**CITY OF CONCORD**

*New Hampshire's Main Street™*

*41 Green Street, Concord NH 03301*

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**CONCORD ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CEEAC)**

**DRAFT MEETING MINUTES**

**February 25, 2026 @ 6:00PM**

**CITY HALL 2ND FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM**

**41 Green Street - Concord, NH 03301**

**Attendees:**

**Committee Members:** Chair Rob Werner, Councilor Michele Horne, Councilor Mark Davie, Chuck Willing, Miriah King, Gerald Eaton, Allen Desbiens, Mark Fagan

Student Representative Elliot Clendenning

**Absent Members:** Nick Babladelis, Jeffrey Evans, Elise Foerster, Thomas Kolling

**Staff Present:** Beth Fenstermacher, PLA, LEED AP, Director of Special Projects & Strategic Initiatives

**Public:** Perry Jones

The meeting was called to order by Chair Werner at 6:00 pm. The committee members made introductions, and Ms. Jones introduced herself as a new resident of Concord, she works for the Renewable Thermal Collaborative and was invited by Member Babladelis.

1. **Adoption of Minutes**
   A motion was made by Mr. Fagan and duly seconded by Ms. King to adopt the minutes of January 28, 2026. Mr. Willing suggested edits to clarify some of the CPCNH discussion. The motion to adopt subject to those edits passed unanimously by voice vote.

2. **Municipal Project Updates**
   **West Portsmouth Street Solar Project (Lodestar)**
   Nothing new to report.

   **Solar Project at Landfill (Kearsarge Solar)**
   Ms. Fenstermacher reported that she was able to visit the construction site to check progress. The snow has slowed progress, however, it still moving along towards June or July completion.

3. **C-PACER Update**
   Chair Werner reported the Commercial Project Assigned Clean Energy and Resiliency (CPACER) program was before the Fiscal Policy Advisory Committee (FPAC) for review at their February 17 meeting. Ms. Fenstermacher provided a summary of the discussion, and reported that City staff will be working together to provide answers that were raised regarding risk, staffing requirements, and success stories or lessons learned from other states that have used this program. Ms. Fenstermacher reported that they hope to report back to FPAC at a meeting in March or April, and it will go back to the full City Council from there.

4. **COMMUNITY POWER**
   Mr. Willing distributed and reviewed a Community Power report to the CEEAC dated February 25, 2026. This report is attached. He highlighted that wholesale power prices have spiked due to very high levels during the cold months of January and February. This will affect CPCNH's cost of service, which will impact how much can go into replenishing

the reserves. The utilities' cost of service will also be affected, perhaps more so since they are more exposed to the spot market for power.

There was discussion about the recent article about the Town of Bow Board of Selectmen voting to leave the Merrimack County Community Power Program. There was discussion about whether other communities are considering leaving the program, and how there may be more discussion around this at upcoming Town Meetings. Councilor Horne reported that she has heard from constituents about how the City should terminate the program.

Mr. Willing discussed current legislation that CPCNH is tracking.

**5. RESILIENT BUILDINGS GROUP ENERGY EFFICIENCY COLLABORATION**

Chair Werner reported that a meeting has been scheduled with Resilient Buildings Group (RBG) and representatives from Unitil and Liberty Utilities for March 10th at 2:30 pm. The meeting will be in person at the RBG office, but there will be a virtual meeting option. The meeting will focus on the getting a plan in place for marketing the NH Saves program and outreach to the Concord Community.

**6. POLICY AND PROJECT UPDATES**

*a) ICLEI-USA Update*

Chair Werner reported that the City has been invited by ICLEI to apply to be part of the Race to Resilience Culture (RTRC) Academy, which is a program that runs from April through October 2026 providing a learning opportunity for communities interested in strengthening climate resilience by centering culture, heritage, and local knowledge. He will attend an information session on February 26th to learn more. The application is due March 13th.

*b) UNH Sustainability Fellow Institute Update*

Chair Werner reported that interviews were held earlier in the week, and there are 2 strong candidates. UNH will follow up with references and presenting an offer. The fellow will start in late May.

**7. New Business/Announcements**

Ms. King asked about a plan for Earth Day, and if the Committee is planning a similar event to last year. She heard from Councilor Brown who suggested a collaboration with the Conservation Commission Tree Subcommittee to host a tree tour. Chair Werner reported that he will be unavailable for the majority of April and was not planning on planning an event this year. Ms. Fenstermacher stated that the Tree Subcommittee does not meet until March 27th, and would like to get buy in from that committee before committing to a collaboration. Members of CEEAC did not express interest in planning an event for Earth Day this year.

**8. Other Business**

None.

**9. Next meeting:**

March 25, 2026 at 6:00 PM.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Eaton and duly seconded by Councilor Horne. The motion passed by unanimously voice vote.

**10. Adjourn:** Meeting adjourned at 6:47 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Beth Fenstermacher, Director of Special Projects & Strategic Initiatives

**Community Power Report to CEEAC (February 26, 2026)**

Again, here are the utility and CPCNH electricity supply rates for the Spring 2026 (2/1/26-7/31/26) rate period:

| | Utility Rates (cents/kwh) | CPCNH Rates (cents/kwh) |
|---|---|---|
| Eversource territory | 11.303 | 14.663 |
| Unitil territory | 12.060 | 14.942 |
| Liberty territory | 13.735 | 14.637 |
| NHEC territory | - | 14.504 |

In general, the utility supply rates will be higher in the Spring 2026 rate period than in the Fall 2025 rate period. CPCNH's rates remain higher than the utility rates.

The following factors (among others) affected CPCNH's rates. Wholesale power costs are higher. Retail electric providers (including both CPCNH and the utilities) have incurred higher than expected DASI (day ahead ancillary services) charges. CPCNH was not able to close its hoped-for revolving line of credit (RLOC) in December, so its borrowing costs remain high. Related to that factor, CPCNH faces cash flow challenges this winter (procuring wholesale power is most expensive during the cold winter months). But the rates approved by the Board will improve CPCNH's cash position by the spring and are expected to substantially add to joint reserves, putting CPCNH in a position to be more competitive with the utilities in the next rate period. Continuing to rebuild joint reserves will be a priority for CPCNH in 2026.

Of note, wholesale power prices have spiked to very high levels during cold weather periods in January and February. That will affect CPCNH's cost of service (and the amount that it can put toward joint reserves) but might affect the utilities' cost of service even more since they are more exposed than CPCNH to the spot market for power.

CPCNH is proceeding with customer refreshes in March, which will help rebuild CPCNH's customer base, which will further improve finances.

CPCNH has been actively tracking bills that affect community power or electricity supply generally at the legislature and the PUC. There are some positive developments, but we are still far away from having final outcomes.