**Marlborough Community Power Committee**

**Public Hearing**

Jan 10 7-8pm

Marlborough Elementary School Library

**Minutes**

Hearing convened at 7pm by Marge Shepardson, Chair, Marlborough Community Power Committee. Also present: Committee members Jerry Burns, Ted Mead, and Chana Robbins. A quorum of the Committee was present.

Chair Shepardson turned the meeting over to Ms. Emily Manns of Standard Power, for a presentation on the fundamentals of Community Power. Presentation, occasionally paused for questions, concluded at approximately 7:30 pm.

Questions or comments, and responses by Ms. Manns or Committee members, included the following:

Question: If Community Power is approved by the Select Board and Town Meeting, will residents have a choice whether to enroll in the Program, or not?

Response: Yes. Residents can choose to “opt-out” of the program and stay in their current service agreement with Eversource, or choose another commercial utility. A postcard will be provided for those who wish to opt-out to register their intention.

Question: Why does my power company for a residence in another state charge much lower rates than Eversource.

Response: The Committee has no knowledge of electrical rates in other states.

Question: What if the sun goes down, the winds don’t blow? If we’ve chosen renewable energy, will we not have power at those times?

Response: Renewable energy is purchased through Renewable Energy Credits (REC’s), which allow customers to make payment for this type of supply while drawing their electricity, uninterrupted (except by storms, accidents, other outages), from the regional power grid (the New England ISO).

Comment: There is no such thing as “green power.” All electrical energy depends on technologies that pollute the natural environment in some way.

Response: None. The conversation took another turn and this comment was not addressed.

Question: Will there be a continuing flow of information re power rates, ways to check on comparisons with the default service provided by Eversource and/or other utilities?

Response: Yes. The Community Power page on the Town website will contain real-time information regarding the rates of the various products included the Program, as well as info on the utility rates. In addition, a detailed annual report, to be included in the Town Annual Report, will summarize all pertinent rate and other information. Based on this info, residents may decide to opt-out, or join, the CP Program at any time.

Comment: This seems like a good program, except for the opt-out provision. Would prefer a program that required residents to opt-in.

Response: The opt-out provision is specified in the New Hampshire law establishing the right of municipalities to adopt Community Power.

Question: Will the Town benefit from conserving electricity use?

Response: Yes. Conservation benefits individual customers and can help to lower rates for larger groups of users, especially at “peak” times in winter and summer.

Comment: The school is wasting electricity. It is nighttime and every light in the building is on.

Response: The Committee volunteered to check with the custodian on duty. This was later done. The custodian explained that the lights are on in the parts of the building being actively cleaned. Automatic shutoffs operate as he moves to different locations. However, some lighting is maintained through the evening hours for security purposes.

The hearing came to an end at approximately 8:10 pm.