**Woonsocket City Council Renewable Energy Sub-Committee**

**Meeting Minutes of 30 July 2019**

The Woonsocket City Council Renewable Energy Sub-Committee convened a meeting in Harris Hall (at City Hall) at 5:31 pm on Tuesday, July 30, 2019.

Sub-Committee members Jon Brien, John Ward and James Cournoyer were present. Chairman Brien presided over the meeting.

Also in attendance were the following:

* Solicitor John DeSimone

**Approval of minutes from the meeting held June 10, 2019.**

A motion was made by Member Ward to approve the June 10, 2019 meeting minutes, seconded by Member Cournoyer. The motion passed on a 3-0 vote.

**Vote on whether or not to recommend to the City Council that the City issue an RFP for the development of a solar energy project at the site known as “River’s Edge”.**

A brief discussion ensued wherein Chairman Brien explained that the City previously issued an RFP (#5849 in April 2018) seeking renewable energy projects to provide the City with, on an annual basis, approximately 8.5 megawatts of energy. He further explained that the City purposely did not identify specific sites as part of that RFP and that, pursuant to that RFP, the City ultimately selected Green Development, LLC, which identified several sites throughout the city for solar projects. However, the total amount of power that Green Development, LLC’s proposed locations would provide was less than the 8.5 megawatts the City was seeking, thus it made sense for the City to issue a second RFP in an effort to fill the remaining capacity. Chairman Brien recommended that the second RFP identify the specific site(s) that the City wanted respondents to bid on. To that end, he recommended that an RFP be issued for the “Rivers Edge” site, which is a former landfill that has been capped and is currently used as a recreation / soccer field. Member Ward noted that capped landfills have frequently been repurposed for either recreational facilities or solar fields and that the existing soccer fields are currently utilized, however, the amount of activity has been greatly diminished over the years and, based on his communications with the City’s Parks & Recreation Supervisor, the soccer fields are not favored by a number of leagues due to balls being kicked over the fence into the river. Further, he noted that the Parks and Recreation Supervisor indicated that there appears to simply be declining interest in soccer within the City and therefore less use of the facility. It was agreed that recreational use of the facility and reassignment of such activity to one or more of the of the several other parks & fields in the City (e.g. Barry Field) would need to be a considered and factored into any final decisions, however, at this point it was prudent to move forward to at least find out what potential the site has for solar / renewable energy. Chairman Brien concurred and noted that he sent a formal letter to the Mayor on June 24, 2019 requesting her to provide the Committee any additional sites that she may have in mind, as she previously stated on several occasions that she had been “working on this issue” and that she “had several sites” she wanted considered. Chairman Brien stated that despite the Mayor indicating numerous times, going back to last year, that she had sites she wanted considered, she still had not produced a list, despite numerous requests to do so, and that it was time to move forward. Chairman Brien then passed out a draft RFP that he recommended the City issue pursuant to approval from the full Council. Chairman Brien said he’d like to be in a position to submit a formal Resolution to the City Council at their August 5, 2019 regularly scheduled meeting wherein the Sub Committee would recommend that the Council instruct the Administration to review and edit the draft RFP, return it to the full Council for final review and approval, after which the Administration would then issue the RFP. Chairman Brien then asked for a motion to that effect.

A motion was made by Member Cournoyer that a Resolution be put before the full Council instructing the Administration to review and edit the draft RFP, return it to the full Council for final review, amendments and approval, after which the Administration would then issue the final, amended RFP. Member Ward seconded the motion. The motion passed on a 3-0 vote.

**Update on discussions with Green Development, LLC pursuant to Resolution 19 R 71**

Solicitor DeSimone advised the Committee that, as of this date, July 30, 2019, the Administration had not yet had any discussions with Green Energy, LLC in connection with *Resolution 19 R 71* that was passed by the City Council on June 17, 2019 wherein the Council instructed the Administration to *“immediately begin contract negotiations with Green Development, LLC in connection with RFP #5849”*. Solicitor DeSimone did note, however, that on Friday, July 26, 2019 the City engaged Attorney Christian Capizzo from Partridge, Snow & Hahn LLP to represent the City in the subject negotiations. Both Member Cournoyer and Chairman Brien noted that the hiring of outside legal counsel requires City Council approval. They both also noted that time was of the essence and the Administration needed to move forward quickly and begin discussions and negotiations with Green Development, LLC. Solicitor DeSimone agreed on all counts and said he would advise the Administration as such.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:14 pm.