

TOWN OF FRANCONIA
BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2018 AT TOWN OFFICES

TOWN OFFICIALS PRESENT: Bernadette Costa, Jill Brewer, Eric Meth.

TOWN OFFICIALS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Holly Burbank, Jenny Monahan, Peter Grote.

The meeting was called to order at 3:07pm.

APPOINTMENTS:

It was determined that the Life Squad budget had been reviewed at a previous meeting so this appointment was removed from the agenda.

The Board reviewed the 2018 Proposed Planning and Zoning Budget with very little discussion.

SIGN/APPROVE:

The Board reviewed and approved the January 8th, 11th and Tri-Town meeting minutes and approved as amended.

The January 18, 2018 Transaction List was reviewed and signed.

The Board reviewed and approved a building permit for Map 28 Lot 6.

The Board reviewed and approved the Intermunicipal Agreement for Provision of Prosecutorial Services between the Town of Littleton and the Town of Franconia.

DISCUSSION:

Town Administrator Holly Burbank suggested having the first public Budget Hearing on 2/15/2018 at 7:00pm at the Town Hall, and the second hearing on 02/19/2018 if needed. The Board briefly discussed approaching deadlines associated with Town Meeting.

The Board discussed the appointment of a new Deputy Emergency Management Director to replace John Monaghan. Holly Burbank said Mark Taylor suggested Pam Oakman.

Bernadette Costa motioned to approve Pam Oakman as Deputy Emergency Management Director, Jill Brewer seconded the motion. All were in favor. **Motion passes.**

Holly said she had received the report from HEB regarding Wells Road. The report states that a bridge will be required for Wells Road. The Board authorized Holly to direct HEB Engineers to submit the report to NH Department of Transportation to be put on the State Bridge Aid List.

Holly had a brochure/fee schedule from Campton/Thornton Transfer Station that the Board reviewed and agreed that they would like to have something similar developed for Franconia. Having the Transfer

Station be closed on government holidays was also discussed, and the Board agreed this would be appropriate.

Holly updated the Board on her meeting with the Franconia Notch Regional Chamber of Commerce (FNRCC) and said a decision regarding FNRCC moving into the Sports Shop building and using it as a visitor center has not been finalized yet.

CORRESPONDENCE: Holly had a letter from the USDA confirming their support of Northern Pass. The Board members had previously received the letter via email.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Conservation Commission: No update, they will be meeting next week.

CIP Committee: Bernadette Costa said the CIP committees missing minutes are being located and posted to the site shortly.

Energy Commission: Eric Meth said the Energy Commission met on 01/16 and discussed the recent updating of the street lights. Eversource couldn't locate two streetlights to update them, so 141 out of 143 streetlights were done. Eric said he had observed a reduction in nighttime light pollution and received comments from community members regarding the same. Bernadette Costa suggested that the town should request a refund from Eversource for the billing of the two lights that were not located.

Planning Board: No update, next meeting on 01/30/2018.

Northern Pass: Eric had a news story from indepth.org: "D-Day Approaches for Northern Pass" and read several excerpts aloud. The article is attached to these minutes.

PUBLIC INPUT: Peter Grote commented that in reviewing Northern Pass testimony, he noted that other towns had included objections regarding Master Plan interference and Conservation Commission testimony and he thinks Franconia should have done the same. Eric Meth said that some communities had different committees focus on their NP interests and less Select Board involvement.

Jill Brewer made a motion to enter non-public session at 4:20pm pursuant to NH RSA 91-A:3 II (a). Eric Meth seconded the motion. All were in favor. **Motion passes.**

The Board left non-public session at 5:30pm. Selectman Costa made a motion to seal the non-public minutes. Jill Brewer seconded the motion. All were in favor. **Motion passes.**

Sergeant Mac Cashin joined the meeting for a time prior to being sworn in as Chief of Police at 6:00pm.

With no further discussion, the Board adjourned at 5:55pm on a unanimous voice vote.

