



**Hingham  
Climate Action  
Planning Committee**

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**MEETING MINUTES**

DATE: March 16, 2023

PLACE: Remote meeting via Zoom

MEMBERS PRESENT: Brad Moyer (Chair), Carlos DaSilva, Henry (Bob) Hidell, Tom Morahan, Elliott Place, Beth Porter, Kathy Reardon, Nancy Wiley, Maria Zade

MEMBERS ABSENT: Alyson Anderson, Gary Tondorf-Dick

GUESTS: Brianna Bennett (HMLP), Brenda Black (Advisory Committee), Tanya Bodell (Energyzt), John Borger, Laura Burns, Kathy Curley, Ginny LeClair (Town of Hingham), John Molloy (Energyzt), Paul Sprecher

ATTACHMENTS: CAPC Agenda Mar 16, 2023; HCAPC Meetings Minutes Jan 26, 2023; 2023.2.16 CAPC Draft Minutes; CAPC Presentation Schedule

The Chair, Brad Moyer, after establishing quorum, called the duly noticed meeting to order at 7:04 PM, and presented the Virtual Open Meeting Protocol and Procedures as outlined in the Governor’s Chapter 20 Pandemic Directive of 2021.

Update on public presentations to date and upcoming presentations, and a review of feedback received so far

Brad noted that there have been many substantive comments on the draft plan thus far, and there are still scheduled meetings for continued feedback.

John Malloy presented on behalf of Energyzt, sharing the preliminary emissions estimates:

- Green house gas emissions by source: buildings (42%), electricity (30%), transportation (26%), waste (2%). Buildings will be a primary sector for any efforts at reducing emissions. 90% of the Town is using oil (50%) and gas (40%) heating. Electricity has been going down as more renewables come on-line. Transportation will likely decrease with more electric vehicles.
- Maria asked what percentages of buildings are municipal vs residential and commercial. Tanya shared that in Cohasset municipal is about 10%. Carlos asked how much is tied to schools. John will forward that information to the committee.
- The draft of this appendix will be available Monday and will include spreadsheets and data that can be put into the tool the committee selected for recording. Many of these numbers are estimates as the data is not currently collected. One of the committee's recommendations is to collect the data.
- Laura asked how electricity calculations are made. Tanya explained that is drawn from HMLP's annual report. With respect to renewable energy credits, they are working off of supply of what has been purchased, and taking it at its face. Energyzt understands that Hingham has sold credits that should be counted as part of the mix. Laura cautioned that we must not misrepresent our electricity supply as being more renewable than the state considers it.
- Brad suggested that we add this topic to the next agenda once we have the appendix as that is the inventory to which we will hold ourselves. It should reflect what is appropriate and accurate, and be broken down in a way that is measurable (in absolute terms, and by who owns the reduction).

Feedback heard to date includes the following from EAC, light board (including feedback from board members and HMLP), Hingham Net Zero, and the following departments: building, planning board, Weir River water, waste, health, conservation, and several others.

- Heat pumps – tone could be more positive and should reflect advances in technology, cost benefits of time
- Types of buildings – we tend to talk about residential, commercial, and municipal; we can break that down further into nonprofits, house of worship, etc.
- Make more explicit references to capturing methane at landfill and the desire for a municipal solution for composting instead of relying on private haulers
- More forcefully advocate for a sustainability director vs a coordinator
- HMLP feedback has been extensive. They are making sure that versioning comments were captured correctly.
- Building dept.: concerns and suggestions regarding economic impact, how much are we able to capture the impact on residential conversion needs (stretch and successor codes for older homes could be costly); what can we do to pursue grants to lessen costs; impact on builder community r.e. construction costs and detrimental cost to fuel companies; concerns about using the building department to educate / promote certain HVAC

solutions as it is not in their remit or purview; there is not a means to expedite permitting, they process 1400 permits/year on a strictly first come, first served basis

- Brad noted that most of the comments were based on review of the Appendix A action items
- Planning board: there is a zoning amendment for EV installation in parking lots of >20 spaces; recommended transportation demand management strategies also be included for larger multi-family developments and or employers; recommended that we include exploration of zoning districts that would comply with the MBTA communities multi-family zoning requirements (whereby the State will give or withhold money depending on whether or not you allow low-cost housing near public transportation); there is a zoning bylaw proposed r.e. mitigation plantings from Conservation also a tree removal and replacement policy that could be incorporated
- Weir Water – they are championing some things they are doing that could be added
- Health – concerns with recycling regulations for haulers and enforcement on single use plastic bottle ban from an ability to enforce; also concerned about bringing your own container to a restaurant and become ill afterward, they cannot trace the source
- Fire – some concern about EV fires as the technology and suppression system haven't caught up; specific concern with encouraging businesses to install indoor EV charging or encouraging employees to ride an electric scooter that they could then charge in a break room; the new public safety building will include heat pumps, but they are not sure if they will pursue LEED certification; interested in finding money for heat pumps for their current HQ
- Recreation: the town's goal of improving the athletic fields may run counter to the plan as they won't be eliminating nitrogen/fertilizer
- Con Com – not too many concerns
- Waiting on DPW, school, town admin (Art will be the one to review once all the GHG data is included); Ginny worked with Art to make these specific questions were addressed by the departments:
  - Do you have further concerns?
  - Do any of the action items require additional resources/people/budget?
  - Do any of the action items require a change to town bylaws?
  - Are the action items assigned to the correct department?

Elliott called out the listed concern about reverse penalizing those who don't convert to electric vehicles, heat pumps, etc. Specifically, the concern was related to charging higher excise taxes for less efficient vehicles and noting that would effectively penalize residents who couldn't afford EV vehicles. Another concern was around recycling wrapping from boats, and incentivizing the move to electric propulsion though we were not proposing a tax.

