

## **Renewable Energy Committee**

February 25, 2008 - 12 p.m. Paradise Lodge  
3 p.m. Board Room  
Polk County Government Center  
100 Polk County Plaza, Balsam Lake, WI 54810

- Minutes -

Attendance: Marlin Baillargeon, Thomas Engel, Art Gamache, Jeff Peterson, Mike Voltz, Mike Welch, Gregg Westigard

Others present: Rod Nilsestuen, Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection  
David Jenkins, Director of Commercialization and Market Development, Wisconsin Office of Energy Independence  
Brian Driscoll, Policy Advisor, Governor's Office, State of Wisconsin  
Various County and Local Administrators, Local Mayors, County Staff

Meeting called to order by Jeff Peterson, Chairman @ 12:05 pm. Visiting dignitaries introduced.

Meeting recessed until 3 pm at County Board Room.

Meeting reconvened by Jeff Peterson, Chairman @ 3:05 pm.

Motion: (Engel/Baillargeon) to approve agenda. Carried

Previous Minutes: Motion (Baillargeon/Gamache) to approve 2/5/08 Minutes. Carried

Public Comments: Daryl Kittelson urged more publicity on the Committee.  
Chairman Jeff Peterson briefly explained the committee's history, purpose and energy investigations completed so far.

Status Reports: Biomass Inventory Grant work is underway in the county planner's office. Work to be completed by March 31, 2008 deadline.  
Recycling Center Solar Collectors have been approved and Mike Voltz expects to have them completed and installed before Earth Day, April 18<sup>th</sup>. Mike may request volunteer labor to help building the panels.

Guest Presentation: David Jenkins - Reported that it costs every Wisconsin citizen \$200 per year for energy purchases. Almost all of the money is sent out of the state since for 1985 to 2008 only 5% of our energy is produced from renewable sources. The state has goal of more than 400 E85 fueling stations.

Guest Presentation: Rod Nilsestuen - Talked about the establishment of an Energy Consortium of science, industry, agriculture and community leaders. Pointed out Wisconsin's excellent climate for both agriculture and forestry, as well as its diverse natural resources. 2/3 of the state is ag or forest acres.

Questions and Answers: Comments about the paper industry is largely now owned internationally, versus local ownership which means different economics and priorities. Goals and time lines for the \$125 million grant - program has just barely started. Discussion of Focus On Energy and private capital investments Requested better tax incentives for homeowners. Question about reactivating the Balsam Lake hydro plant - possible federal regulations.

Committee Member's Comments:

Greg Westigard commented on the success of today's program was just the results networking.

Tom Engel commented on the small wind generator article from Duluth that had circulated among the committee members. In regards to a wind assesment, he volunteered to try to obtain information from the Wisconsin DOT weather station on Highway 8.

Marlin Baillargeon commented on the local purchasing program at a hospital in Eau Claire.

Jeff Peterson spoke about some negatives that he read about on the internet.

Mike Welch reported that the planned visit to Xcel Energy in LaCrosse is still developing.

Consensus: To set next meeting date March 25, 2008 at 3 p.m

Motion: (Baillargeon/Welch) To adjourn. Carried.

Meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Prepared by: *Thomas G. Engel*