

Renewable Energy & Energy Conservation Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes

December 1, 2010

Logan City Environmental Department Class Room

Board Members Present:

Charles Ashurst	Richard Anderson	Robert Carpenter	Robert Davies
Loren Anderson	Herm Olsen	Jim Goodwin	Byard Wood
Laraine Swenson			

Also in attendance:

Chris Niemann	Emily Malik	Carl Francis	Tom Dickinson
Paul Taylor	Derek West	Pete Brunson	William H.

A. Approval of Minutes & Agenda

Minutes of the last meeting were approved.

All present board members voted to approve the agenda.

B. Announcements

Emily announced that there had been an insulation incentive application and we would soon be doing the first inspection.

C. Building Energy Codes Discussion

Tom Dickinson - Building Inspector/Plans Examiner

In 2007 President Bush signed a mandate calling for 3% annual energy reduction growth for new construction energy usage. The new standard would be based upon reducing energy use per square foot per new construction. Governor Huntsman signed a statement affirming the mandate.

Utah House Bill 45 moved us back to the 2006 energy code provisions. Contractors and lobbyists didn't like the 2009 codes because they mandated sprinkler fire suppression systems in every home and condominium. Home builders helped push House Bill 45 through to passage.

Since then there have been a lot of changes in the code. The new home building code won't get published until 2012 and won't go into effect in Utah until 2013. The current plan is to amend the most current code so that it can be adopted by July 1, 2012.

Kevin Emmerson with Utah Clean Energy interrupts. Kevin works for Utah Clean Energy Advocacy Group which focuses on education, partnerships, renewable, and clean energy projects.

Kevin says that the 2009 Energy Code is in place for commercial construction but not residential. There are groups working to stop its adoption, and the effort has become very political.

The Energy Policy Act (Clinton Administration ?) requires states to review regularly new energy codes, and specifies that States should adopt the most current energy codes. The Governor of Utah assures the Federal Government that it will follow through, but there are no teeth in the Energy Policy Act.

The primary improvements in the 2009 Energy Code are in the areas of lighting and an increase in wall insulation. There are also requirements for air tightness and air duct tightness for ducting running through non-insulated spaces. It should help home owners get what they are paying for and expecting. The Energy Ad Hoc Committee has analyzed the increased costs for these improvements to builders, but has found that making retrofits to include these improvements later would be five times more expensive. The average cost to home builders will be \$983.00 at the time of construction. Average annual home energy savings should be \$175.00 per year.

Advocacy Groups and legislators are grappling with how to proceed with energy conservation codes. They are considering two possibilities. One option is to make amendments to the current House Bill 45. The other option is to draft a new bill. The recommendation of the Building Code Commission is to adopt the bill but in January of 2012 and to include an amendment to allow builders to build to the 2006 Building Code while exceeding the 2006 code energy standards by 12%.

House Bill 45 mandates how the state must comply. The codes are actually implemented and enforced at the local level, and must be equal or more stringent than the statewide code. There is some interest from some Utah Counties for adopting the new code on a statewide scale. House Bill 45 was the first time the legislature passed a building code rather than building codes originating from the Uniform Building Code Committee.

The incremental cost that the builder assumes for energy conservation measures increases the total cost of construction by 1.5% which in turn is marked up by another 1.5%. The increase to the home owner's mortgage is \$15.00 per month.

The Ad Hoc Committee has done some energy modeling on three different insulation variations and energy improvements to study the costs to home builders while still achieving the energy conservation goals.

Paul Taylor said that they typically see lower quality homes being built by out-of-County Contractors who are building track homes. Most local builders are building better than the code and really achieving energy conservation.

Tom Dickinson finds that he has to write up self home builders that use lower efficiency windows. Paul Taylor disagrees.

Paul Taylor noted that many home improvement stores are carrying as “stock”, windows and other building materials that comply with the 2009 energy codes, perhaps because of the tax credits and other incentives that have been in effect.

Jim Goodwin noted that perhaps we need to send the message to buyers and builders that Logan City is proud that they are exceeding current energy codes to keep them on track.

In the interest of time, Emily suggested that we move on to allow Chris Neimann to make his announcements regarding the decision for Logan City to not participate in a nearby wind generation project and on Logan City’s decision about contracting with enerlyte.

Chris noted that Logan City is looking at the technology that they would like to go with to start the community invested solar project. They will begin the project in the spring, when the weather improves. They are also looking at a small wind turbine for the location.

In regard to investing in new solar power, Chris noted that Logan City opted out of the wind purchase because wind is unreliable and you cannot schedule it so we end up losing money on wind energy because we have to sell it on the market at less than we pay for it.

Emily noted that if wind is not preferred for Logan City’s power portfolio, then perhaps Logan City should not invest in a wind turbine. She noted that perhaps it would be best to stick to generating power that will help us.

Chris also noted that they called individuals in Payson City to learn of their experience with enerlyte. Payson had approximately 9 negative notes (from an 8,000+ customer base). Because of the negative comments, Jeff and Chris would like to sit back and see what the experience other customers have with enerlyte.

It was noted that 9 of the 8,000 customers is a relatively low level of dissatisfaction.

Emily noted that if we do that, we will lose our pilot pricing.

Jim Goodwin suggested that Emily write a letter to enerlyte asking for an extension on the pilot pricing. She agreed to do that; Jim agreed to help edit the letter.

Loren Anderson noted that many people hated the recycling program when it was first launched and those same people are major proponents of it now. He argued that there is much less opposition to this program in Payson than there was for recycling in Logan, that people will adapt, but it is worth a shot.

That sentiment was seconded by others in the room and on the phone.

The meeting was adjourned due to the late time.

Minutes submitted by: Carl Francis & Emily Malik

Approved by: