

Energy and Climate Action Committee Meeting
Minutes – 6/16/2026
[Approved 7/28/2026]
Virtual Meeting

Meeting Start: 7:04PM

Committee Members Present: Michael DeChiara, Greg Day, Gail Fleischaker, Nate Heard

Committee Members Absent: None

Public: Dean Gendron

The introduction of Dean Gendron, prospective ECAC member

Dean introduced himself, expressing his interest in joining the committee and suggesting ways that his academic and professional background would help him contribute to the committee's work and the community as a whole. Committee members introduced themselves.

CCA for Eversource customers

Nate summarized Colonial's onboarding communications to the 40 Eversource households not yet in the aggregation. Nate and Gail composed a Town Announce alerting households that they should read the mailing that would soon arrive from Colonial. Greg, a member of one of the 40 households, confirmed that he had received a mailing.

Stormwater Committee

Greg provided an update on the new Stormwater Committee, which will meet on June 26th with GZA engineers. The engineers will present on the town as a whole but the priority focus is on the Lake Wyola area. The committee will likely meet during first week of July. There are three other committee members, James Moore, Robert Douglas, and Jennifer Wallace. Michael mentioned that ECAC had looked at storm water through a municipal vulnerability (MVP) lens. Michael and Gail both suggested keeping an eye out for the whole town, not just the Lake Wyola area. Another topic of discussion was culvert mapping database construction.

School lighting

Presumably the pins necessary to fix the parking lot light timing mechanism are in hand but we're not sure whether they're installed or there is a plan for installation.

Solar project with Colonial

Michael recapped the idea to attract a solar developer that could install panels on DOT-owned land. Michael and Mark Cappadona continue to engage DOT, DOER, and other state offices with this concept.

Microgrids

Elaine Puleo of the Library Building Committee helped organize a visit with representatives of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs at the library. Visitors included the undersecretary for the newly created Office of Environmental Justice & Equity (OEJE) and others. There might have been confusion about there being no microgrid at the library (no large battery, etc.). Greg remarked that it was encouraging to see state representatives there.

Meeting attendees discussed uses of municipally-owned electric companies, also known as municipal light plants (MLPs). An MLP would replace the town's current CCA but the committee discussed learning more about the process of setting up an MLP (distinct from our broadband MLP). Greg offered to read up on the process.

Technical Assistance grant, procurement & related building decarbonization efforts

We submitted the Climate Leaders technical assistance grant and hope to hear back from the state this summer or early fall. Michael recounted a meeting that took place a couple of weeks ago on procurement strategy under different possible grant award timelines. Michael, Frank, Haley and Nate attended.

Nate described an upcoming meeting with himself, Michael and Ben Weil, Director of Climate Action for Northampton and point person for their high school's ground source heat pump project. Ben will provide advice on how we might replace the elementary school's fossil fuel heating with air or ground source heat pumps

Alison Gage at FRCOG reached out to Michael to learn more about how Shutesbury developed its decarbonization roadmap.

Minutes

Nate moved to approve the minutes from 2026-05-14. Gail seconded. Vote to approve minutes: Michael DeChiara, Aye; Gail Fleischaker, Aye; Greg Day, Aye; Nate Heard, Aye

ECAC Appointment

Nate moved to recommend to the Select Board that Dean be appointed to ECAC. Greg seconded. Vote to recommend: Michael DeChiara, Aye; Greg Day, Aye; Gail Fleischaker, Aye; Nate Heard, Aye

Next date

The next ECAC meeting will be on July 28 at 7PM.

Close

Gail moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:07. Greg seconded. Vote to adjourn: Michael DeChiara, Aye; Greg Day, Aye; Gail Fleischaker, Aye; Nate Heard, Aye

Respectfully submitted, Nate Heard.