**Town of Swanzey, NH**
**Swanzey Energy Commission**
**Meeting Minutes for March 10, 2025**

*Note: Draft minutes are subject to review, correction and approval by the Committee. Review and approval of minutes generally takes place at the next regularly scheduled committee meeting.*

**Call to Order—**The meeting of the Swanzey Energy Commission was called to order at 1 pm by Chair Audette. Present: Bob Audette, Barbara Skuly (via phone), Cheri Domina. Also present: Emily Manns, Standard Power; Andrew Hatch, Community Power Coalition.

Absent: Steve Russell, Denis Swain

**Minutes**

Skuly made a motion to approve the Feb. 21 minutes. Audette seconded. All in favor. Approved.

**Business**

**Community Power Coalition, Andrew Hatch—**Discussed how the CPC operates. They started in April, 2023 and have been growing and maturing. They buy RECs retroactively and try to support local renewable energy projects. Their strategy has been to set rates to follow the utility's schedule every 6 months. They do offer a one-year contract too, which is easier for municipalities. They have four levels: Granite basic at 9.7 cents (25.2% renewable); default at 10.4 (33%), 11.1 (50%) and 13.1 (100%). They don't send out notices for rate changes, but customers can sign up for alerts.

Skuly noted that the basic rate is different, and has 10% less green energy. Current rates are closer to Swanzey's than they have been. CPC had to reset rates this winter, as one generator changed owners and contracts were voided.

New member towns have to sign a joint powers agreement; it is signed once and is not binding. Contracts outline specific relationships and how they manage overall costs, so no towns are burdened unfairly. Some towns are active and send a member representative to their annual meeting. Others are more passive. We would have a dedicated website & portal and phone number available for customer service.

Discussed stranded cost delivery charges and Eversource charging artificially low rates lately, and trying to recoup costs on the back end.

Discussed REC aggregators—both CPC and Standard Power will now do it. They pass on actual REC amounts, and not a flat rate.

Hatch is willing to present info to our Selectboard. Will email us the info on transitioning from Standard Power to CPC.

**Community Power Contract—**Discussed how Standard Power compares to CPC. Manns noted that CPC's basic rate is currently high, and felt our pathway to switch could be difficult. Skuly noted that people in Swanzey can sign up for CPC individually if they want to. Consensus to stay with Standard Power for now.

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Recommendations by consensus:

1. Stay with Standard Power.
2. Negotiate a 30-month contract. We could do a 12 or 17-month one, but that would put us out of synch with our member towns. Proceed with the presumption we will stay with the group.
3. Keep the default Renewable level at 35%, and keep all four customer options
4. We don't recommend adding a fee to create a discretionary fund at this time. Manns will look into whether we can create one anytime, or wait for the next contract renewal. We would like to have a goal in mind.

Motion: **Audette moved that we recommend to the Selectboard that we continue with Good Energy and Standard Power for the next Community Power contract renewal. We recommend retaining the current program options and renewable energy default level of 35%. We recommend the Selectboard move forward with the intention to stay with the Keene/Marlborough/Wilton group and their duration of contract.** Skuly seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

Skuly suggested we put information on our gas and pollution savings on our web page.

**CENH Policy Review—**Audette suggested we look at them

**Energy Forum—**Audette said MSH will do one soon.

**Energy Audits—**Skuly reported that all three buildings have had an audit and we are waiting for reports in May. Will present to Selectboard in June.

**SolSmart—**Are we signed up? Audette said Mehu told him we are enrolled.

**Group Net Metering & Solar Garden—**Manns said our municipality already benefits from GNM via Standard Power, and suggested we don't sign any new agreements (such as Solar Garden's) until the project is close to completion, as they often don't happen. The town gets a quarterly check now. Would SP do this with our community power program? Manns will find out.

Skuly said our auditor recommended putting solar directly on town buildings, so they are behind the meter and Eversource's distribution charge and connection fees are avoided.

**Next meeting:** April 14, 1 pm

**Adjournment:** Domina moved, Skuly seconded, all in favor, adjourned 2:40 pm.

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