

**February 28, 2024 6:30 P.M.**  
**Meeting Minutes - Remote Participation**

**Board Members Present**

John Hayes, Chair

Will Winn

Rick Nye

Erin Bonney Casey

Chris Cantone, Vice Chair

**City Staff Present:**

Stacy Kilb, Sustainability Engagement Coordinator (recorder)

**Absent**

Elvis Alvarez

**Public:**

SATV (recording)

Steven Andrada

Betsy Frederick (SERC applicant awaiting confirmation)

**Introductions**

- Kyle Davis, City Council liaison to SERC

**City Council Liaison Update (Kyle Davis)**

- Specialized Opt-In code passed
  - Draft was presented to SERC by Neal Duffy; discussed by Committee and a letter of support was provided by SERC to City Council
- Chris Cantone asks how he came to be liaison to SERC and his thoughts on how the Committee's work can be brought to the Council
  - Environmentalist, interested in this work, signs up for environmental, housing, and social justice work.
  - Notes the learning curve; had a conversation with Jeff Cohen
  - Councilor Alice Merkl and he have had discussions on transitioning to electric leaf blowers. Is SERC interested in discussing this?

- Will Winn asks if Councilor Davis has reviewed the Resilient Together plan? Will focuses on housing decarbonization, and the document shows that light transit and housing are two big sources of carbon emissions in Salem. The state of MA is trying to decarbonize in next 6 years. How can we move forward with this?
  - Specialized code is a good step. Housing conversations intersect with carbon emissions. Discussions include allowing multifamily housing in areas where it is not currently allowed. There are racial and economic justice components, but zoning also has a huge environmental impact.
- John Hayes: SERC's website has presentations of past speakers, including John Dalzell from the City of Boston speaking about building decarbonization; Kyle Davis may want to review.
- Betsy Frederick asks about CZM/Healey administration re coastal resiliency planning. Does the City/City Council/Planning Dept. Engage with them on any regional planning effort?
  - Kyle has not been part of these conversations yet but will look into it. Erin Casey notes that SSCW has been involved in CZM discussions re Resilient Mass Plan, grant funding, and outreach. City should be involved too as this is a strong funding mechanism

## City Updates

- Specialized Opt-In Code
- Past & Upcoming Events, Volunteer Opportunities
  - Energy Coach Office Hours (see flyers, available for 1:1 appointments)
  - National Grid Energy Fair, Mon. 3/11, 2 PM – 6 PM, El Espacio, 105 Congress St.
  - Zero Waste Weekend
    - Downtown Drawdown commercial waste audits 3/20 & by appt.
    - Fri. 3/22 SSU Events & SPS
    - Sat. 3/23 book swap, e-waste, free document shredding
  - Presentations to SSU classes (April)
  - Salem Kicks Gas: A North Shore Electric Vehicle Expo, Sun. 4/28, 1 PM- 4PM, Salem High School

- Living Green Expo, Sat. 5/11, 10 AM – 1 PM, Old Town Hall & Derby Square
- Haunted Happenings Parade, Thurs. 10/3, 5:30 PM – 8:30 PM
- Earth Week Salem State April 8-12: Speakers, panels, movie Fri. April 12<sup>th</sup> 12:15PM Inundation District, coastal flooding in Boston, director will be present.
- Will met w/CLEAResult Mass Save staff, NGrid and Mass Save are pushing enhanced incentives. Normally 75% off insulation, now it is 100% off insulation for income eligible. Insulation and air sealing are key to heat pumps being effective. Multifamily or landlord owned single family homes are 100% incentivized.
- If your gas usage is 200 therms or above at peak in winter, there is an opportunity to insulate (if house is below 2500 sf).
- PUBLICIZE THIS – Mayor's blast

