



Town of Amherst, NH
Energy Committee and Public Hearing Draft
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, December 6 at 6PM
Johnson Meeting Room
Amherst Town Library
14 Main Street, Amherst NH

In attendance: Mercedes Olster, Zach Olster, Bill Stoughton (ex-officio), Susan Deschenes, Martin Rowley, Emily Manns from Standard Power and members of the public

Call to Order - Mercedes called the meeting to order at 6:01pm.

Motion to Open the Public Hearing - Mercedes moved to open the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Susan and passed unanimously.

Public Hearing Begins

Presentation about Community Power by Emily Manns of Standard Power

Same presentation as Public Hearing on Tuesday, December 5, 2023.

Questions from the members of the public

- If a town has a Community Power program, how is it free for the town? The Energy Committee consists of volunteers. The consultant, Standard Power helps the community through the program to launch, and supports the program after launch. Standard Power earns 1/10 of a cent per KWH.
- Consultants have more flexibility to time energy purchases? Yes, Standard Power can contract for power any time, as opposed to Eversource, which by law, can only make contracts during a 3-day period once in December and once in June.
- NH is new to Community Power. A person asked whether other states have been using this program for a longer time. Nine states have deregulated energy, allowing community power. Massachusetts, NH and Rhode island have Community Power programs. Massachusetts started offering community power, at least in Cambridge, in 2017.
- Every Town of Amherst customer will have four choices in Community Power, with different levels of renewables.

- If I already have a contract with another power supply company other than Eversource, will I need to opt out? No, only Eversource supply customers need to opt out.
- How does one opt in? It's an opt-out program; Eversource supply customers are automatically opted in at the default rate.
- How many communities in New Hampshire are using Community Power. Over 70 communities are either launched or working on the Community Power process.
- What does the opt out process look like? Before launch, customers will receive a postcard and a letter. There's an opt-out card in the letter, or you can call to opt out, or you can opt out online.
- At town meeting, if Community Power is voted in, then everyone who has Eversource as supplier will need to opt out? Yes, anyone who wants to stay with Eversource and doesn't want Community Power will need to opt out.
- What does it look like when Community power's rates change? At the end of a contract, Standard Power sends a letter to customers telling them what the new rate will be. New rates will also be posted on the Town of Amherst's website on the Energy Committee page.
- The pricing contracts for Standard Power are much longer than Eversource. Eversource is 6 months, Standard Power is 1 to 3 years.
- 100 million KWH per year is the sweet spot for purchasing power at the best rates. A group of approximately five towns comprises this amount. That's why Standard Power groups towns together to purchase power in a single block.
- An attendee of the public hearing said that Amherst is doing a great service to its residents by proposing Community Power.
- Direct Energy, Nextera, First Point Power, and Constellation Energy are the power suppliers to Community Power at this time.
- Will Eversource lose money and bring our town back up last during outages if Amherst uses Community Power No, Eversource isn't an energy supplier, it's just a passthrough for them. They make their money delivering electricity.
- If Community Power passes at the town meeting, when will it launch? June or July of 2024.
- What about the Eversource Heatsmart rate? Might it be lower than the Community Power rate? If it is, Heatsmart customers can choose to opt out of Community Power.
- NH Saves program works with people to insulate their homes and reduce heating costs. This program pays up to 80% of insulation costs.

Motion to Close the Public Hearing - Mercedes moved to close the public hearing. Zach seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Public Hearing Ends

Motion to Approve Draft Community Power Plan and Submit it to the Select Board for Approval - Mercedes moved to approve the draft community power plan and to present it to the Select Board for approval at their meeting on Monday, December 18. Mercedes made the motion. Zach seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Approval of November 11, 2023 Energy Committee Minutes - Mercedes moved to approve the minutes. Martin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Adjournment - Mercedes moved to adjourn at 7:34pm. Martin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.