January 19, 2026, Energy Committee meeting minutes draft for approval

The meeting officially opened at 10:11 AM by Chair Al Rossetto
The first item on the agenda was the approval of the minutes from the January 8, 2026, meeting.
DPA requested to pass over the prior meeting minutes and return later.

1. Public Works Equipment Replacement Discussion (Grant Application)
The committee discussed preparing for the January 20th Board of Selectmen meeting, specifically regarding a grant application for a dump truck. The primary challenge is that the town's current equipment (Freightliner dump truck and Internation) do not meet the minimum usage requirements (250 hours/year) for the 80% reimbursement grant program.

. The Freightliner dump truck is not used enough, primarily hauling snow and sand over short distances.
. The Bobcat already has a Tier 4 engine, disqualifying it from the Tier 3/Tier 4 trade-in option.
. The International truck (from the fire department) is in excellent condition and has low mileage, making replacement undesirable.
. The cost of a new 14-yard dump truck is estimated at $150,000, meaning even with a 20% reimbursement, the town would need to fund about $30,000.
. The committee agreed that they lacked sufficient information on vehicle usage hours and maintenance costs to proceed with the grant application at the Selectmen's meeting and concurred to remove from the board agenda.
. The committee decided to gather more data on vehicle hours and maintenance costs and consult with Melissa (the grant contact) again.

2. Public Works Equipment Capital Reserve Fund (CRF)
Given the high cost of new equipment (skid steer at $70,000, loader at $250,000), the committee discussed increasing the Public Works Equipment CRF, which currently holds $67,800.

. The current funds are insufficient for major equipment replacement.

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. The loader, a 2012/2013 model, is heavily used for handling salt, leading to significant maintenance issues and rust.
. Increasing the CRF by $20,000 annually would bring the fund close to $90,000, potentially reaching $100,000 in a couple of years.
. A recommendation will be made by Al to the board to put $20,000 into the Municipal Public Works CRF.
. This item needs to be placed on the list of warrant articles for the upcoming March town meeting.

3. LED Street Light Conversion Project

The committee reviewed the proposal from Affinity for converting streetlights to LEDs, focusing on funding options and potential savings.

. Projected Savings: The proposal projects savings of 66,300 kilowatts, equating to $20,558 in savings based on a rate of approximately 31 cents per kilowatt-hour.
. Actual Rate Discrepancy: Calculations based on a recent power bill showed the total cost per kilowatt-hour was closer to 35 cents. The committee decided to use the conservative estimate provided in the Affinity proposal to avoid confusion.
. Funding Options: Options included a warrant article for a bond/purchase, or a lease agreement. A bond/warrant article for $100,000 would require a special bond hearing and a secret ballot at town meeting, which is politically difficult given the current (tax increase) atmosphere. The most viable option is a non-appropriation lease (MLC proposal).

Lease Funding Mechanism:

The former Town Administrator (Tammy) confirmed that the Select Board has the right to enter a lease outside of town meeting if:

- The lease payment can be found within the existing budget and,
- there is an escape clause (non-appropriation clause), which there is.

The plan is to keep the current street lighting budget ($35,000) constant for five years. The savings (approximately $20,000) generated by the LED conversion would then be used to cover the annual lease payment, making the project cash-neutral to the taxpayer during the lease term.

Warranty and Service Concerns:

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. The warranty includes field labor and service charges for one year from purchase.
. The lamps (units) have a 10-year warranty.
. After one year, the town will be responsible for labor and service charges to replace or repair the units, even if the materials are covered by the 10-year warranty. The committee needs to obtain unit costs for this service.
. **A motion** was made by Wayne to bring the Affinity lease proposal, including the November power bill for information, to the Select Board for a decision to proceed with the lease.
. The motion was seconded by Sheila.
. All members present voted in favor, and the motion passed.

4. Energy Efficiency CRF and Next Steps

The committee discussed establishing an Energy Efficiency CRF to help with funding future opportunities.

. The committee agreed that a small fund ($10,000 to $15,000) would be beneficial.
. This CRF must be established via a warrant article at town meeting.
. A suggestion was made to fund the CRF by allocating a percentage of the energy savings realized from the LED conversion, rather than asking for new money from the budget.
. The committee agreed to keep this item on the agenda for the Select Board meeting to ensure it is added to the list of warrant articles.

5. Committee Membership and Next Meeting

The committee discussed adding a new member, Mark De Genarro, who has extensive experience in commercial and residential construction and procurement.

. A motion was made by Wayne to add Mark to the committee and was seconded by Sheila all members present voted in favor, and the motion passed.

- David mentioned that meeting minutes are in process and will be ready soon.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting was scheduled for Friday, January 30th, at 10:00 AM.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Sheila and was seconded by Wayne with all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 11:54 AM .

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