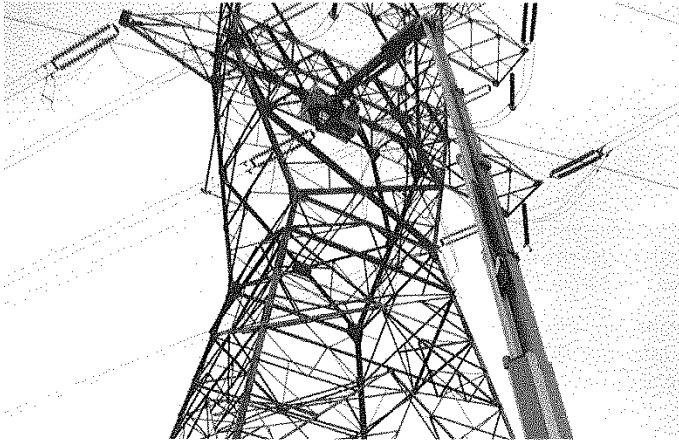
Respectfully Submitted,

Jenny Monahan
Administrative Secretary

BUSINESS & ECONOMY

D-Day Approaches for Northern Pass

By GARRY RAYNO, InDepthNH January 15, 2018



Electric Light & Power photo

By GARRY RAYNO, InDepthNH

CONCORD — Next week Massachusetts' three major electric distributors and the Department of Environmental Resources will announce which proposals to produce 10-terawatt hours of clean renewable energy over the next 20 years will be selected to negotiate long-term contracts.

The 46 proposals present a buffet of options for energy officials and are expected to help meet Massachusetts's clean energy goals.

The Massachusetts legislation emphasizes new renewable energy sources and transmission systems to deliver "clean power" to southern New England.

The selection committee, comprised of representatives from Eversource, National Grid and Unitil with the DOER as an advisor, will announce which proposal or proposals will move to the next level, negotiating a long-term contract for the renewable energy.

Massachusetts officials hope renewable energy, which has no fuel costs, will help drive down regional prices and provide a more economically stable wholesale market, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Of the 46 proposals the committee is considering, two would use the \$1.6 billion, 192-mile Northern Pass transmission project stretching from Pittsburg to Deerfield, currently under consideration by New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee. The committee begins deliberations on the project Jan. 30.

While some believe the Massachusetts clean power contract is economically essential for Northern Pass, a project spokesperson denies that.

"Northern Pass was never predicated on any single solicitation for clean power," said Kaitlyn Woods. "In fact, the Massachusetts RFP didn't exist when Northern Pass was first proposed."

The project was first proposed in 2010 and the legislation for the Massachusetts clean energy project passed in 2016.

But Jack Savage of the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, which opposes the project in its current form, said he believes the contract is important for Northern Pass.

"Today, Northern Pass apparently only works for Hydro-Quebec if the ratepayers of Massachusetts were to pay the cost of building the line. New Hampshire would bear the burden of siting the project and all of the unreasonable adverse impacts the project creates," Savage said. "So the Mass RFP is important to Northern Pass. It's not critical to Massachusetts since there are other options for getting power out of Quebec."

Recently Northern Pass developer Eversource, issued a news release saying the project is the only major proposal being considered that would meet the statutory timeline requiring delivery of the clean energy by the end of 2020.

Woods said the maturity of the Northern Pass project is what sets it apart from the other proposals.

"Northern Pass is well-positioned to begin construction in mid-2018, and to bring an additional 1,090 megawatts of much-needed clean hydroelectric power into the region two years ahead of other proposals that have bid into the Massachusetts RFP," Woods said.

"Northern Pass is the only project that can achieve Massachusetts' statutory timeline requirement for carbon emission reductions while also delivering more than \$900 million in accelerated benefits to New England customers due to the project's early in service date of 2020."

But Savage says he doubts the project can be built in that timeframe. "I suspect Northern Pass is at a disadvantage given the uphill battle they continue to face in New Hampshire," he said.

SEC
Decision

A verbal decision is required by the end of February and a written decision by the end of March.

The written decision triggers a 30-day window for Eversource or the intervenors to ask the SEC to reconsider its decision.

