

Statement from the Cornish Energy Committee on Community Power

February 9, 2026

A year ago at Town Meeting, the Energy Committee agreed to monitor the Community Power Coalition of NH (CPCNH) to see how they handled and rectified the financial problems they encountered last winter. We have determined that they have implemented numerous measures, including stringent safeguards, enhanced management policies and staff trainings, which reveal that the organization is operating responsibly and transparently.

Their new rates for residential customers that will go into effect starting on February 1, 2026 are 14.637-14.663 cents per kWh, which is 1 cent higher than Liberty's rates and approximately 3 cents higher than Eversource & NHEC. This new rate includes a 2 cent per kWh additional charge that will enable CPCNH to retire its financing obligations in calendar year 2026. By eliminating financing fees in 2026, the Coalition will be able to more quickly build community reserves, which in turn will position CPCNH to achieve competitiveness sooner.

If the Town were to vote in favor of adopting Community Power at a future Town Meeting, it could not activate the program until CPCNH's rates are lower than at least one of the other major utilities.

CPCNH is facilitating the development of large local community solar arrays, one of which will go into operation this year in Warner NH. Such projects enable greater energy independence and can help to lower transmission and other costs. CPCNH advocates for green energy policies in the state legislature, leads in market innovation, and also makes it possible for towns to promote energy efficiency and participate in joint projects.

The Cornish Energy Committee voted 4-1 to recommend to the Select Board to bring Community Power to a vote at Town Meeting 2026. The Select Board felt that since CPCNH is still recouping its reserves and its prices are higher than the other utilities, this year was not the right time to bring this matter to a vote. The Committee sees the merit in this decision.

The Energy Committee will continue to monitor CPCNH's operations, and will revisit this matter next year.

Any questions? Contact josharf@gmail.com