**Guest Speaker:** n/a

### **Old/New Business**

- Chris Cantone discusses stepping down as Vice Chair, recommends Erin Casey in his stead
- Discussion of SERC subcommittees/liasons
  - Events Coordination Subcommittee
  - Resiliency planning at SESD, the Salem-Beverly Water Supply Board, and the city's stormwater management. (Erin Casey)
  - Follow offshore wind project/port development
    - Scope? Permitting, development – CBA is out of SERC's scope. Attend planning Board meetings when this is on the Agenda.
  - Neal and Jenna Ide are both on the High School development Committee, and Neal can update as needed.
  - Liaison to HEET <https://heet.org/> (report to SERC 2-3x/year)
  - Liaisons to: Conservation Commission, Tree Committee, Planning Board, Recycling Committee
- Discussion of SERC changing SERC's role to more than just an advisory committee

- RETF formed under MassCEC, its mission statement followed theirs, membership capped at 7. SERC has been as such for 7 years, with a broader focus and mission
  - We should form a subcommittee to examine guiding bylaws/rules for other Sustainability committees separate from CEC. Ex. Under the current mandate, SERC is not allowed alternates who could vote in case of a lack of quorum. What do other cities/towns' guidelines say? Attendance should be required for membership.
  - Betsy Frederick: Does SERC have regulatory function? No, it is advisory only to Mayor and City Council, but the City Green Building Ordinance requires that SERC provide input on City buildings. This has not been triggered yet.
  - Wetlands Ordinance amendment, as well as Flood Hazard Overlay District updates and C-ROD, did appear before SERC. Rick Nye: hitting our stride, meeting attendance, not having alternates has been an issue. Good opportunity to change committee for the better. Rick, Stacy, and John to collaborate. Alternate would be allowed to vote in the event that a regular member was unable to attend
- Review of Mass. State government actions re sustainability and climate change (John Hayes)
    - Mass CEC focus
      - Greenhouse emissions reduction
      - New CEO
    - Vineyard offshore wind project
      - Salem Offshore Wind Terminal transfer of ownership to CEC (42 acres w/5 acres owned by Salem)
    - CBA w/ Crowley (SOWA) Salem Offshore Wind
    - 2023: Gov Healey creates first ever Climate Chief position and climate science advisory panel
    - Clean Energy projects in MA
    - Mass Save info/Heat Pumps
      - No more fossil fuel rebates being given out after August, no more financing w/HEAT loan (presumably) after September
      - HP water heaters are huge

- Must disconnect gas system or thermostats if doing whole home conversion to Heat Pumps. Exception if boiler also runs hot water but must disconnect from heating thermostat.
- Partial home rebates are per ton. Integrated controls for HPs above a certain temp and gas system below that temp. “Home like a hybrid car.” HPs are not as efficient at very low temps.
- If a resident has electric baseboard heat, they should go whole home, no reason to do partial.
- Can get smart thermostats directly from the website Mass Save
- CEC Cadmus group study on cold climate ASHP effectiveness “Residential Heating Electrification In the Northeast” <https://cadmusgroup.com/articles/residential-heating-electrification-in-the-northeast/>
- Community Climate Bank/affordable Housing

**Public Comment**

- None

**Approve Meeting Minutes – December 6, 2023**

- *A motion to approve the above minutes is made by Will Winn, seconded by John Hayes, and passes 5-0.*

John Hayes	Yes
Erin Casey	Yes
William Winn	Yes
Rick Nye	Yes
Chris Cantone	Yes
Elvis Alvarez	Absent

**Upcoming City Committee Meetings**

- **Upcoming City Committee Meetings**
  - **Agendas can be found at:** <https://www.salemma.gov/minutes-and-agendas>
  - **Salem Food Policy Council:** First Monday of the month, 3/4/24, 6:00PM
  - **Recycling Committee:** First Tuesday of the month, 3/5/24, 6:30PM
  - **Tree Commission:** Third Monday of the month, 3/18/24, 6:00 PM

- **Conservation Commission:** Third Tuesday of the month, 3/19/24, 6:30PM

**Next SERC Meetings – Wednesday, March 27, 2024, 6:30PM (virtual)**

**Adjournment**

- *A motion to adjourn is made by Rick Nye, seconded by Chris Cantone, and passes 5-0.*

John Hayes	Yes
Erin Casey	Yes
William Winn	Yes
Rick Nye	Yes
Chris Cantone	Yes
Elvis Alvarez	Absent