"Presuming that such a motion would be denied by the SEC, an appeal would then be filed to the NH Supreme Court," Savage said. "Depending on the nature of the appeal, the court would have a lot of catching up to do on the record in order to render a decision. That could go on for quite a while."

Even if Northern Pass receives SEC approval, building the line and having it operational by the end of 2020 is overly optimistic, he said, noting Hydro-Quebec has hedged its bets by partnering with other transmission projects bidding for the Massachusetts contract.

The Massachusetts bid indicates how the Northern Pass proposal has had to change to address market conditions, Savage said.

"Originally Northern Pass was marketed as a 'participant-funded' project," Savage said. "Eversource said that the line would be paid for by Hydro-Quebec and that Hydro-Quebec would recover its costs to build the line by selling electricity wholesale to the New England grid. That was the initial tale seven-and-a-half years ago."

When Northern Pass was first proposed, electric rates were much higher due to the cost of natural gas which is used to generate more than half of New England's power. Since that time, natural gas prices have gone down dramatically and until the recent cold wave, so had

electric prices.

Woods said the recent cold spell shows the need for the Northern Pass project.

“Certainly, the solicitations that have been presented recently affirm the great need for projects like Northern Pass. This was especially apparent during the recent cold snap,” Woods said. “We estimate that electric power generation emissions in New England during that period were two-and-a-half times greater than average, as a result of the region’s reliance on oil and coal-fired facilities.”

In cold weather, natural gas is first used for heating, driving up the price for its use to generate electricity.

Since the 46 proposals were submitted in July, the selection committee along with its consultants and an independent evaluator have been reviewing and rating the plans.

Selecting the winner does not follow a normal procurement process as the ratings will not be known until the contracts go before the Department of Public Utilities by April 25, but does reflect the varied interests of the major distributors, including the two submitting competing proposals, National Grid and Eversource.

The two companies are among the five partnerships with large-scale offerings.

Northern Pass and Hydro-Quebec would use the proposed transmission line for two plans, one to supply 1,090 megawatts of large-scale Canadian hydro power and supplying hydro power along with Canadian wind power currently under development.

National Grid also has two proposals that use a combination of hydro and Canadian and New York wind and solar projects.

The Granite State Power Link would use existing right-of-ways through Vermont from the Canadian border to Monroe, New Hampshire, and down to Londonderry. The Vermont right-of-way would need to be expanded, is controversial and yet to be finalized.

The Northeast Renewable Link would use existing lines to bring small hydro, wind and solar from New York to a substation in Massachusetts.

Central Maine Power also submitted two proposals and has run ads in Massachusetts saying it would cost \$650 million less than the Eversource and National Grid proposals.

New England Clean Energy Connect would bring 1,200 megawatts of Hydro-Quebec power to the New England grid over a 145-mile new transmission line from the Canadian border to Lewiston, Maine.

The Maine Clean Power Connection would use wind and solar power being developed in western Maine to connect to the New England grid in Lewiston.

TDI (Transmission Development Inc.) New England also presented two proposals for the clean energy project. The company owned by multi-national Blackstone has all the needed permits for a buried transmission line under Lake Champlain that would connect to the New England grid in Ludlow, Vermont.

The New England Clean Power Link would deliver 1,000 megawatts of Hydro-Quebec power and the other would use 700 megawatts of hydro coupled with 300 megawatts of wind power under development in New York and Canada.

And Emera has proposed the Atlantic Link, a new 900 megawatt under water cable connecting Nova Scotia and Massachusetts. The proposal would supply wind and hydro power from the Maritimes.

Other proposals would use wind, solar and hydro power in smaller bundles from the Northeast and Canada.

A majority of the proposals would use wind power. The wind and solar power in many plans would be supplemented by large hydro when wind and solar are not available.

And off-shore wind project Revolution Wind submitted a bid which is the first time an off-shore wind farm has competed head-to-head with other renewable generators.

After the selection committee makes its recommendations, the projects have until March 27 to negotiate long-term contracts before they are presented to the Massachusetts DPU in April.

Garry Rayno can be reached at garry_rayno@yahoo.com (mailto:garry_rayno@yahoo.com).