

**TOWN OF HAMDEN
ENERGY USE AND CLIMATE CHANGE COMMISSION**

**(Via Zoom/Telephonically)
Minutes of a Regular Meeting
Monday, December 14, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.**

A regular meeting of the Hamden Energy Use and Climate Change Commission took place on Monday, December 14th, via Zoom/telephonically.

Attending: Lawrence Rosenthal, Chairman; Brendan Smith, Vice Chair; Alison Demaio; Martin Mador; Henry Dynia; David Cooper

Absent: Susan Kulis

Also in attendance: Kathleen Schomaker, Energy Efficiency Coordinator; Tambria Moore; Timothy Mckee ;Bob Langdon; Beva Nall-Langdon; Liana Paglia, substitute clerk

1. Call to Order (roll call):

- a. Chairman Rosenthal called the meeting to order at 7:20 pm. See attendance noted above; a quorum was present.

2. Approval of November 9, 2020 Minutes

- a. Mr. Smith was counted as absent, when he was in fact present during the meeting. Mr. Langdon and Ms. Nall-Langdon noted their names were misspelled. Ms. Schomaker noted the need to change the language when referring to a letter written in support of, rather than to apply for, the CT Energy Network Program. Mr. Rosenthal noted his name was recorded as "Mrs." Instead of "Mr." Mr. Rosenthal requested a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Mr. Cooper made a motion to approve the amended minutes. Mr. Smith seconded and all were in favor.

3. General Comments B. Smith Vice Chair

- a. As an avid biker for both recreation and commuting purposes, has found that the route from Whitneyville to Spring Glen that does not put you on to Whitney or Dixwell. He noted the safety risk that this poses. He questioned if the commission could tackle the issue of Hamden not being a bikable town, or if there are other groups they could support. Mr. Smith mentioned potentially contacting Bill Horowitz, the treasurer of the Farmington Valley Trails Council. Mr. Rosenthal noted that that commission is shut down due to the pandemic. He also noted that the only designated bike lanes added within the past year were on Ridge Rd. to Davis St. to Waite St.

Ms. Schomaker noted that the Engineering department completed an extensive, nationally recognized training, called "Complete Streets." Mark Austin, the town engineer, is invested in making Hamden a walkable, bikable community. The main function of the training is to ensure that multimodal (walking, biking, wheel chairing, busing, etc.) transportation is supported. Ms. Schomaker suggested having a conversation with Mr. Austin and Mr. Smith, and highlighting Complete Streets as an important aspect of the Energy Plan. However, she reminded the commission to remain focused on their current, agreed upon priorities.

Mr. Cooper questioned if the Farmington Canal is safely navigable into New Haven. Chairman Rosenthal noted that Mr. Horowitz, the treasurer for the Farmington Valley Trails Council, biked the entire length of the canal. He acknowledged the canal as bike

and roller blade friendly. He questioned if the canal should be considered the primary route for biking north-south, as it does not allow cars on it and has periodic vehicle parking. Ms. Schomaker called for bicycle accessible connectivity. She noted that you cannot get anywhere in Hamden safely, strictly by bike. Once “Complete Streets” is passed, there is a potential for other commissions to join in the efforts for improvement. Ms. Schomaker concluded by once again suggesting she, Mr. Smith, and Mr. Austin have a conversation. Chairman Rosenthal agreed with this suggestion, and is open to the possibility of the commission participating in the Complete Streets educational program.

Mr. Dynia noted lighting as a safety issue on the canal. Ms. Schomaker explained that canal lighting is overseen by the canal commission, which would have to exercise a policy change. Chairman Rosenthal questioned where the lighting should start. Ms. Schomaker explained that by policy, the trail has no illumination, aside from the tunnels. Mr. Mador suggested contacting the Parks and Rec commission, as Mr. Smith’s concerns, are not limited to just the canal.

- b. Chair Rosenthal introduced soon-to-be commission members: Tambria Moore and Timothy Mckee. Tambria Moore is a member of the Green Party. She has served in the New London mayoral office, was a member of the port authority, and chaired the housing commission. Mr. Mckee started a Toxics group in Tulsa, Ok, due to oil pollution. He cofounded and was the co-chair of the Green Party in Rhode Island. Both Ms. Moore and Mr. Mckee are interested in assisting in the commissions’ efforts, even before they are officially appointed.
- c. There was some brief discussion explaining the logistical details concerning the official appointment of Ms. Moore and Mr. Mckee. Ms. Schomaker explained her role as a staff liason to the commission. Chairman Rosenthal overviewed some of the commission’s larger programs, such as their electric vehicle program.

