



City of Medford
Medford Energy Committee
City Hall Room 205
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Medford Energy Committee Minutes
November 3, 2014, 6PM
City Hall Room 201

Attendees: Cathy Young, Jonathan Hunt, Serge Valme, Loretta James, Curtis Tuden, Alicia Hunt, , Bob Paine, Luke McNeally, Barry Ingber
Guest: Jen Webber, Next Step Living; Hayley Welsh

1. Administration

- Approval of the Minutes of October 6, 2014 meeting 6:00-6:05
 - approved
- Introduction and welcome of new MEC member (Young) 6:05-6:10
 - Barry Ingber – Director of energy and environment at TriCap
 - Has been working in low income communities for 35 years
 - Has a masters in environmental education
 - Previous director of MassEnergy
- Next Step Living update on outreach activities in Medford (Malcolm Bliss) 6:10-6:15
 - Malcolm wanted to come in a talk about the outreach that Next Step Living is doing in the community
 - Done over 1000 home energy assessments in Medford, active in Medford for about 3 years
 - Lots of community events in Medford, including tabling at Stop & Shop. Probably about 1/3 of energy assessments were this year.
 - Working with MHS to do an education to workforce partnership to show clean tech as a great place to direct their vocational skills. Curtis has been working with the Director of the Tech School on this
 - Doing an info session on the “Medford Energy Challenge” Bestsellers Café, Thursday, Nov 20th 6:30-7:30. Will be promoting MassSave energy assessments and introducing the energy challenge. They are giving \$10 to TriCAP for every resident that participates. They are trying to partner. If less than half the units in a building are eligible for low-income programs then it is very difficult for them to do energy work on the house. If more than half are low income in a 4-unit or fewer building then they can do the whole building.
 - Pricing saves 5% across a 20 year lease
 - Target is people who care about the environment but are not able to afford rooftop solar
 - What messages should they reinforce in their outreach? Where should they be telling people to turn to?
 - Jon – message that most of the energy consumed in Medford are consumed by residents. Concerned about the door to door sales of alternate electricity suppliers. Alicia recommended googling the name of the company and “reviews” and checking them on BBB.org. Also, the City recommends that you do not buy electricity from alternate supplier.
 - Told them about the no-idling movie at the library in March. Jen recommends Mothers Out Front for people interested in green energy. Bob asked about Community solar because he is buying into that with NSL

soon.

- There are a lot of things that people can do that aren't expensive
- Explain how there is 0% interest loans for energy efficiency work
- To address the rise in energy prices (Alicia): Official recommendation from the city is that residents do not choose an alternate supplier
 - If you want to change suppliers google their reviews and look them up in the better business bureau,
 - The city cannot specifically recommend any secondary supplier
 - Check out Mothers Out Front
- MEC project advising - Status update of draft letter for MEC review (McKneally) 6:15-6:20
 - Luke would like to remove this from the agenda. It's not clear there is a simple way to advise projects. Luke would be interested in the opportunity to review and make comments on projects, but it is not clear that the MEC should be responsible for doing this. Alicia will share information when she can and request feedback as feasible.
 - No simple process for us to advise on projects, too complicated for us to step into the permitting process
 - Luke is interested from a professional perspective, but the Committee does not need to become responsible as a group or interfere
 - Motion to table this topic, approved
- Candidates and process for election of committee Chair (A. Hunt) 6:20-6:35
 - We have decided we will have formal nominations and a formal vote for Chair each year, but there will be no term limit
 - We choose now because we like to hit the ground running for the new year after the holidays
 - Staff cannot vote or nominate
 - Next month we will come with ballots and everyone will vote
 - Alicia encourages members of the Committee to go to City Council meetings and school board meetings or meet with the mayor to share any concerns either as a member of the committee or as a resident
 - Nominations:
 - Cathy Young, nomination accepted.

2. Update on 2014 Active Subcommittees

- 2014 Subcommittee Status Updates:
 - a) Education - (Tuden) 6:35-6:45
 - Education subcommittee hasn't had a meeting, but he has been working with the students at Medford High. As part of Project Wild
 - Monday next week school group will be going on a hike in the fells
 - Once they get a dependable group, they will start storm drain labeling
 - They will be able to do snowshoeing too.
 - The club still has \$400 from the USGBC grant and Curtis is trying to empower the students. They have to blog about the project once they use the money. Could students write blog posts on behalf of the committee? Would anyone like to chaperone a field trip to Harvard Museum of Natural History? Other suggestions for other field trips for the students?
 - Meeting Wednesday Nov. 5th at 2:30pm at MHS for people who want to get involved in Project Wild
 - Project Wild is run through DCR, try to be involved in local schools
 - Ex: a gym teacher got an \$8000 grant to upkeep trails
 - We could have students make blog posts on the MEC website

- Maybe high schoolers could help patrol elementary schools to remind people not to idle because they get out earlier
- Book recommendation from Luke:
 - The China Study, followed by Whole
 - Looks at climate change and deforestation and eating habits
- Library is willing to show environmental documentaries
 - If you know of any, please let us know!
 - A recommendation from Luke: Forks over Knives
 - Promotes plant-based food
- Field trips to Harvard Museum of Natural History
 - The process of planning these is simple
 - Need chaperones

b) Recycling (McKenna, McKneally)

