



**CITY OF PORTSMOUTH NH
Portsmouth Energy Advisory Committee**

MINUTES

Tuesday, March 4, 2025, 6:30 pm

**City Hall Conference Room A
and via Zoom**

A recording of this meeting is posted on the City’s YouTube channel:

[3.4.2025 Portsmouth Energy Advisory Committee](#)

1. **Roll Call:** Attending: Councilor Tabor, chair. Tom Rooney, Tracey Cameron, Kevin Charette. Herb Lloyd. By zoom: Ben Antonio. Absent: Peter Somssich, Betsy. Staff: Jillian Harris.
2. **Chairman's remarks** -- Staff is reviewing the feasibility of placing a solar array at the Jones Ave. capped landfill site. They are meeting with engineering, industry experts and regulators. A site walk is planned in the near future. In the meantime, PEAC can look at other large solar array projects in NH as detailed in this chart supplied by the Chair.

Location	Land	MW	Developer	City/town benefit	Finance
Bow	Capped landfill	2.27	Kearsarge	\$120,000/yr	Lease, PILOT, 11.5 cents discount on electricity
Somersworth	Superfund landfill	2.6	Aneresco	\$100k/yr	Lease, PILOT, discount on electricity
Exeter	Sewer plant	1.77	ReVision	\$30k/yr 2025-2045, \$150-\$350k/yr after bond retired... electricity savings, RECs,	Bond \$3.6mm, Inflation Reduction Act grant \$1.6mm
Manchester	Capped landfill	3.3	Kearsarge	\$25k/yr	Lease and discount on electricity
Dover	Sewer plant	3.3	ReVision	TBD	Lease or purchase TBD
South Portland ME	Capped landfill	4.5	ReVision	\$20 mm lifetime savings (40 yrs?)	PPA to buy discounted power from ReVision for 6 years, then buy out the project and get no-cost electricity

Sources: Town websites, newspaper articles, developer proposals. These are estimates: A fully accurate comparison would require comparison of all of the town-approved pro formas which are not all available.

Annual benefits derived from “total benefit over x years” statements in presentations. No discount rate applied.

Chair noted he was struck by the wide variety of financing among the towns, though all benefitting the towns with their ROI, as solar does. PEAC has heard Exeter’s experience. Invited Bill Baber from the Dover Energy Commission to discuss the solar array project at the city’s wastewater treatment facility (<https://www.fosters.com/story/news/local/2024/10/03/dover-solar-array-wastewater-plant/75466442007/>)



Dover's wastewater treatment plant on Middle Road, where a proposed solar array would be located. *Provided By City Of Dover*

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Bill Baber, Dover Energy Commission – The Dover Energy Commission initiated the study considering solar at the Dover WWTF to fulfill one of the Commission's objectives. Dover has two solar arrays at the Children's Museum of NH and adjacent indoor pool at Henry Law Park, downtown, as well as a 1 megawatt AC array on the high school roof (was the largest rooftop solar in NH at the time).

Both were built under Power Purchase Agreements, leased with purchase at 6 years, which the city is now doing with monies put aside to do so. The high school site has not been setting aside funds to do so. Availability of Inflation Reduction Act funding for infrastructure may still offer additional financing considerations.

Dover has taken advantage of hiring an energy manager, Jackson Kaspari, who contributed greatly to the city's evaluation of the project. Caspari is now projects manager for CPCNH and continued to provide insight and analysis of the project (as he would for Portsmouth).

The Dover WWTF site offers three significant advantages:

1. The site is large enough for their 4 megawatt array, adjacent to the largest single city consumer of power, the WWTF. Negotiations with Eversource may supplement the city-owned land with a right of way easement.
2. The WWTF required the interconnection capacity needed for the solar array.*
3. The nearby substation also has the capacity available for the array.*

*The interconnection and substation can add substantially to the costs and therefore, ROI and PPA considerations.

Dover was anxious to get in the queue for demand on the substation and Eversource interconnection approval (currently takes 2 years). Not a phased project due to cost efficiency and finance predictability of doing the whole project at once. Availability of hardware such as transformers also an issue. After working with Siemens on an energy audit, asked about their bandwidth for the solar project. Siemens recommended ReVision and made a joint proposal that included the application with Eversource. ReVision \$75,000 contract covers the \$25-35,000 interconnection study and their fee. The Dover Energy Commission made the contract recommendation to the City Council who

promptly approved. DEC keeps their Council informed with an annual report (commending Council's decision making and results.) Chair noted that PEAC needs to get the interconnection feasibility contract defined so it can be included in the next CIP.

Comparison takeaways on Jones Ave.

1. 7 acre site can support the array with the goal of powering the high school and indoor pool and city owns the intervening property as well..
2. Challenge is the cost of transmission wires a quarter to half mile to school.
3. Substation at Tidewater might be a consideration.

Bill recommended reviewing contracts from different providers as the variations and questions/answers tend to help coalesce the specifics of the project – but said to be as specific as possible in defining what you really need. And then negotiate the terms.

Herb: Was CleanEnergy NH helpful for your project?

Bill: We've found they are focused on the struggle to make the overall environment for solar more suitable in NH than working on individual projects like these.

PEAC and DEC will continue to exchange information and insights.

3. **CPCNH update** – CEO Brian Callnan announcement. Chair spoke with Henry Herndon who is Acting Manager. Expecting full disclosure on the management change, integration issues with integration issues with Calpine and Ascend Analytics and financing. Expected that report 4 March but not posted yet.
4. **Legislative update – HB 760.** If PUC recommendation is approved it could water down the concept of community power and be trouble for CPCNH.
5. **Minutes from Feb 5, 2025 meeting**, on a motion by Herb, seconded by Kevin, approved. (Note: Ben had to leave before this vote – and had edits to the minutes. To be taken up at next meeting.)
6. **NREL Update** – Herb reported he had spoken to Sharon who requested one more meeting to finalize their report, ETA end of March. Thanked DPW/Erich Fiedler for the ability to drill down on the answers on technical information on the sites and their power consumption. Would anticipate PEAC review of the report at the April 1 meeting. Suggested inviting NREL in Denver to zoom for that meeting
7. **Public comment** – None.

Adjourned at 8:06 pm.

Next meeting: Wednesday, April 2 at 6:30 pm in Conference Room A.