

**TOWN OF SOUTHWINGTON
ENERGY COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
December 21, 2009**

A special meeting of the Energy Committee for the Town of Southington was held in the Council Chambers of the Southington Town Hall, 75 Main Street, Southington on December 21, 2009.

Present: Chairman Frederick Rogers, Fred Cox, Sharon Voecke, John Degioia and ex-officio members Anthony Tranquillo, Town Engineer and Mark Sciota, Town Attorney.

1.) CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:03PM by Chairman, Frederick Rogers.

2.) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of September 21, 2009 were administratively approved by Town Attorney, Mark Sciota.

3.) ENERGY COMMITTEE COMMUNICATIONS

a.) Communications from the Public

Arthur Cyr, 103 Berlin Ave addressed the committee. He spoke about the luminosity studies of public buildings done by the previous committee. He notes that in at least 99% of cases the lights are now off at night. He addresses the goal of energy savings for the town and points out the bright lighting at the Water Company's Mill St. facility. Chairman Rogers answered that the Water Company is aware of this and is presently taking steps to correct it.

b.) Communications from Committee Members

Chairman Rogers spoke about the past committee members and their accomplishments. He acknowledged a job well done by those who served. The Town of Southington and this committee appreciates their vision and action as he recognized that their efforts will continue to bring results for the taxpayers of Southington into the future.

4.) MISSION STATEMENT REVIEW

Chairman Rogers read the Mission Statement of the Energy Committee. "The mission of the Southington Energy Committee is to advise and assist the Southington Town Council in its efforts to develop and implement comprehensive, cost effective conservation measures and to further assist their efforts to promote the use of renewal energy sources by the Town of Southington, government, commercial and residential properties." Town Attorney Mark Sciota suggested that one of the goals of the Council through this committee is to review and apply for any energy grants available. Chairman Rogers will modify the mission statement accordingly and present it for discussion and to be voted on at the next meeting.

5.) ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION AND REVIEW

a.) DBS Energy Study

There was a discussion about projects in progress under the auspices of Gary Lane of DBS in municipal buildings based on the previous committee's actions and decisions. Anthony Tranquillo, Town Engineer explained that energy audits have been accomplished on all municipal buildings. Work on updating the lighting, including the use of motion sensors, and thermostat updates is underway. He noted that Gary Lane is the town's agent to administer the \$172,000 grant received for this purpose. He gave an accounting of where the conservation project stands

to date. The PV and solar installation fire station will be addressed soon and represents a sizable investment. The installation will contribute to the town's 20% renewable energy commitment. Tranquillo explained the terms of the grant and repayment arrangements vs the energy savings projected. He anticipates that the energy cost savings will cover any expenditure. Mr. Cox noted that the Board of Education has been very happy with DBS's services and the cost savings are being applied to the loan. He anticipates the payback period to be shorter than projected.

Anthony Tranquillo reported on the energy audit done at the Waste Treatment Plant. DBS is conducting a simultaneous energy audit at the plant with the future improvements planned there. Rogers had some questions about the review of various systems at the plant. There was some discussion and it was decided to ask DBS to appear before this committee to report on progress and answer questions. John Degioia had some questions concerning the proposed redesign of the plant. Chairman Rogers is concerned about the two projects being handled simultaneously without duplication and waste.

b.) Waste Water Plant – RFQ

Tranquillo explained that the RFQ is for qualification statements and not a scope of services. Degioia expects ultimate massive redesign of the plant. He notes that much of the equipment dates back to 1958, some from 1980. The system is not efficient and he feels there is little that can be done to make the existing equipment efficient by today's standards. Chairman Rogers is doubtful that the energy component of this project is addressed adequately on the proposed RFQ spec. Degioia pointed out that the two elements of this project—energy and waste treatment efficiency—are of equal importance. An energy efficient plant that can't do the job of processing waste is useless. After some discussion, Town Attorney Mark Sciota suggested that the RFQ be extended by 45 days to allow time for review and modification as needed. All agreed. This will be handled administratively.

