is to conduct a portfolio benchmarking (with ISO interconnect) audit identifying the biggest needs and setting priorities, preparing engineering designs at investment grade, i.e. a full analysis with all the numbers – to maximize use of rebates, tax credits and Federal grant monies, and then constructing the project. EEI guarantees the performance and savings – both dollars and BTUs. The process produces a capital plan so that replacement can be anticipated not an emergency fix.

EEI has worked with the Portsmouth School Department conducting this process and implementing improvement projects at the Middle School, Little Harbor and New Franklin elementary schools. Now working with City Facilities Manager Joe Almeida on 6 City facilities: City Hall, Portsmouth Police Station, all three Fire Department stations, Community Campus and the DPW complex on Peverly Hill Road. (Note: Peter Somssich asked if the Spinnaker Point Recreation Center, though not City-owned could be included as 6 years remain on the lease.)

There was a lengthy discussion about the challenges presented by the City Hall complex (EEI: Michael Davey, EEI Business Development Manager has commented that City Hall is “the most challenging building I’ve ever seen in my career because it was not designed for its current use.”) and consideration of ventilation options to find the balance with an appropriately-sized system: Variable Refrigerant Flow (VRF), existing 2-pipe with more ventilation, 4-pipe with more ventilation or geothermal.

EEI will present the results of the audit by Dec 2024 in order to consider projects for the FY26 CIP. Will supply the Auburn NH report as an example of the deliverable.

4. **Battery storage program** – item deferred to next meeting.
5. **NREL/wind power for sewer plants** – Herb Lloyd provided the quick update that the City has received a proposal from NREL detailing the scope of work: 60 hours of technical assessment of distributed wind power and battery storage for peak shaving at the City’s wastewater treatment facilities. Will also look at other options on City property – canopies, rooftops, etc. Report arrived too late for inclusion in the packet so Councilor Tabor will forward. This is a pilot project covering the financial viability, funding sources, cost and pro/con decision tree to dip our toe in the NREL pool. DPW Director Peter Rice is interested in their waste-to-energy and PFAS neutralizing program knowledge but City is not interested in being on the cutting edge of unproven technology.” Councilor Tabor has asked the City Manager about staff involvement to oversee NREL: City Engineer Erich Fiedler who was involved in early discussions and Ronnieann Rakoski, DPW regulator compliance admin. NREL will provide a written deliverable on their findings.
6. **Green Challenge report** – Portsmouth is leading in community opt-ups as of the August report.
7. **Green Challenge “yard sign” options** – Stephanie Seacord, PIO presented a weatherproof yard pinwheel. Tom suggested it could be branded with a label that folds around the stem with the “OptUp Portsmouth/CommunityPowerNH.gov/Portsmouth message. The pinwheels are 70 cents each compared to yard signs that are \$7 each. And the pinwheel is not plastic and supports the renewable wind message.



8. Old business
  - **Peter S. discussed the ability of solar 1.0 customers – those who installed systems before 2017 – who CAN sign up for Community Power and retain their net metering credits.** Mark Bollanger at CPCNH confirmed this but the customer service agents were not informed – and will be. Peter will advise when his switchover actually shows up in his Eversource bill so PEAC can inform the public, especially those at the solar education event who expressed interest.

- **Peter S. has also investigated use of the Jones Ave. capped landfill.** He reviewed the City's 2015 report on the site and called DOE who advised on the form and process (via a vendor) to allow. Peter Britz forwarded the necessary information for the form. Peter then discussed the idea with Beth McGwinn, DES site evaluation contact who explained the use for a solar array like the one in Jaffrey depends on the size and plan, noting the area is currently used for passive recreation. Peter suggested a site walk with Beth and PEAC. Councilor Tabor would like to investigate whether the energy generated could power the high school for behind-the-meter benefit. Herb has discussed the project with Katrin from Clean Energy NH. Need to define the goal. Many options: ReVision project paying City? Bonded City project with direct payoff? Partner with Clean Energy NH or CPCNH – involving other towns or not? Need to evaluate potential locations for the technological possibilities, review the financials and determine 'is this achievable?' Councilor Tabor will schedule a work session(s) to consider angles: invite Katrin/Clean Energy to facilitate a session with PEAC, a solar developer such as ReVision, Peter Britz and other City stakeholders.
  - **Tracey reminds PEAC about the NH Saves “Button Up” Workshop October 23 at Community Campus** – Coordinated with the Library and Sustainability Committee. Outreach in the form of flyers, press release and City Newsletter all forthcoming.
9. Public comment – no public attending and no Zoom participation due to a scheduling error.
  10. Adjourned at 8:30 pm

**Next PEAC meeting: Wednesday, November 6 at 6:30 pm**