# Medford Energy & Environment Committee (MEEC) Agenda

**March 6, 2023 @ 6:30 PM**

**Via Zoom Virtual Meeting Connection** (connection information below)

Office of Energy and Environment: Alicia Hunt

**Committee Members:** Gaston Fiore (co-chair), Benji Hiller, Barry Ingber, Lauretta James, Kathleen McKenna, Luke McKneally, Martha Ondras, Bob Paine, Jessica Parks, John Rogers, and Paul Taslimi (co-chair).

**Committee Attendance:** Paul Taslimi, Bob Paine, Luke McKneally, Barry Ingber, Benji Hiller, Jessica Parks, Kathleen McKenna, Martha Ondras

**Staff:** Alicia Hunt, Lilly Worth

**Guests:** Jeannine Pecoraro, Lois Grossman, Abbie Klein, Sue Brown, Anuhea Elliott

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## AGENDA

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<td>6:30-7:00</td>
<td>Administration.</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>1. Greetings, roll call, and introductions of guests.</strong> Gaston Fiore has resigned from the committee due to too many existing commitments. MEEC is looking for a</td>
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**For accommodations, please call in advance:** 781-393-2137 or TTY: 781-393-2516

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volunteer to replace Gaston.

2. Review of minutes from January 6, 2023. January and February minutes approved

3. Administrative updates from Alicia Hunt.
   1. Open meeting law - the state house has voted to extend the option to hold fully remote meetings for another 2 years (until 2025). The state senate has not yet voted but it is expected that they will pass this as well.
   2. PDS office is interviewing for additional interns. MEEC has also been listed in the mayor’s recent communications as being open for new members. Action item: Lilly will review interested candidates with Alicia from the central application database

   1. Alicia will see if the Mayor can make it to the regularly scheduled April 3 meeting to discuss HYEF, otherwise, April 10 is a potential backup date to move this meeting
   2. It’s fine to schedule meetings (or ad-hoc meetings) via email - it does not violate open meeting law

7:00-7:30 Discussion

All

Suggested priorities for MEEC in 2023

I wanted to ask everyone to provide some input into our priorities for 2023. The following list contains many of the previous priorities that the committee has advocated and focused on:

1. Annual organization of the Harvest Your Energy Festival at the McGlynn Middle School.
   a) Committee will meet with Mayor to develop additional ideas to engage public

2. Support and promote electrification of public transport
   a) For example, feasibility of electric school buses, or electrification of commuter rail. It’s important to advocate directly to the MBTA for electrification
   b) Has there been any discussion of promoting electric scooters? City is aware they are popular and considering them in their planning as part of the active transportation ecosystem
   c) MEEC could potentially work with MBAC to advance education about bike use as transportation

3. Support and promote tree equity across Medford and in particular in areas where there is a paucity of canopy (through our continuing cooperation with Trees Medford)

4. Presentation of the Green Awards to Medford residents and businesses that have made substantial contributions to our local environment.
   a) Committee is not interested in pursuing this. However, there is a program in Boston that benchmarks buildings for energy efficiency - perhaps we should do

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this. See https://www.wegowise.com/ - make it voluntary to begin instead of an ordinance format which would have to be enforced
b) National grid measures citywide electricity consumption - this is public info and Alicia has the data. Alicia also has utility bills for all municipal buildings in Medford; there is also a private website that requires a city login to show more detail. Medford makes energy disclosures through a 3rd party company, CDP. MAPC provides emissions data and will have an update for us this spring (prior data was from 2014).

