

CORNISH ENERGY COMMITTEE MINUTES
March 2, 2026, 7:00 – 8:30 PM
Cornish Town Offices and via Zoom

ATTENDEES: In person: CEC members Joanna Sharf, Richard Thompson, and Mike Belanger; CEC Alternates Susanne Haseman and Frank Parks; Stuart Foote (Cornish)
Via Zoom: CEC Members Myron Kuhre (health) and Bill Schmidt (family commitment); and Tony Newton (Cornish), Doug Cogan (Clean Energy NH)

APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 9TH MINUTES: Joanna suggested the minutes include mention of the law number relating to volunteer liability protection (RSA 508-17) in the discussion of the Hillsborough Renewable Energy Initiative (HAREI) program. Richard moved adoption of the minutes as amended and Bill seconded. The minutes were approved.

ZOOM MEMBERSHIP REIMBURSEMENT: Mike suggested that the Committee reimburse Joanna for a ZOOM membership that has been used for Committee meetings and educational forums. Joanna indicated that she was willing to absorb the expense.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS: The Committee discussed annual election of Committee officers. Joanna reiterated that this was her last meeting as Chair and as a committee member. After discussion of sharing various responsibilities, Richard agreed to be Chair but indicated he would need help. Susanne agreed to be Vice Chair, pending approval by the Select Board of her nomination to be a full CEC member, and Bill agreed to continue as Secretary. Mike agreed to continue as Treasurer as well. Joanna made a motion to approve the officers slate of Richard as Chair, Susanne as Vice Chair, Mike as Treasurer and Bill as Secretary. Richard seconded and the motion was approved. It was noted that the Select Board still needs to approve Susanne as a full Member.

PUBLIC STATEMENT ON COMMUNITY POWER: Joanna reported that she had submitted the statement drafts (long version and short version) to the Select Board but had not received a response yet. The Committee discussed the drafts further, with a focus on making the sure they were not overtly advocating for the Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire (CPCNH). After discussion, various changes were suggested in case the Select Board rejected the previous drafts. Joanna moved adoption of the changes and Richard seconded. The suggested changes were approved.

ALLOCATION OF COMMITTEE ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS: Joanna reviewed a range of tasks for Committee operations. She had provided a list in an email to the Committee and promised to create a more comprehensive and detailed guide for Richard. Tasks included renewing the ZOOM account, access to the Town Offices for meetings, conference room reservations, meeting notice requirements, and several additional items. Frank offered to speak with the Select Board about the ZOOM account issue.

TOWN ENERGY USE DATA: Joanna identified this as a top priority for the Committee that has yet to be completed. Stuart Foote had several suggestions on how to streamline the process of gathering the data annually and inputting it into Portfolio Manager. Data has been captured for 2015 – 2024. Stuart and Myron agreed to work together on a new process, and Frank offered to speak with Heidi about her possible role in recording the data monthly.

PENDING LEGISLATION ON NET METERING: The Committee discussed pending state legislation (SB 538) relating to net metering for larger municipal solar power projects (5 megawatts and larger). Currently, contracts for net metering can only extend to 2040, the current year in which net metering in NH is scheduled to sunset. The legislation would restore 20-year contract terms, which is current standard practice in the industry and important in ensuring the viability of these projects. Doug indicated that Clean Energy New Hampshire (CENH), which has prepared a letter of support by towns across the state, is hoping for bipartisan support for the bill since it is more a technical correction in the law than a significant change in policy. Specifically, Cornish is being asked to sign onto the CENH letter, which was shared with the Committee in advance of the meeting and is attached to these minutes. Joanna made a motion to recommend to the Select Board that Cornish sign onto the CENH letter and the motion was seconded by Richard. The motion was approved. Richard offered to follow up with the Select Board.

FUTURE COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES AND FORUMS: Richard suggested that the Committee devote much of the April meeting to brainstorming ideas for future programming.

CPCNH/COMMUNITY POWER ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVE: Select Board member Jason Bourne is the official representative to CPCNH for Cornish for community power and Joanna has been serving as Alternate. Joanna suggested that Bill become the Alternate with her retirement from the Committee, and Bill accepted.

WEBSITE SUBCOMMITTEE: The Subcommittee is close to completing its work and meets again via ZOOM on March 24th. Joanna agreed to continue to lead this effort through completion.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Next Meeting: April 20, 2026, 7:00 – 8:30 PM

Addendum: On March 5th, the Select Board officially approved Susanne as a full CEC member.