4. General Comments on advanced charging technology – L. Rosenthal, Chairman

- (See below)

5. Energy Efficiency Coordinator Report – K. Schomaker

- a. Update on changes to Economic Development Commission
 - 1. Mr. Kroop, the former head of the Economic Development department has resigned. As of 12/14/20, Marian Amodeo is the interim part time director of the Economic Development department. At the most recent commission meeting, the EV readiness tool kit program was discussed. Ms. Schomaker posed an invitation for one or two Economic Development commissioners to join the expanding committee on EV readiness.
- b. Update on Street Lamp Audit and construction schedule
 - 1. The RFP is in its formative stages. There are two memorandums of understanding, one being the Private Area Lighting (PAL).United Illuminating treats this as a separate upgrade project. This memorandum is in the Town Attorney’s office, with some details being worked out. The Engineering Department and Ms. Schomaker collaborated to perform an internal audit of these lights. The municipality only owns 212 of the 933 outdoor lamps. The remaining outdoor lamps are owned by private businesses or non-profits. They are trying to get this project underway before moving to the street light internal audit and the RFP for the professional audit.

Chairman Rosenthal requested clarification in regards to the figures of private street lights versus the overall count of street lamps. Ms. Schomaker confirmed

that the figures are completely distinct. Chairman Rosenthal questioned if this audit will take place in early 2021. Ms. Schomaker explained that this audit is in preparation of the construction. Much research has been done to ensure that this construction is done in an effective and affordable way.

- c. Update on start of NORESKO work
 - 1. Ms. Schomaker believes an educational session with the legislative council members is necessary. It should be classified as a “capital project” when discussing with the legislative council. This will be a way to target town buildings, especially the schools, and update their HVAC systems. Not only is this update energy efficient, but it would help combat airborne diseases.
- d. EVSE (Electric Vehicle Service Equipment) Module status and Other Department Participation
 - 1. Ms. Schomaker is proud of the efforts Hamden has made in promoting the electrification of transportation. Mr. Langdon and Ms. Nall-Langdon have been co-captains of Hamden National Drive Electric Week Car Show the past three Septembers. Hamden was the second municipality in CT to have an EV Readiness study performed by Live Green CT. Hamden has just completed a 12 week EV Readiness toolkit program. She believes they are ready to embark on a more intensive, one year program in 2021. This program will be fully paid for by Avangrid.

Mr. Cooper asked Ms. Schomaker how much money she expects to be available from the Volkswagen settlement. The settlement of \$10 million, is being handled through a trust, but there is no way to know how much specifically will be awarded to Hamden.

Ms. Schomaker took the time to applaud the efforts of Mr. Langdon and Ms. Nall-Langdon, who had created a slide deck to be used by other audiences and commissions that need to be persuaded about the value of EV.

Ms. Schomaker asked the commissioners if they would be interested in dividing up the toolkit modules amongst themselves. There was some discussion amongst the commissioners as to which as to which modules each would focus on. Ms. Schomaker reminded commissioners that Hamden is in a unique position to be leaders in this.

Mr. Cooper noted the industry change towards CCS charging up to 350 amps. He questioned if Avangrid has the capability to push out sufficient electricity if the Hamden EV population grows significantly. Mr. Langdon pointed out that the field is rapidly evolving, specifically with new charging technology. He noted BP is developing a level 3 charger with its own batteries, without requiring power from a main line. Chairman Rosenthal is being sent data in regards to new EV charging technology, and he will share this information at the next meeting. Ms. Schomaker remarked that the challenge is finding monetary support for this capital investment.

Ms. Moore noted the importance of educating the population about the benefits of EV. She also suggested a dedicated charging location near public safety, or a police station for domestic violence safety charging.

Mr. Langdon pointed out that with the current EV goals put forth by the Biden administration, there could potentially be some federal funds available in 2021. Ms. Schomaker again pointed out that Hamden is likely in a better position for receipt of any potential funds, as it has completed the EV Readiness Toolkit.

Chairman Rosenthal reminded Ms. Schomaker and the commissioners that he had sent out a draft of a letter to Mayor Leng pursuing a grant writer to assist the commission in securing grants. Chairman Rosenthal hopes to have the final version go out this week, after any corrections from the commissioners.

There was some brief discussion in regards to the legacy of Dale Kroop, the former head of the Economic Development department. Mr. Mador questioned if Mrs. Amodeo, the newly appointed interim head should attend the next EUCC meeting. Ms. Schomaker believes she should attend after getting acquainted with her new position. Mr. Cooper suggested Mr. Kroop attending future EUCC meetings as well.

Ms. Schomaker departed the meeting at 8:42 pm.

6. Old Business

- a. Module comments by commissioners as to completion: (See above)
- b. Q & A by Commissioners:
 1. Mr. Cooper questioned if an Avangrid representative could be arranged to speak at one of the EUCC meetings. Ms. Demaio, a former Avangrid employee, suggested Rick Rosa, as a potential speaker for January or February's meeting. All efforts are being put into the completion of the EVSE module program, which will position Hamden favorably for the next steps.
 2. Chairman Rosenthal raised the subject of undergrounding wires in lieu of poles. Mr. Dynia elaborated that the underground structuring could be done in a way with little impact to the ratepayers or state budgets. He touted the main benefits of undergrounding, which will be that less trees are chopped down, reduced storm damage.

7. **Adjournment:** Chairman Rosenthal requested a motion to adjourn. Mr. Cooper moved to make a motion to adjourn, which Mr. Smith seconded. All were in favor.

Submitted by: Liana Paglia, Substitute Clerk for the Commission