

**PLEASE NOTE NEXT MEETING WILL BE THURSDAY FEB. 14
AT 2:30 IN THE AFTERNOON IN THE SACO CITY HALL**

**SACO ENERGY COMMITTEE
JAN. 22, 2008 MINUTES**

Committee members present: Howard Carter (Treatment Plant Director); Travis Peaslee (Lab Tech. Treatment Plant); John Sherman (Deputy Director Parks and Recreation); Maggie Daigle (Ferry Beach Ecology School); Bob Hamblen (Saco City Planner); Sandy Guay (Saco Planning Board); Eric Cote (Saco City Councilor); Mark Mitchell (Saco Code Enforcement); Mike Garrity (Director Maintenance Saco Public Schools); Peter Morelli (Saco Economic Director)

Guests: Peter Gordon (Jolly John Auto City); Ron Appel and Ruth Fogg (Dexter, Maine Energy Committee)

1. WIND ENERGY

Howard reports that the EW15 should be installed Feb. 4 and 5th on Saco Island. The net metering arrangements have been completed. Electricity produced in excess of what the Transportation Center uses, will be credited first towards the electricity used by the Transportation Center parking lot lights, and then towards the electricity used by the Police Department. Howard projects a 12-15 year payback for the turbine.

2. ELECTRIC CARS AND TRUCKS

As previously stated in the minutes, Mike Garrity, the Director of Maintenance for the Saco Public Schools, would like to try a 100% electric truck. Currently, the school system utilizes a Ford F250 to go between schools. Mike would like to keep the Ford F250 for heavy hauling, but utilize a light electric truck the remainder of the time. The Ford F250 gets 8 miles per gallon on a good day. Mike likes the GEM model eS.

Peter Gordon from Jolly John Auto City attended the meeting. See Peter's card below.



Peter Gordon

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Peter said GEM motor vehicles are manufactured in North Dakota. Global Electric Motorcars is a division of Chrysler. The company has been in business for 10 years. It takes about a month to get a GEM, as each is custom made. Jolly John fought for 3 years with the State of Maine to make electric vehicles legal on roads in Maine. The vehicles can legally go only 25 miles per hour. A vehicle needs airbags to go over 25 miles per hour. GEMs would be repaired at Jolly Johns, and would be picked up with a trailer. They are low maintenance, and go 30 miles on a charge. The front wheel drive makes the GEM good in the snow. Three care models and three utility vehicle models are available.

Eric called Rick Higgins (tel. 288-6163) of the Jackson Lab., Bar Harbor, Maine, as Peter Gordon gave his name as a reference. The Jackson Laboratory has had the same model GEM truck that Mike would like to have, for going on three years. Rick said that it works wonderfully. The heater is not much, however, and it is chilly riding in it. Rick does not like the canvas doors, and recommends another kind of door. Rick does not think the GEM is good for going through snow banks. All in all, Rick says it is an awfully good vehicle. The truck is used for maintenance. The maintenance workers, who use the GEM, like it a lot. Rick would like to buy another. Tourists give the GEM a thumbs up. There have been no problems with the vehicle. Rick hopes Saco buys a GEM, and wants us to let him know if we do.

Peter Gordon also gave the name of Dan Nein (tel.786-8364) as a reference. Dan is the maintenance director at Bates College. As a young boy, he lived on Cross Street in Saco. Bates has had three GEMS for going on 10 months. Information Services has a car as does the plumbers. Food Services has a truck. Dan was skeptical about the GEM vehicles when they were purchased. Now 10 months later, he has no reservations about buying another one. There have been no problems with the vehicles except a small matter, which the Bates staff probably caused. Jolly John has provided good service. The vehicles have been very reliable. They work really well for Bates. There have been no complaints from staff. There have been no problems with the electric charge running out. Dan believes Keene State College in N.H. has 2 trucks, and Keene has had no problems.

3. BIKE SHARE PROGRAM

Peter, Mark, and Bob went to the Police Station to look at the bikes that may be part of the program. Most bikes were more complicated than Peter had in mind. Mark suggested picking up single speed and three speed bikes at yard sales. Peter met with Andy Greif from the Community Bike Center. Andy can get helmets for \$5 each. Bike stands were also discussed. John said the Community Center would be part of the program. Maggie suggested the Bike Coalition of Maine be contacted. Mike suggested that the public be asked for bikes for the program.

4. COMMUNITY CENTER

John said electricity consumption has been reduced by 1/3 with the lighting improvements. The lighting in the gym is twice what it was prior to the lighting project.

John reports that now all the energy conservation projects in the Community Center have been completed. Beside the lighting project, about \$179,000 was spent to: upgrade the gym heating system to bring in outside air and to refurbish the system; replace windows; replace doors; replace all thermostats with digital heating controls; repair steam traps; fill in windows; fill in garage doors; replace the heating system in the reception area; replace some roof flashing; etc. The staff did a lot of the work in the winter off season. There is a huge difference in the quality of air in the gym. The prior air situation in the gym did not meet current building standards. W. H. Demmons did the heating system work. John said the company was excellent to work with. All in all, the work has made a big improvement to the building.

5. SCHOOLS

Mike Garrity said electrical consumption in Burns, Fairfield, and the Middle School has been reduced by 20%. Inadequate lighting in a number of classrooms was fixed.

Mike believes that the most cost effective project that he has remaining to do in the schools, is to upgrade heating controls at Fairfield School. The school presently uses 16,000 gallons of oil per year. An upgrade costing about \$22,000 would cut oil consumption by about 2000 gallons, and reduce maintenance costs, making for about a 3 year payback on the investment.

6. DEXTER ENERGY COMMITTEE

Ruth Fogg and Ron Appel from the Dexter, Maine Energy Committee participated in the meeting. The town manager asked Ruth and Ron to get a committee going. Besides Ruth and Ron, 5 or 6 other people are on the committee, including the assessor and the code enforcement officer. Dexter just went to bid to build a new middle school. A biomass furnace is planned to be used. The Saco Energy Committee put in a plug for a geothermal heating and cooling system, and recommended that Dexter look at the system in the Gorham Middle School. The Dexter Energy Committee is also working on a project to put a 2 kW micro hydro turbine in a stream. It is projected to produce 30,000 kilowatt hours per year. Jim Sysko is providing the technical assistance. Saco Energy Committee members commented that they were interested in micro hydro, and had tried to communicate with Jim Sysko a number of times, but failed to make connection. Saco will try again. Following the meeting, Howard showed Ron and Ruth, Saco's Skystream wind turbine.

7. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be Thurs. Feb. 14 at 2:30 in the afternoon in the Saco City Hall. The agenda at this time is:

1. Mark's report on the Zenn;
2. Ron, John, and Travis' report on the smart strip power strip project;
3. Discussion with David Shaw and students on Middle School project;
4. Howard's report on EW15 wind turbine project;
5. Discussion with Shannon Hill of Simply Green about biofuels;
6. Discussion on further projects.