

**MINUTES - BOARD OF EDUCATION PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD OCTOBER 22, 2020 BY VIDEO CONFERENCE**

Planning Committee Members Present: Andrew Martelli, Chair
Timothy White
Kathryn Hallen

Additional Attendees Present: Vincent Masciana, Chief Operating Officer
Richard Clavet, Facilities Manager
Michael Sahn, ECG Engineering, P.C.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Martelli called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. AUDIENCE

Mr. Masciana reported there were no questions or comments received.

3. DISTRICT SOLAR ENERGY PROJECT

Mr. Michael Sahn, Senior Project Engineer for ECG Engineering, P.C., introduced himself and provided a brief overview of his experience with energy projects. He noted that he worked with the Town on the design of the solar carport that is installed at the Cheshire Police Department on Highland Avenue.

Mr. Sahn shared his screen and provided related information from a presentation on solar photovoltaic (PV) solutions, entitled *Cheshire PV Opportunities - Potential Incentives*. He provided detailed information on two specific programs that could be used to fund PV installations, namely the Zero Emissions Renewable Energy Credit (ZREC) Program and the State's School Construction Grant (SCG) Program. He also noted that Eversource offers various incentives for non-PV systems. Mr. Clavet explained that the Cheshire Public Schools have taken advantage of various Eversource incentive programs and highlighted how we are currently proceeding with incentive-eligible upgrades in six schools with Energy Resources as the Eversource approved contractor.

Mr. Sahn also provided relevant information from a presentation entitled *Cheshire PV Assessment – Preliminary Facility and System Assessments*, which he prepared based on information he previously received from the district.

Mr. Martelli explained that the School Modernization Committee is working to develop a plan for the district that will impact multiple school building properties across the district. Recommendations are expected to be made over the next several months and thus, any future solar PV or other projects need to be planned for accordingly.

In the discussion that ensued, various options were explored with questions and answers focused on the following areas:

- The pros and cons of owned versus leased PV systems.
- Roof-based versus ground-based installations such as solar carports. Mr. Sahm noted that roof-based costs are generally lower. Ground based installations can include provisions for electric car charging stations. Mr. Masciana noted that the district is wary of roof-based installations due to snow-load concerns.
- With respect to the ZREC program, the difference between medium and large installations, the procurement process, and the deadline dates for application.
- With respect to the SCG program, it was noted that the cost of both roof replacement and PV System installs are covered by the program and reimbursement and would be at the school district's renovation rate, which Mr. Masciana indicated is approximately 46 percent. Funding for the project would have to be approved through the Town's Capital Budget process resulting in a much longer lead time for project approval and execution.
- Also with respect to the SCG program, Ms. Hallen asked what the impact would be if a grant were used to fund a project and then the school building was no longer in use (subsequent to the meeting, it was learned that the grant may have to be repaid unless the building was going to continue to be used for educational purposes).

Based on the discussion, the consensus of the Committee was to work toward meeting the relevant deadlines for a ZREC funded project. It was agreed that a site visit would be scheduled with Mr. Sahm on Thursday, October 29, 2020 at 9:30 am. Mr. Masciana stated that he would send a calendar invitation and that he would work with Mr. Clavet to provide a "short list" of potential sites in advance of the site visit.

4. **ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Mr. White, which was seconded by Ms. Hallen, the meeting was adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Attest:

Vincent J. Masciana, Chief Operating Officer

Carol Jesensky, Executive Assistant

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