Kathy cautioned that we have to be very careful about how we say things. Bob continued that there is a balance we need to maintain to get public buy-in, and it is a critical balance particularly as our Town ages. His concern is that when we talk about EV incentives, heat pumps incentives,

etc., we don't want to penalize those who can't afford or can't rely on electric vehicles. We have to be balanced as we want the community to find plausible what we are trying to do.

Brad proposed that although we are still in comment gathering phase, we revisit the breakout groups that were assigned in January to take the comments to date, incorporate them into the appropriate sections, and then send that to Brad/Energyzt/Ginny. We can then incorporate into one document to evaluate along with Appendix A when completed.

Assignments as follows:

- Transportation: Elliott, Gary, Bob
- Electricity: Brianna, Tom, Brad
- Waste: Maria, Allison
- Buildings: Gary, Carlos, Nancy
- Community: Elliott, Beth, Maria
- Conservation, natural resources, recreation: Bob, Kathy

We are still seeking feedback from the planning board, school committee (Brad and Maria on March 27), cleaner greener committee (Maria and Elliott on March 30). Select Board will review once the plan is updated with the feedback to date. Elliott and Kathy can help with the select board.

Brad asked if there are other groups to approach. Elliott suggested DPW. Ginny has been contacting the head of the DPW. Other groups mentioned were:

- Open Space Committee
- Land Trusts
- Harbormaster
- Any unstaffed committees
- South Shore Chamber of Commerce
- Nancy will schedule a presentation to the Industrial Committee for the first half of April (Bob to co-present) and will invite Hingham Downtown Association, South Shore Chamber of Commerce, Derby and other major retail presences, historical districts commission
- Housing authority
- Ginny did reach out to library just in case
- Deirdre Anderson of the Historic Society should be approached; she has been supportive in the past
- Andrea Young is the administrative person for Historic Districts Commission

Brad will confer with the groups to understand whether they just want to review the plan or would like a presentation. Ginny offered her support.

Elliott shared the feedback from the two meetings with Hingham Net Zero. There are three main areas of focus:

1. Clarity and phrasing
2. More focus on transitioning to heat pumps – this area is the key in HNZ’s viewpoint
3. Dealing with electrification and being accurate about how renewable we really are

#### Discuss timeline and process for finalizing the Climate Action Plan

The goal is to conclude presentations by mid-April. Breakout groups can start incorporating feedback now, and when we have completed all of the feedback meetings we will meet to run through a collective document. We are targeting a final plan by the end of May. The next CAPC meeting will be in 2-3 weeks to discuss how to incorporate feedback to date and to talk in detail about the emissions inventory and methodology.

Brad will share the updated version of the plan on Monday for the committees’ review. He asked committees to review whether a comment should be accepted or rejected, and if accepted, how it should be incorporated. We will need to differentiate comments made by committee members and others. HNZ is trying to make their feedback as useful as possible – 90% sentence level edits with just 10% comments. They will send their edits to Elliott with Brad and Tanya copied.

Ginny asked whether we could edit via Google docs so that all of the parallel changes are captured. That may run afoul of open meeting laws, but Ginny will confirm. If it is deemed acceptable, Ginny will work to find out whether the Town can host the document or whether Brad needs to use his personal account. It was decided that each group will send their comments to Brad, and he will incorporate them. Ginny also offered to serve as the point-person for editing the comments into one document.

Energyzt’s contract concludes at the end of the month, and they have exceeded their hours. Tanya is willing to help into early April, but we do not anticipate further support after that. CAPC will drive the final steps to conclusion.

#### Update on warrant article submission review with Select Board and Advisory Committee

The select board was unanimously in favor of the warrant article. The Advisory Committee was also in favor with some suggested edits. They felt that the phrase “hold to account” could give the impression that Town bodies would be answering to Climate Action Commission. Brad explained that it is more of a reporting out function so that there is public accountability of action or inaction. Brenda Black led that discussion and updated the language. Based on that, Advisory Committee approved the warrant article to move forward. Pertinent to our timeline, they did indicate that CAP is anticipated to be completed in early June.

#### Review and approval of previous meeting minutes

Nancy prepared minutes for the January meeting. Brad shared them on his screen. There were no comments. Elliott prepared minutes for the February meeting. Brad shared them on his screen. There were no comments. Tom moved to approve the minutes. Bob seconded. Beth abstained as

she missed the meetings. Carlos voted in favor of January's minutes, but abstained from voting on February's. All remaining members voted in favor.

#### Other business brought before the committee

Brad suggested a rolling deadline for incorporating feedback. He asked committee members to start incorporating the feedback we have, knowing that more will come by mid-April. Those comments should be incorporated for the discussion at a meeting the week of April 24.

#### Discussion of possible agenda items for the next meeting and scheduling of that meeting

- Primary will be discussion of GHG emissions and methodology – Energyzt can make a presentation
- Members will also report out on continued conversations and presentation
- Status of updated plan
- Possible plan for town meeting and warrant articles – Brad does not anticipate that the warrant article will be seen as controversial. We have support of the Select Board and Advisory Committee, and it is a continuation of an article that was almost unanimously approved in 2021, but he asked committee members to share if they hear differently. He does anticipate that we will be asked to speak at Town Meeting, and he will be prepared to do so. HNZ is also monitoring whether there is resistance. They are also considering a campaign with Cleaner Greener on the single use bottle by-law.

The next meeting will be held at 7pm on March 29<sup>th</sup> . Carlos will not be able to join. There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 9:19.