

## ENERGY COMMITTEE

*Evan Oxenham, Jen Lenz, Nick Cohen, Ron Eberhardt, Steven Ladd.*

The Plainfield Energy Committee focus in 2019 was to work on the implementation of the Ready for 100 goal. As in previous years the Plainfield Energy Committee joined forces with the Cornish Energy Committee.

The Energy Committee sees the implementation of the 100% renewable energy as having the following components:

- Developing a **Plan to achieve the 100% Renewable Energy Goal**
- Providing **Specific Programs** to help the town, its businesses and its residents achieve this goal.
- Continuing the **Renewable Energy Educational Series** consisting of presentations, movies and workshops to help residents understand the costs and benefits of this goal.

Specifically, the committee worked on the following during 2019: the plan to achieve 100% Renewable Energy, the Weatherize campaign, and the Renewable Energy Educational Series.

### **A. Plan to achieve the 100% Renewable Energy Goal**

The Energy Committee continued working a plan to achieve our 100% renewable energy goal, with the main point being how to reduce our use of fossil fuels. Jim Barker from Cornish acted as facilitator at the planning meetings to help us move forward. Unfortunately, we did not complete the development of the plan and will continue working on that in the coming year.

One difficulty that we encountered is how to measure what energy the town uses in order to understand where we can make changes. We know how much electricity, oil and propane is used by the municipal functions of the town, but we still do not have a means to estimate the energy usage by the residents and businesses of the town.

During the planning process we looked into buying our municipal renewable electricity from a third-party vendor and received a proposal which did not meet our needs.

As a small town, Plainfield does not have the buying power to obtain attractive rates for renewable power, so we decided to investigate combining working with other towns to obtain better rates. Representatives from the Energy Committee are participating in the Local Government Community Power committee, which is a committee of eleven towns discussing how to work together to provide renewably generated electricity to their towns.

Under the Municipal Aggregation Statute passed in 2019 towns, acting alone or together, can form Electrical Aggregation (aka Community Power) organizations that provide power to all the electric ratepayers in the area covered by the Electrical Aggregation or Community Power organization. Community Power seems to be a realistic approach which could provide renewably generated electricity that is cheaper than what the utilities currently charge. Note that the utilities would still provide the wires for distribution and transmission, but the power would be obtained from third party energy suppliers.

## **B. Renewable Energy Educational Series**

The Energy Committee continued its presentations in the Renewable Energy Educational Series. The series featured technologies that could be used to meet the 100% renewable energy goal.

### **a. General Renewable Energy Education**

**Heat Pump Event** – Nathan Moore, an expert installer, talked about cold climate heat pumps. He described how they work and what was needed for an installation. A few homeowners who have had heat pumps installed talked about their experience with heat pumps.

**Electric Grid: Looking Toward a Future with Renewable Energy** – A presentation by Graham Turk from Green Mountain Power of Vermont and Henry Herndon of Clean Energy New Hampshire on incorporating renewable energy electrical generation into the electric grid. This was very well attended and stimulated a lively discussion.

**Electric Tools Showcase** - Members of the Energy Committees of both Plainfield and Cornish demonstrated electric tools such as chain saws, brush cutters, battery electric push mowers and battery electric riding mowers that they use.

**Electricity 101** – Steve Ladd of the Plainfield Energy Committee discussed the basics of electricity, how it works in a home and how to understand your electric bill.

### **b. Renewable Energy Transportation**

**National Drive Electric Vehicle Event.** Members of the Plainfield Energy Committee showed their electric vehicles at the fourth annual Electric Vehicle Expo at the Dothan Brook School in White River Junction Vermont. It was a very well attended event which demonstrates the increasing interest in battery electric vehicles such as the Tesla Model 3, Chevy Bolt and Nissan Leaf. The typical range for battery electric vehicles available in 2019 is at least 210 miles, which is the point at which longer distance travel by electric vehicles becomes realistic. Attendees were able to inspect the vehicles and take test drives.

Respectfully submitted,  
Evan Oxenhard and Steve Ladd Co-chairs  
Plainfield Energy Committee

**2019 Turkey Trot**  
**Ellen Abrahamson-Bonner took home the pie.**



**Photos Melissa Longacre Event Director**