5. **Engagement of High School students in support of various environmental issues.**
   a) **How can we help increase engagement?**
      Teachers that Alicia worked with in the past are not available. There is also the CCSR https://medfordccsr.org/ that may be a good partner. Paul will make some inquiries about youth initiatives.
   b) **Solid waste initiative at the High School?**
   c) **What happened to the High school orchard idea?**
   d) **Other project ideas?**

6. **Attending and participating in community events to provide education and outreach to Medford residents regarding energy and environment issues.**
   Tufts energy conference happened last week - mid-week timing made it difficult

7. **Developing urban meadows in Medford?** Volunteer effort to have unmown green spaces for pollinators

8. **Other ideas and initiatives?**
   Developing low-income community solar

   Overall state of capacity at state level: New governor is increasing the budget for environmental initiatives; adding a dept of environmental justice. Overall, the state is building staff capacity and will then run programs. Hiring right now is difficult generally.

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| 7:30-7:35 | Lauretta | **Any updates on tree and leaf-blower ordinances?**
City council will meet about the tree ordinance this Wednesday. There will likely be questions about enforcement and budget. Ordinance is split into 3 parts: trees on public land, trees on private land, & formation of a tree committee. |
| 7:35-7:55 | Bob      | **Presentation: Heat Pump options for residential homes**
Bob has circulated information via email
Currently, heat pumps will be more expensive than natural gas (current rates being considered) - electricity is more expensive at the moment
Lots of information is out there - many contradictory opinions.
Abode energy is a resource that may be more neutral and useful |

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7:55-8:20 | Alicia | **Presentation: Information on advanced stretch code**  
The stretch code has been adopted by the vast majority of municipalities. Medford was one of the first.  
Phased approach will introduce stricter requirements for HERS ratings, ventilation, etc  
For the comparison between stretch code and municipal opt-in code, some of the differences for residential buildings are very subtle.  
Rules for commercial buildings are more complex and stringent

8:20-8:30 | Other business

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Community Development is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.  
Topic: Energy and Environment Commission Meeting  
Time: January 9, 2023 06:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)  
Join Zoom Meeting  
[https://zoom.us/j/96291215902](https://zoom.us/j/96291215902)  
Meeting ID: 962 9121 5902  
One tap mobile  
+19292056099,,96291215902# US (New York)  
Dial by your location  
+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)  
Meeting ID: 962 9121 5902  
Find your local number: [https://zoom.us/u/aVXjXTo94](https://zoom.us/u/aVXjXTo94)  
Anyone wishing to send comments or questions to the meeting can send email to [enviro@medford-ma.gov](mailto:enviro@medford-ma.gov)  
The meeting recording will be available on the committee website within a few days:  
[https://medfordenergy.org/gogreen/medford-energy-committee/](https://medfordenergy.org/gogreen/medford-energy-committee/)  

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**Medford Energy and Environment Committee Mission:** To promote policies and actions that make Medford more sustainable by encouraging resource conservation, improving climate resiliency, and increasing the use of renewables to meet present and future needs of the Medford community.
On July 16, 2022, Governor Baker signed into law An Act Relative to Extending Certain State of Emergency Accommodations. This Act allows public bodies to continue holding meetings remotely through March 31, 2023 without a quorum of the public body physically present at a meeting location, and to provide "adequate, alternative" access to remote meetings.

In accordance with this Act, this meeting of the City of Medford Energy & Environment Committee is being conducted totally via remote participation using Zoom, including committee members and the public. The use of Zoom complies with the law's requirement to provide live “adequate, alternative means” of public access to the deliberations of the public body, instead of holding meetings in a public place. Persons who would like to listen to or view this meeting while in progress may do so by using the link that was included on the meeting agenda posted on the City of Medford website. We will also post a record of this meeting on the city’s website in the near future at the link provided in the meeting agenda.

