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## *Orford Energy Committee*

*Meeting of the Committee*

**\*\*\* PLEASE NOTE FORMAT CHANGE DUE TO COVID-19 \*\*\***

***Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020 at 7:00 P.M.***

***Online Meeting via Zoom***

### **MEETING MINUTES**

1. **Meeting called to order 7:02 PM**

Those present via Zoom video conference: Scott Gagnon, Mark Blanchard, Robb Day, Jordon Sutherlin, Ted Cooley (chair), John Miller

2. **Approved Minutes:**

11<sup>th</sup> August 2020 Online Meeting, approved as amended.

3. **Reports & Updates:**

- Town Offices energy Projects – Jordon

Ted asked Jordon to report on conversation with Selectboard Chair, John Adams. Audio difficulties resulted in postponement of this report.

Audio issues worked around via telephone audio option. Jordon reports:

Conversation with John Adams summarized as follows:

Jordon pointed out that the bid specification for Town Garage renovation omits insulation under slab. Adding insulation during construction would add minimal expense and pay ongoing energy savings as a dividend to the Town. He noted to John that OEC is available and willing to be a resource to the Selectboard. Jordon noted that OEC input had been requested for the Town Office furnace replacement project, but discussion didn't occur regarding recommendations. Perhaps "too expensive" and passed over out-of-hand?

Discussion:

Mark expressed that the Town (due perhaps to taxpayer sentiments) tends to look to short-term tax savings at the expense of sound long-term investment. Scott suggested that consultant input for project cost analysis could surely be helpful in illuminating the long-term vs short-term issues. Ted observed that useful dialog between committees and commissions (in general) seems to be suffering since the SB elected to not have an ad-hoc SB member attend these meetings. John responded to Scott's suggestion by reminding the group that OEC has no funds available for consultants, nor for other energy initiatives, being wholly dependent up SB funding. Engineering survey of Town Offices performed several years ago is one example of the possibility. However, the resulting study had not led to any investment in Town Office foundation remediation. Mark continues to hope that OEC might recruit appropriate community members for volunteer project consulting where local expertise may be identified.

- Foundation – (see Other Business)
- Furnace / Thermostat – no new information
- Grant opportunities

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Ted observed that the Town Offices are now included in the NH Historic Registry, which should open grant funding opportunities. OEC members should be watchful for such. Jordon tells the group that he has advocated that Orford Energy Committee can help with energy-related projects, identification of funding sources including rebates from NHSaves, assistance with applications for same – during multiple conversations with Selectboard members.

4. **Business:**

- Potential projects

- Weatherize – Part II

- Ted reported on invitation from Martha Tecca to join Lyme in a second round of the Weatherize campaign. He reported that two years have elapsed since the first round and that NHSaves incentives would once again be available to homeowner participants. Ted polled OEC members for interest.

- Mark asked if Vital Communities would again be involved organizationally. Ted reported on his conversation with Sarah Simmonds of VC indicating that Vital Communities was at that time still considering.

- Mark expressed caution regarding level of local effort that could be anticipated. Ted commented that OEC would require a local “champion” in charge of coordinating the project working with Lyme, as in round one. Lyme is once again considering subsidizing the Energy Audit charges to individuals (last time audits were available at \$50 per audit, rather than the “list price from NHSaves of \$100). Mark observed that there had been some confusion regarding OEC’s proposed share and administering such last round.

- John shared his personal experience regarding problems encountered after his project. He expressed concern related to ownership of problem resolution. In addition there is the challenge of vetting participating contractors, (a task that was undertaken c/o VC during round one).

- Ted polled the group regarding their support for endorsement of the Lyme Weatherize initiative, first phase being utilization of NHSaves Button-Up webinar. Jordon asked if there might be a plan to record the webinar such that prospective homeowner participants could utilize a recorded video upon demand. John recalled that VC had made recorded material available via their website during the Weatherize Upper Valley initiative previously. (They did have a resource person (Paige Heverly) on staff assigned to this task)

- Ted informed the group that OEC has access to Google File Stream and Zoom recording options. He concluded from feedback that OEC has support for endorsing / publicizing Lyme’s NHSaves Button-Up webinar and that more information is needed prior to further commitment to this major project. Robb noted that the absence of a volunteer to “champion” the project is indicative of member overload. Perhaps focus upon existing projects and priorities might be wise.

- Battery Backup, microgrids, and Broadband – no new information

- OEC Website contents – encouraged, and to include NHSaves Button-Up information
      - Energy Committee members / candidates
        - OEC Nomination(s) – members continue to recruit
      - Outstanding invoice – Selectboard alerted
      - Other Business

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- Foundation

Jordon reported on his conversation with Deb Hadlock regarding potential funding limitations for any foundation projects. Locally OK so far, but uncertain at a State of NH level.

Robb suggests that Eric Paige might be approached for an estimate of repairs to foundation vs replacement. This might be more likely to move forward with Selectboard endorsement (or perhaps as a Warrant Article in March, 2021) with less “sticker shock” and more attractive “short-term” cost?

Jordon noted that he will attempt to break any such quote into two parts, the second of which to be adequate insulation.

5. **Next meetings:**

Committee Meetings:

13<sup>th</sup> October 2020, Online Via Zoom, 7:00 p.m.

10<sup>th</sup> November 2020, Online Via Zoom, 7:00 p.m.

6. **Adjourned 8:03 with unanimous approval.**

Submitted,  
John Miller  
Secretary, Orford Energy Committee