



MEMORANDUM

Date: July 22, 2022

To: Select Board

From: Alternative Energy Committee

Re: 2022 Update on Tuesday, July 26, 2022 – Introduction to Near-term Action Items

For the Select Board meeting to be held on July 26, 2022, the Alternative Energy Committee intends to provide a quick update on grants and an overview to introduce three near-term action items.

THREE NEAR-TERM OPPORTUNITIES

1) Electric Vehicle Charging Station Fees and Structure

- EV Charging Stations continue to receive a growing number of unique visitors.
- The AEC voted to recommend fees that should be charged by the Town to recover costs and disincentivize hoarding – details to come for the next Select Board meeting.
- The recommendation also will include a proposed structure allowed under *Special Revenue Funds* to enable collections to offset payments from the same account, as opposed to the general fund. The following two examples are the extreme end of possibilities, with options in between:
 - Example 1: Revolving Fund for a Town Department
 - Example 2: Annual Fund for an Enterprise Fund or Municipal Light Plant

DISCUSSION: What does the Select Board want the recommended fees to achieve?

FUTURE MOTION: To approve the AEC's recommended fees and collection/payment fund.

2) Municipal Solar Energy – Opportunities at Third Party Sites

- The time to move forward with solar energy arrays is now.
- Opportunities still exist for the Town to receive a discount to its electricity bills by purchasing solar energy array credits – either directly or through a power purchase agreement.
- Palmer Capital, owner and operator of the solar energy array on the Cohasset Landfill that has saved the Town nearly \$300,000 to date, has developed a solar energy array opportunity for the town on a third-party site.

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- The specifics of the opportunity will be discussed at a future meeting in Executive Session, but include:
 - Capacity: Around 500 kW, roughly the size of the solar array on the landfill.
 - Price: Option to receive either fixed price or fixed net credit.
 - Current Credit: Both options are set to provide the Town with a net credit that reduces its electricity purchase price by more than 10 percent (under current conditions) – the difference ties to who bears the upside and downside risk in the event the SMART 2.0 price falls below a fixed price for the credit.
 - Savings to the Town: Total estimated savings over 20 years could be \$10,000 to \$20,000 per year.
 - Location: Rooftops of the Stop & Shop building (390 and 400 Chief Justice Cushing Hwy) – on the Cohasset Microgrid Project proposed as part of the BRIC grant.
- The Town has more than enough potential electric bill costs to absorb these credits without sacrificing the opportunity for more lucrative solar energy arrays (e.g., the School Roofs).
- The Town can allocate the credits (and costs) to Town accounts and to the energy-intensive enterprise funds.

DISCUSSION: Is the Select Board interested? Time is of the essence.

NEXT STEPS:

- Town to send Letter of Intention to allow Palmer to go into the queue
- Town Counsel to review the proposed contract
- The Alternative Energy Committee to review the options to make a recommendation to the Select Board and present in Executive Session; Select Board to decide how to proceed

3) Residential Solar - Simplifying Solar with Energy Sage

- Federal incentives for solar ratchet down at end of year (26% to 22% in 2023 to 0% for residential in 2024), but opportunities still exist for low-cost financing to install solar.
- Energy Sage offers information and education to residents to simplify the solar decision, including competitive price offers from multiple vendors.

www.energysage.com

- Energy Sage also works with towns to customize a webpage to allow for education and competitive bids for solar projects.

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- Members of the AEC reached out to Towns that have used Energy Sage to create a town-specific website and the feedback was generally positive. Shortcomings were based on the town not putting in the effort to customize the webpage or market to its citizens.
- At no cost, Cohasset can enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Energy Sage to customize a website to facilitate access for Cohasset residents who can have a centralized source for understanding solar energy options; the MOU currently is in queue for review by Town Counsel.
- The Alternative Energy Committee voted on July 14, 2022 to recommend that the Select Board approve a motion to allow.

DISCUSSION: Is this a good way to provide unbiased education about solar to the Town.

REQUESTED MOTION: Subject to Town Counsel's approval, move forward with Energy Sage to establish a Cohasset-specific website that can educate and inform citizens and businesses of their options to go solar.