

Town of Sharon
Municipal Solar Oversight Committee
Minutes for 08/21/2023 meeting held 4:30 pm to 5:15 pm on Zoom

Welcome

Committee Attendees: George Aronson (Chair), Xander Shapiro, Rob Maidman, Chris Pimental (late)

Not present: Silas Fyler

Guest Attendees: Jay Tobin (Town Energy Manager), Tim Chouinard (DPW), Allen Giles (Solect), Joe Flocco (resident, electrical engineer)

Approval of Minutes

Minutes were reviewed from the Committee meeting on July 19, 2023 and approved by a vote of 3-0.

Status of existing projects

- East Elementary School canopy solar PV. Operating. 481.21 MWh generated from commercial operation date to today; 158.34 MWh in 2023 to date.
- Heights Elementary School rooftop solar PV. Operating. 657.15 MWh generated from commercial operation date to today, 123.5 MWh 2023 to date.
 - After Town advocacy through the municipal ombudsman's office, Eversource finally responded to a Solect Work Order request to allow a 2-hour shutdown to repair the solar array after a two-month delay. Repairs are now complete and the facility is back in production.
 - George noted that the extended length of the downtime interruption qualifies as a failure largely attributable to failure to perform by a third party (Eversource) per Section 5(b)(a) of the PPA, which offsets potential liability for failure to meet the Performance Guarantee for Contract Year 3 that started on April 20, 2023. Allen will provide updated information on historical performance by contract year.

Status of projects under development

- Heights Elementary School battery energy storage system (BESS). Physical work is done. Date is scheduled for Eversource approval of energization. If there is a delay, Town is ready to repeat advocacy effort with Eversource management.
- Mountain Street Landfill project: Per Jackie Bruce, project manager, is awaiting a vendor confirmation signature on the order for the battery before submitting final plans to DPW for ministerial permit review. Also need to finalize amendment to confirm Site Lease Schedules 1 and 2. Project has secured PSOQ for Block 7. Construction is targeted to mobilize in October 2023 – 3 months for racks, two months for panels, commissioning and contingency time. COD in mid- to late-2024, depending on the schedule for battery delivery. Tim Chouinard asked to be connected with Jackie Bruce to coordinate on the status of the shed, disconnecting the shed power and other matters. George will facilitate the introduction.
- Gavin's Pond parking lot canopy. Eversource impact study is required. Timeline is indefinite.
- High School rooftop project. Eversource and Solect are discussing the impact of the battery on the schedule and whether the battery might be added as a second phase. Response expected shortly.
 - NOTE: During the meeting, Solect sent an email indicating that Eversource would not require the system impact study if the battery were deferred to a future phase, thereby enabling the solar PV installation to move forward.

- DPW project. Allen confirmed that the LOIs have been signed. Solect adding language on EVs to the contracts and will forward to Town shortly. Eversource confirmed no incremental interconnection cost!. SMART block 7 secured.
- Middle School project. Eversource confirmed that a system impact study will not be required. SMART Block 7 secured. Solect expects interconnection service agreement back from Eversource in mid-September when level of upgrades is identified. Engineering and geo testing underway. Goal is to order steel for spring installation, and to coordinate with Tony K to start work before school year ends. Will need to coordinate with Principal and may present to School Committee. After installation, can return to battery addition after a one-year delay.
- Well #5 project. Town signed the LOI. Solect started engineering; interconnection application due out by end of August. Expect to be in Block 8. Solect working with Jay Tobin to keep AOBC value within Water Department. Goal of securing authority to sign agreements at Fall Town Meeting.
- Solar PV at new Town library. Solect and George reviewed construction plans for solar readiness. Solect will need a pad outside near the transformer for a disconnect switch; conduit to the electrical room and then to the roof; and breaker space in the electrical room switchgear cabinet. Allen confirming with Drayton Fair (library architect). Joe Flocco noted that code for being “solar ready” changed in July 2023. Solect prepared a preliminary solar PV design based on the library design, but will defer preparing a detailed design until as-built plans are available post-construction, since design plans always change. Anticipate ~60 kWAC on roof and some side panels. Note that Eversource would not accept an interconnection application until the new building has a work order for electric service.

Roof replacement projects. The governor signed the new law, but funding is \$50 million rather than \$100 million, so there will be competition for limited funds. MassCEC will control awards. First round expected after Thanksgiving. Allen expects advantages to small projects (spread the money around between more sites) and to being as shovel-ready as possible – points for completing design, having an LOI, submitting an ISA application, etc. Applicants will need to demonstrate solar potential and need for roof replacement. Advocacy from elected officials will help.

Town candidates include Cottage Elementary, the Middle School and perhaps East Elementary. Middle School canopy development is a complication, so reduces its eligibility points. East Elementary roof is leaking and aging, and canopy has been in place for over a year, but status of Town action on roof repair/replacement needs to be confirmed. Xander will follow up with Tony Kopacz regarding info on Cottage roofs and wall upgrade needs and the East roof situation. Solect would do LOI, ISA and SMART SOQ to make it shovel-ready.

Compensation monitoring. George met with Town Finance Director Krishan Gupta. Summary materials for the meeting will be attached to the minutes.

Next meeting date set for Monday, October 9, 2023, time (4:30?) and agenda to be confirmed

Meeting adjourned at 5:35 pm

Approved by Vote of 4-0 at meeting on October 30, 2023.