

Atkinson Electric Aggregation Committee (EAC)

Notes from Atkinson Community Power Public Hearing #1

December 2, 2023

10:00am – 12:00pm

Kimball Public Library

EAC Members attending: Marie Torris, Mark Ellison, Fred Doherty, Doug Early, Stan Graziano, Jim Garrity

Guest attendee: Andrew Hatch (Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire)

Roughly 30 residents attended.

- 1) Presentation by Jim Garrity detailing:
 - a. How Community Power Works
 - b. Electric Aggregation Plans
 - c. Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire
 - d. Implementation Process & Timeline
 - e. **Questions & Discussion** (see below):

Q: How does Coalition (CPCNH) get paid?

A: CPCNH is a non-profit, procurement operation. Overhead costs for running the Coalition are equivalent to 3% of the per kilowatt price. These costs are expected to diminish over time as the number of participating towns and electricity customers increases. Another 11% of the per kilowatt price is set aside as a community reserve which may be used for price smoothing and other benefits for the town. There is a specific community reserve fund assigned to each CPCNH member community. Atkinson accrues community reserve funds for use by Atkinson Community Power customers.

Q: Can Atkinson, as a town, opt out after joining the Coalition?

A: Residents can opt-out on an individual basis, or Atkinson Community Power (ACP) can opt-out as a community. If APC at any point decides to opt-out of the Coalition, then the balance within the community reserve fund would be refunded to residents.

Q: Will the CPCNH salaries, budget and community reserve balances be published?

A: Yes. Salaries are included in the current working budget, available [here](#). Additional information is available at: <https://www.cpcnh.org/about>

Q: Can the wording of the warrant article be changed during our deliberative session?

A: Yes- Other than the first sentence the wording of the warrant article can be changed.
Here is the warrant article as submitted by the Energy Commission:

Atkinson Community Power

To see if the Town will vote to adopt the Atkinson Community Power plan, to authorize the Select Board to implement the plan, and to take all action in furtherance thereof, pursuant to RSA 53-E. The Atkinson Community Power plan is an initiative to offer lower electricity rates to residents. The plan will launch only if it can offer lower rates. Initial participation can be declined and residents can opt out at any time in the future.

Tax Impact: None

Select Board Vote: [INSERT]

Q: How does joining the Coalition affect renewable producers with net-metering?

A: This is a difficult question to answer. During the initial formation period of the Coalition plan, there was quite a bit of disruption to the structure of the Public Utilities Commission and Department of Energy. This undermined the Coalition's ability to establish proper policy relative to net-metering. The utilities need to share relevant data enabling the Coalition to support net-metering. This data sharing issue is presently being working out by the utilities, the PUC and the Coalition, but this is a slow-moving legislative issue. Net-metering needs to be accommodated and net-metering credits need to accrue to renewable producers. This is a work in progress. As a result, current renewable producers on a net metering plan will not be automatically enrolled into Atkinson Community Power. (Although regulatory issues could possibly be worked out by next summer).

Q: What other benefits might the Coalition provide in the future?

A: The Coalition seeks additional value for residents over time. Some possibilities include:

- Time of Use rates (TOU) . TOU will enable additional savings for electricity consumers who shift electricity use to off peak times.
- Outreach programs to identify and facilitate improvements in energy efficiency
- Interest free loans for consumers seeking to improve energy efficiency in their home or business.
- Additional options for electric rate periods lasting longer/shorter than six months
- Other interests as may arise over time from Coalition towns
- "MORE TO COME"

Q: What happens during power outages?

A: No change. The utility (Unitil or Eversource) restores power after an outage.

Q: After an outage, why wouldn't the utility prioritize restoration to their default electric customers first?

A: The electric utilities are regulated. They make no profit from being an electricity supplier and there is no incentive to prioritize on such basis. Besides, it's against the law!

Q: Is CPCNH essentially a third-party electric supplier?