### Medford Energy and Environment Committee Members

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<td>Gaston Fiore (co-chair)</td>
<td>Gaston believes that an environmental education campaign leveraging our youth, encouraging active forms of transportation (pedestrian and bicycle), and making green technologies reachable to low-income households are key to achieving world-class environmental sustainability for Medford. Gaston has a background in AI and machine learning and has experience in self-driving cars and demand modeling to medicine. He has BS and MS degrees in Aerospace Engineering from MIT, and an MS in Computer Science from Harvard.</td>
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<td>Benjamin (“Benjie”) Hiller</td>
<td>is a now retired lawyer. He has a Masters degree in biology/ecology. He spent most of his career engaged in toxic tort litigation, specializing in representing children harmed by lead poisoning. Back in the 1970s and 1980s, he was part of the Clamshell Alliance which fought to prevent the construction of the Seabrook Nuclear Power Plant and which brought the dangers of nuclear power to the attention of the world.</td>
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<td>Barry Ingber</td>
<td>has spent most of the past four decades with non-profit organizations that serve low-income communities and work for a more sustainable and affordable energy future. Most recently, he managed energy programs for Tri-City Community Action Program. Previously, as Executive Director of MassEnergy, he founded the state’s first and largest green power program, and the nation’s first non-profit renewable energy coop.</td>
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<th>Lauretta James: is a real estate agent and Realtor®. She works within the Committee to design and promote energy, sustainability, and environmental programs and events to educate and benefit residents and businesses. Her background includes working in the elevator industry, event organizing, and art and design. She was previously President of the Massachusetts Elevator Safety Association.</th>
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<td>Kathleen McKenna: environmental engineer at Commercial Construction Consulting, Inc. (C3), which deals with LEED and sustainability consulting, energy audits, and implementation. She is secretary of the New England Chapter of The Association of Energy Engineers. Kathleen served in the role of community solar coach for the very successful 2013 Solarize Mass Program, when she coordinated the community outreach process, answered questions from residents and businesses, and was the main point of contact for community members.</td>
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<td>Martha Ondras: with a Master's degree in environmental health at Tufts, she is a research associate at the Health Effects Institute (HEI) in Boston, working on air quality research. HEI provides high quality, trusted science for cleaner air and better health. Prior to pursuing a second career in environmental health, she retired from the post of Director of Design at Harvard Business School.</td>
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<td>Bob Paine: Certified Consulting Meteorologist and Qualified Environmental Professional. Experience in meteorology and air pollution studies and consulting. Associate Vice President at AECOM, a company that focuses on areas of air quality consulting, engineering, and compliance, climate adaptation, and PFAS mitigation. Bob has been a member of this committee and legacy municipal committees (e.g., wind turbine committee) since 2004.</td>
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<td>Jessica Parks: with a background in sustainable design and urban planning, she has experience in developing greenhouse gas reduction plans, driving energy efficiency projects, and establishing energy reporting protocols. She is currently a Senior Project Manager at MIT for projects under the campus-wide Greenhouse Gas (GHG) program. Jessica hopes to utilize her experience and expertise to help create opportunities for community engagement and education in support of a more sustainable and resilient Medford.</td>
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**John Rogers**: extensive background in energy conversion (motors, batteries, chargers, power grid, electric vehicles). With Solectria, he worked on the electrical system for the “Solectria Sunrise” EV and on their Grid Tied Solar Inverters. With Azure Dynamics, he worked on a Ford E250 Electric Van Prototype and on the onboard charging system for Ford’s Transit Connect Electric. He now works for Instrumentation Laboratory - Bedford, MA.

**Paul Taslimi (co-chair)**: Senior scientist at Merck Research Laboratories Boston. Paul has been an active scientist for 40 years. Paul has a BSc and MSc degrees in Chemistry and Biochemistry respectively from Canada. Paul has a deep interest in mitigating the climate crisis through science education and raising awareness at the local level and hopes that his years of experience in science can be beneficial to the Medford community in addressing the climate crisis.

**Medford Energy and Environment Committee Municipal Staff**

**Alicia Hunt**: Director of Planning, Development and Sustainability. Alicia started working with the city in 2010 as the Energy Efficiency Coordinator and has managed extensive energy efficiency and renewable energy projects for the City’s buildings. She facilitated the City’s Green Communities designation and works to bring in energy and environment related grants and programs to the City of Medford. Alicia is a Medford resident who brings her green knowledge to other Medford organizations in her spare time.

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