6:45-7:00

- Impacts of Ballot Question #2 on the City of Medford
- Next meeting is November 20th, if that works for the group
- It is legal for the committee to come out with a position on a ballot
- Question 2 Ballot Question: Possibility of putting a price on bottles
 - How would this change recycling?
 - Could this charge be construed as a tax?
 - This money would be redirected into an environmental fund for clean ups and environmental projects if people do not redeem their nickels
 - See it as a donation
 - 80% of bottles with deposits get recycled and only 20% of bottles without deposits get recycled
 - price of drinks do not go up
 - vote yes to put the extra 5 cents on the cost of the bottle

c) Green Awards - (Young)

7:00-7:15

- should we look for a better way to get nominations for green awards
- possibility of adding a recognition
- Jonathan liked the presentation of the awards this year without the recipients speaking, moved along faster
- Kathleen thinks there was a nice feeling around the recipients saying a few words
- In the future we could give everyone the opportunity to say a few words and give them advance notice that they have this option
- We should think about this over the next several months
- Do we want to do a Green Awards party again?
 - We should be doing follow-up meetings after the event in order to debrief
 - Need to plan far in advance
 - There was great reception for it this year
 - We could make this event wider to further show all the work of the whole committee
 - Everyone is welcome to come to the debrief, not only the people who planned it
- Need to clarify the criteria for winning a Green Award
 - Application is geared toward building particularly on the business side, some fit this framework, other applications did not

- What is our goal of having these awards?
 - How can we get more people to apply?
 - Should we go through the Chamber of Commerce or through building and permitting
 - We should have the whole committee make a decision about this so that everyone is on the same page going into the next cycle
 - Whole committee should decide on the big picture, the goals
 - A subcommittee can work on the presentation and the advertising
 - A question to discuss is the difference between a Green Award or an Emerald Award
 - If a group is fulfilling their mission, should they be getting a Green Award for it?
 - Should Emerald Awards go to people who are doing green things that are not building related
 - Need to figure out logistics and criteria in January, February or March
- d) Harvest Your Energy - (A. Hunt) 7:15-7:30
- a. Huge thank you to everyone who helped
 - b. What Worked?
 - i. Wind turbine tours
 - ii. People expressed interest in the event lasting longer
 - iii. Fred's Franks
 - iv. Great to see on billboard
 - v. Great to get City robo call
 - vi. Great support from Team Medford (paid for our flyers, \$400) and Mass in Motion (\$250) – both Medford grants.
 - c. What didn't work?
 - i. One of the sound speakers didn't work well; The audio had a lot of distortion
 - ii. We should advertise more so that more people come
 - 1. need to make sure vendors think its worth it to come back
 - iii. Laretta thought 11:30-3 would be better timing – fit in HS sports better, longer for the amount of work done; felt there was better turnout in 2013; not so much competition.
 - iv. Did people not come because people went to the City's Community Day?
 - v. Should we partner with someone else for the future.
 - vi. Sergi – More advertising
 - vii. Can we ask churches to put it in the monthly bulletin or newsletter. – can we have a subcommittee meeting to discuss outreach early in the new year? Viridian sales person going around handing out flyers – can we legally ask him not to do that?
 - viii. There was nothing drawing people past the Middle Schoolers – could we put Whole Foods down there next time?
 - ix. Home Depot didn't show up! Neither did SunBug
 - x. More food vendors
 - xi. Water bottle guy was weird
- e) Alternative Energy Park – (Young) 7:30-7:35

- Could we meet after the MEC monthly meeting?
Kathleen went to an energy event in Boston last week and met someone who's doing a net-zero building and has a company to design it, but no location to put it. Maybe we could meet with him?

3. Planning & Policy/Cross-Mission

- LEAP – Review list of goals and update for 2014 (Young, McKneally) 7:35- 7:45
- Cathy & Luke have not had a chance to meet.

4. General Outreach & Communication

7:45- 7:55

- Blog post updates (J Hunt)
 - Committee would like a schedule. Alicia will create a Doodle where everyone will choose a month that they will write their post.
- MEC participation in December 3 Annual City Holiday Celebration
 - Cathy & Curtis said they would staff it.
 - Could we have cards with energy savings tips and John Rodger's light display.

5. New Business

7:55-8:00

When will we discuss what we are doing next year? Everyone agreed January. When can we discuss how we did at meeting our goals? Let's reflect on the past year in December and then Cathy can write something up for the Mayor.

Alicia will see about reserving the vault room at Salvatores for our next meeting

6. Adjourn

8:00

For accommodations please call in advance: 781-393-2137 or TTY: 781-393-2516

MEC mission: To promote policies and actions that improve energy efficiency, encourage conservation, and increase the use of renewable energy to meet our present needs while considering future generations of the Medford community.

Action List

- Next Step Living info session at Best Sellers Café on November 20th at 6:30-7:30pm to introduce the energy challenge