A: Third-party suppliers prefer to work with larger purchasers, such as CPCNH. The formation of CPCNH should encourage additional third-party suppliers to participate in the aggregate purchasing process and result in more competitive bids and better electricity supply rates for Coalition customers.

Q: Well into the future, what happens to CPCNH customers should a majority of residents opt-out?

A: While the CPCNH reserves are designed to stay the course over the long term, there is an orderly exit strategy already in place. In the unlikely event a Coalition shutdown occurs, then the balance of the Atkinson Community Power reserve fund would be returned and the default electric supplier fall back to the utility.

Q: How many customers have opted-out out of the initial change over to the Coalition?

A: For the NH towns currently using electricity purchased by the Coalition, just under one-half of one percent (0.005) opted-out during initial change over.

Q: Have there been any towns that voted down their warrant article to join the Coalition?

A: Thus far, no town has voted down their warrant article as it saves money for everyone. It's really a win-win proposal and participation is optional. Customers can choose to opt-in by doing nothing, opt-out and stay with their utility as electricity supplier, or sign up with a third-party electricity supplier.

Q: Will the warrant article appear on the ballot with the recommendation of the Atkinson Board of Selectman and the Budget Committee?

A: The recommendation of the Board of Selectmen will appear on the ballot alongside the warrant article. Since there is no expense to Atkinson taxpayers, the Budget Committee does not weigh in.

Atkinson Electric Aggregation Committee (EAC)

Notes from Atkinson Community Power Public Hearing #2

December 14, 2023

7:00pm – 9:00pm

Atkinson Community Center

EAC Members attending: Michelle Veasey, Mark Ellison, Doug Early, Stan Graziano, Jim Garrity

- 1) Presentation by Jim Garrity detailing:
 - a. How Community Power Works
 - b. Electric Aggregation Plans
 - c. Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire
 - d. Implementation Process & Timeline
 - e. **Questions & Discussion** (see below):

Handouts were provided to residents leaving their condo association meeting around 7pm.

Q: It's a no-brainer! Anything that could be problematic?

A: Electricity supply rates must be lower than the Utility rate for Atkinson to join the CPC, but, in the future rates may not always be lower. If CPC rates become higher at some point, residents are free to switch without penalty.

Q: Thus far, has any town voted No?

A: No

Q: How is CPC financed?

A: 3% of per kWh price is for CPCNH overhead,
11% of per kWh price is deposited into ACP reserve fund.
(Discussion continued with respect to purpose of the reserve fund)

Q: How do CPC aggregate energy purchase differ from Unitil sourcing?

A: CPCNH shops for power every week. Unitil shops for power two times a year. Additionally, CPCNH is a non-profit and does not pay shareholder dividends.

Q: What about net-metering?

A: Net-metering cannot be achieved until Unitil and Eversource share the credit data necessary to support current net-metering customers.

Q: Is it a fair estimate that the average ATK household would save \$60-70/month?

A: No- average use is 652 kWh/month, more like \$18-20/month, but that all depends what the rates are vs Unitil default rates.

Q: Could CPCNH membership include entities other than towns?

A: Yes- Cheshire county is currently a member and Rockingham county is in current discussions.

Q: Are other communities in our area considering CPCNH membership?

A: Rye, North Hampton, Statham, Exeter already are members. Plaistow is in process of wanting to adopt community power, but not as a member of the CPCNH.

Suggestion from audience: Selectmen should allow Energy Commission to pilot the ACP process to fruition.

Q: Can the warrant article wording be amended?

A: Yes, portions of the warrant article can be amended.

Q: Is there an executive summary of the ACP Electric Aggregation Plan?

A: Yes- the first five pages of the ACP Electric Aggregation Plan provides an overview. The half sheet handouts provide a short introduction.

ACTION ITEM: Write up a short, concise executive summary. Maybe something that can be sent as a mailer?

Q: What is required of voters to pass this warrant article?

A: A simple majority of votes will pass the warrant article.