

Green Energy Committee (GEC)
Approved Minutes
April 6, 2023, 8am

Remote Participation Protocols:

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation by members of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting can be found on the www.lincolntown.org. For this meeting, members of the public who wish to listen or watch the meeting may do so in the following manner:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/9423538880?pwd=bkFNN0hIY2NMRllldnlWdHNzMVFIQT09>

Meeting ID: 942 3538 8880 **Password:** 460113 **Dial by your location:** 646-876- 9923

No in-person attendance by members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. Minutes of the meeting will be posted on the Town's website as soon as possible after the meeting.

Members Present: Ed Kern, Sue Klem, Ed Lang, Paul Shorb (chair), CJ Volpone.

Others Present: Alex Chatfield, Chris Eliot, Andrew Falender, Belinda Gingrich, Chuck Sizer, Collette Sizer, Anne Sobol.

Call to Order

Shorb called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m.

Approval of Minutes – January 6, February 9 and March 16 Meetings

Shorb suggested moving the approval of minutes to the next meeting

Lincoln Green Energy Choice Contract Period starting Jan 2023

The agenda proposed that we discuss the following questions, so we could make recommendations to the Select Board:

1. Peregrine has recommended that we go out for bids soon for the contract period that will start Jan. 2023 assuming we continue the next Lincoln Green Energy Choice program ("the Program"), rather than wait until November – shall we do that?
2. How long should the next contract period be – 2 or 3 years?
3. What % Class I RECS should be in the default?

C.J. Volpone made a presentation using a slide deck prepared by Peregrine. The deck is not shared here because the last few slides include pricing information provided on a confidential basis.

- 1) When to go out to bid?

Related to the question, Volpone provided an overview of historical trends of electricity prices, the impact of the war in Ukraine, and what that suggests for the near future. Peregrine recommends that now is a good time to go out to bid, with a request for proposals that the Select Board could act on in May, if it likes what comes in. Peregrine has reported that all other towns that it knows of are choosing that timing.

After GEC discussion, Shorb moved that the GEC recommend to the Selects doing the latter. All five GEC members present voted in favor: Kern, Klem, Lang, Shorb, and Volpone.

2) How long should the next contract period be?

Volpone described the different kinds of risk associated with a 2-year contract versus a 3-year contract. On the one hand, a longer contract period tends to get a lower price than a shorter contract and better protects against the risk of future market price increases. On the other hand, a longer contract also has greater risk of appearing too expensive, when and if future market prices fall. Peregrine has reported that about half of the other towns that it knows of have recently been choosing 2 years and about half are choosing 3 years. Volpone feels that a 2-year contract probably will be more appropriate for Lincoln but also noted that Select Board chair Jim Hutchinson is well informed on this topic and that the Selects could rationally choose a 3-year period instead, depending on how the bids come in.

After GEC discussion, Shorb moved that the GEC recommend to the Selects seeking bids for both contract lengths and let the Selects choose the contract period. All five GEC members present voted in favor: Kern, Klem, Lang, Shorb, and Volpone.

3) What % Class I RECS should be in the default?

The GEC previously articulated a goal of moving the default option in the Program to 100% Class 1 RECs by 2030. Volpone showed a slide from Peregrine showing how many RECs Lincoln would have to add each year (meaning, in addition the state-mandated RECs, which also are increasing over time) in order to reach that goal by 2030. The answer is that we'd need to increase our voluntary additional RECs by about 4% more per year, on average.

The GEC discussed the necessary balancing act between (A) a desire to move to 100% as fast as possible for the sake of climate mitigation versus (B) the fact that each of our Program participants has the right to drop out of the Program at any time. Some of the related points mentioned were:

- So far, the net effect of our Program, even with its additional Class 1 RECs built in, has been to save money for its participants compared to if they had opted instead for Eversource Basic Service.
- The additional RECs make up a small share of the total price.
- Compared to all other municipalities in MA with CCA (Community Choice Aggregation) programs, Lincoln has the highest percentage of people that have opted up to 100%. Our default program is not the most aggressive in terms of Class 1 REC content, but we are in the top five.
- In response to our last prior contract change - which had a large price increase due to market effects from the war in Ukraine, and another modest increase in % Class 1 RECs,

only 2 people dropped down from the default option to the “Basic” option, and no one dropped out of the Program.

- Our next contract that takes effect in January likely will provide a substantial price drop, because the market has adjusted in several ways to the war in Ukraine.
- It may be easier to add more voluntary Class 1 RECs to the default option when the total price is dropping than if the total price was rising again. Therefore, may be a good time to add more than the 4%-per-year addition we need to average between now and 2030 (i.e., leaving us some cushion for a future contracting round when we may want to add less.

After the discussion, Shorb moved that the GEC recommend to the Select Board that for the contract period that will take effect in January, Lincoln choose a 6%/year increase for the default option in the Program (with no change to the 2% in the “Basic” option). Volpone seconded. The motion was approved:

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|--------------|----------|
| Roy Harvey | (absent) |
| Ed Kern | Aye |
| Sue Klem | Aye |
| Ed Lang | Nay |
| Paul Shorb | Aye |
| C.J. Volpone | Aye |

Related discussion of Class 1 RECs

Lang explained his no vote (above) was because he is not yet convinced that voluntarily buying more Class 1 RECs leads to more construction of clean energy sources sooner, as proponents claim.

Kern seemed to take the opposite view: he commented that people who have solar panels (and equally, the Town and the School) should not sell the RECs that they earn from them, if they want to be truly “green” (i.e., because retiring those RECs is necessary to trigger the mechanism that drives more construction of clean energy sources sooner).

Shorb suggested that further discussion of the above continue at a future meeting.

Climate Action Plan Process

Sue Klem described the upcoming public workshops and encouraged attending on April 12 or April 14. This will invite suggestions of particular strategies to reach climate-related goals. She explained that the continuing public outreach is part of an effort to be very inclusive, which gives more credence to the final product. The consultant, MAPC, must complete its work by the end of June. The town will circulate the final draft for public comment this summer.. It's a living document, so more changes can always be made. Lincoln can seek state grants for help executing the plan. Hiring a “sustainability manager”, probably part-time, may be an important early step.

The Town plans to hold a community charrette Sept. 30, which would touch on at least major topics for Lincoln.

CFREE

Collette Sizer reported on the continuation of CFREE educational activities, including

- a webinar on heat pumps April 27 (part of the “Getting to Zero” series)
- a presentation planned for early May on retrofitting homes
- a possible presentation by Paul Gromer of Peregrine in May about how the electricity market works, and RECs
- an EV show in July.

Alex Chatfield suggested that is a good time to do another “opt-up” campaign. He is collaborating with Ed Kern on updating the palm card. The basic message will remain the same, i.e., that opting up to the “100% Green” option in the Program is the best way that residents can lower their emissions and fight climate change. And try to reach people who never got around to it before. We should do tabling at the transfer station on Earth Day and write an appeal that can go into Lincoln Talk, The Lincoln Squirrel, and the Land Trust and Conservation Commission newsletters.

Ed Kern reported that he is working with Gromer to develop his presentation; trying to get Lincoln residents to voluntarily report certain energy-related information; and trying to get the Lincoln Schools to be more open about their building’s energy performance.

Follow up to 2023 Town Meeting

Not discussed.

Other Business

Lang highly recommends the “Volts” podcast (and its March 29 episode re “green” hydrogen).

ADJOURNED

per vote by Kern, Klem, Lang, and Shorb.

The next meeting will be May 11, 2023, 8:00 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Collette Sizer, Minute-Taker
April 9, 2023