c.) Update on 20% by 2010 Campaign

Sharon Vocke reported on the status of this project. The Town of Southington is obligated to spend 20% of its energy funds on renewable energy by 2010. There are various initiatives to choose from to meet a goal of 200 points. Southington is presently at 151. She monitors Southington's progress on line at the Clean Energy Fund website, click on Communities, then Southington. She explained some the different ways that the town can achieve its goal and be awarded a wind or solar system to be installed in Southington. A quota of residents must sign up to purchase renewable energy from their electricity supplier. "Sustainable Southington," a committee of adults and children, is promoting the campaign to ask residents to commit to clean energy. They have received a grant for \$2000 for this effort and anticipate eligibility for another \$2000.

There was a discussion about choosing a building from Board of Education and one of the municipal building for tracking for energy efficiency and savings for review by the EPA. Vocke noted that some towns purchase clean energy credits in order to offset the difference in cost, consider the incentives offered by the clean energy suppliers. She suggests interviewing Sterling Planet and Community Energy (certified by the Clean Energy Fund) for cost comparison, considering incentives. She will set up these interviews at a meeting. Attorney Sciota reminded the committee that Southington has a contract with TransCanada for the next few years and they guarantee 7% renewable energy.

d.) Streetlight Retro Program

Chairman Rogers reported that he did some research on this. CL&P offers up to 50% incentive for retrofitting to LED or inductive traffic lighting. Apparently Torrington has done extensive research on this they are willing to share. He wonders about the initial cost of the change to the town. Town Engineer Anthony Tranquillo will do some further research since it would be a sizable investment for Southington. Degioia reports that there are problems with LED

traffic lights since they do not generate enough heat to keep the beam viewable in ice or heavy snow. Heaters need to be installed.

6.) YEAR IN REVIEW

Chairman Rogers asks the panel for any and all spontaneous input, questions, comments or suggestions as this committee ventures forth.

7.) STRATEGIC PLANNING

Town Attorney Mark Sciota asks if there are any grant opportunities in the energy field that committee members are aware of. Ms. Vocke offered to research this and report. Chairman Rogers reports that he watches DOE funding closely in his position at the Water Department. He will maintain an awareness of energy opportunities. Rogers asked the returning committee members if they know of any project in progress that has not been readdressed. There was another discussion about the 20% in 2010 initiative. This needs to be addressed now since 2010 is here. Mr. Cox asked about private installations of clean energy systems, citing specifically Mr. Florian's system, being counted to Southington's credit.

Mr. Cox recalls that there was a discussion by the previous committee about inserting an energy line item in the 2010 budget. He thinks perhaps it would be good to propose a "shovel-ready" project in the event that stimulus money comes available. He had volunteered South End Elementary School as a good photo voltaic project. Chairman Rogers added that he had also discussed with DBS the possibility of the Water Department for a photo voltaic project. Ms. Vocke asks about geo thermal possibilities. Mr. Tranquillo suggests that this committee approach the Town Council to add a line item in the budget for a renewable energy project and initiatives. He agrees with Mr. Cox that with money allocated, if an opportunity comes along there will be some funding to pursue it. The amount would be a committee decision, however, he thinks that a consult with DBS would be in order. This request must be in place before the middle of February in order to be considered at the next budget session. Mr. Degioia discussed the unique position of the waste water treatment plant. Mr. Cox explained that DBS has looked at two sites for current projects—South End and Plantsville. They could present them to this committee for consideration of proposal as a line item to the Town Council. This will be set up. Attorney Sciota explained that a large project would be listed as a capital project and the bond council will undoubtedly become involved.

8.) MISCELLANEOUS

Following a discussion about setting the next meeting it was decided to meet on January 25 (since January 18 is Martin Luther King Day) at 6PM in the conference room of the Town Hall.

9.) ADJOURN

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 5PM.

Frederick Rogers
Chairman
Town of Southington
Energy Committee.