

29Jan24 Green Communities Meeting:

- Member attendees: Dave Blatt, Dave Passios, Kim Duffy, Chris Holden, Matt Snyder
- Non-Member attendees: Eric M Hevy (Director of Facilities and Grounds), Bill Bernard (DPW Director)
- Kelly Brown (Regional Coordinator Central MA for Green Communities)

6:32pm meeting start

- Dave Passios: Discussion of significant potential future energy efficiency rebates to residents. MA Dept of Energy Resources may be applying for federal program
- Upcoming Grant Opportunities for Lunenburg Discussion with Kelly Brown
 - Coming in February 2024: "Program Opportunity Notice" (AKA Green Communities Grant Application).
 - Grants are split into Spring and Fall "blocks". Fall blocks are more popular for timelines (budgeting meetings, school availability during summer). Funding is targeted for a 50/50 split. A maximum of 1 grant per year is granted per town (up to \$200k). Application due Feb 7th for Spring block. Application due April 12 for Fall block.
 - To apply for new grants, current projects must be finalized (streetlight project - on track to finalize this week)
 - There are some new aspects to the application
- Introduction of New Decarbonization Grants with Kelly Brown
 - Larger project funding up to \$500,000 with 25% municipal match. Criteria includes "fossil-free" buildings. If this grant is awarded, the town is not eligible for other grants for a few years.
- Potential Projects Q&A with Kelly Brown
 - David Blatt: Are grants moving from LED lighting towards heating/cooling? Water Heaters?
 - Kelly Brown: LED lighting is still funded but at a reduced amount. Lunenburg eligible for \$200,000 grant (interior non municipal lighting).
 - Other fund possibilities:
 - Not funding fossil fuel replacements or window replacements.
 - Fire dept/police can combine infrared with heat pumps due special circumstances, including firetruck interior/exterior areas that are not feasible for only heat pump.
 - HVAC application can to be combined with weatherization. Heat pump applications require weatherization - whether assessment indicates no additional can be added, or what will be added. Partial project applications can be submitted if exceeds grant amount and exceeds are funded by the town.
 - Facilities and DPW Potential Projects:
 - Bill Bernard: Are electric pumps for sewer systems eligible for grants? Quotes are already provided, timeline is as soon as possible.
 - Kelly Brown: Yes, still allowed under program. On the application: 10hp or less is a prescriptive project. Great than 10hp is a traditional project.

- Eric Hevy: Are School Building Management Systems eligible for grants? Currently the controllers aren't working properly/need upgrade, causing unequal heat distribution at the Primary school.
 - Kelly Brown: Pneumatic systems might be eligible. Non-pneumatic might not be eligible. Schools that have non-pneumatic might just need software/computer upgrade and will not have electric savings. Would need data on how this would save energy. Once energy assessments/surveys are complete and proposals are in hand, can have a meeting to discuss and review the results in the Grant Table.
 - Dave Blatt: Do you have suggestions for who can scope?
 - Kelly Brown: Until contractors for smaller assessments, full audit may require consultant. Full energy audits aren't generally funded, sometimes just one building.
 - Dave Blatt will reach out to Unitil liaison
 - Eric Hevy has been in contact with a team for energy audit
- Kim Duffy: How does MA Clean Heat Standard work with these programs?
 - Kelly Brown: The Clean Heat Standard is a part of DOER and MassSave - works together with goals.
- Dave Blatt: Are water heaters eligible for grants?
 - Kelly: electric instant or heat pump, not gas/fossil fuels. Can help upgrade fossil fuel sometimes. Have funded roof top heat pump with backups - only allowed when the town has a good justification for building setup that all electric heat pump would not work with the temperatures. Vendor justification required.
- Dave Passios - referring to 10-year capital improvement plan being used as a grant plan.
 - Kelly: not all projects would be good energy savers. Partial projects can be funded.
- Dave P - Asks about geothermal
 - Kelly - a lot of schools doing geothermal for IRA federal tax credits
 - Dave P - new school may be built in the next 10-20 years. Will be suggesting geothermal.
- Kelly - in Feb 2024 energy efficient conservation blockers will be announced. Population >35k, direct to Energy Dept). <35k, direct through Green Communities. New studies and projects to apply for. Could hire an energy manager & have someone help them fill out applications. New program -> Green communities 2.0 = Climate Leader Communities. Taking GC criteria and adding (refer back to 18Dec23 notes). Outreach & education coming. First round in June.
- Dave Blatt - For electric car policy under Climate Leader Communities, is the requirement still half ton and below?
 - Kelly- 8500 lbs. or less. Above do not need to comply.
- Dave Passios: Library HVAC re-design (multi-zone) and EV charging
 - Kelly: Most communities have gone through EVIP, more specific to EV. Up to 7500 per station. EVIP says you can't apply for both funding sources (EVIP and GC) for the same project.
- Dave P - Who owns small Lunenburg SUVs? Sewer dept? Outside contractor? Other vehicles might be eligible for funding that we don't know of.
 - Bill: Sewer no vehicles, DPW no vehicles under 8500lbs
- Kelly - explains Grant Excel Table. Assesses energy savings and dollar weight.

- Dave P - schools struggling with climate control. Mini splits would have to be integrated as both heat and cooling units?
 - Kelly - yes both heating and cooling not just for shoulder months
 - Dave P - can we keep some existing and add mini splits?
 - Kelly - explained details of requirements, calling out ventilation
 - Matt - if you don't have current cooling, how does that incorporate into "savings"?
 - Kelly - is the space currently cooled? Window Acs? Will be factored in
- Kim: with the push to electrify, are there are programs researching and improving the grid reliability and cost?
 - Kelly - Grid Modernization Committee
- Dave P - renewable storage funded?
 - Kelly - solar standalone storage, some schools have. Internal projects (like from solar implementation info re: solar safety & reliability) - will be a similar guidebook for renewable storage.
- Dave Blatt - grants for battery backup for existing solar?
 - Kelly - not "battery backup" because it's not meant for power outage. Solar storage for "peak" use that grants can be applied for.
- Community outreach
 - Green communities committee Facebook page
 - Members voted on process for content creation and social media posting. All members present (David Blatt, David Passios, Matt Snyder, Chris) voted aye for Kim Duffy to post informational content related to the Green Communities Committee.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10pm