

1 DRAFT_MINUTES CCPC MEETING of 2025-07-09

2

3 **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER** 7:15pm

4 Present: Edgar Rivera, Fred Portnoy, Beth McGuinn, Beth Blair (BOS Rep / acting as secretary)

5 Absent: Tim Meeh

6

7 **APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETING** 2025-06-11

8 This discussion was postponed until the next meeting on 2025-08-13 as members had not fully
9 read the minutes.

10 Minutes of the June 11 meeting will be recirculated.

11

12 **NEW RATES** FROM Community Power Coalition of NH (CPCNH)

13 Beth McGuinn reported on the results of the rate setting meeting held by CPCNH on 2025-06-26.

14 Reference file attached which is a summary of Beth's report, as well as the Notice of Rate
15 Adjustment from CPCNH, dated June 27, 2025

16 Of Note: Starting with the upcoming Community Power pay period which begins August 1, CPCNH
17 will charge different rates to the Canterbury customers of different utilities. This means that
18 Canterbury Unitil customers will get one rate, and Canterbury Eversource customers will get a
19 slightly different rate. This was a NHCPD decision.

20 Also of note: at this time, the Unitil and Eversource rates are lower than the rates offered by
21 CPCNH. This is due to the utilities using their funds to artificially lower their rates. There is no
22 opinion at this time how long this action can be sustained. See chart in the attached document for
23 the actual differences in rates.

24 It is a complicated process to calculate the different rates per utility and per town. The burden of
25 this calculation is taken on by CPCNH.

26 All Canterbury residents still have the option to OPT OUT of Community Power and pay the slightly
27 lower base rate offered by Unitil/Eversource. They also have the the option to OPT UP to a higher
28 rate that includes a 2mil "adder" that will accrue in an account to eventually be transferred to a
29 specific Canterbury cap reserve fund set up for this purpose. When sufficient funds are collected
30 in the account they are to be used for renewable energy projects to benefit the Town of
31 Canterbury. Projects to be determined in future.

32

33 **MESSAGING**

34 Much discussion followed about how to best get the message about new rates, and Community
35 Power in general, to the residents of Canterbury.

36 Beth McGuinn has forwarded an explanation of the new rates to send out via Town website, town
37 Email, social media, etc. Members of this committee will read and comment to Beth McGuinn by
38 this Friday evening, Beth will prepare a second draft of the explanation, and it will be sent out prior
39 to the new rates coming into effect on Aug. 1.

40 The committee agrees that this type of explanation should happen at least every 6 months when
41 the new rates are decided by CPCNH and is an important part of the committee's goal to keep
42 residents informed and educate them about their electricity rate choices.

43 Edgar suggests that we have several "yard signs" printed up with short messages encouraging
44 residents to learn more about their Community Power options and to actively consider opting UP
45 or DOWN so as to get the rate that best suits their needs. Signs would be deployed around
46 Canterbury at well-trafficked intersections and in private yards (with permission) at intermittent
47 intervals so that the message catches attention by not being in the same place all the time. Edgar
48 will get pricing and design the signs, and Beth Blair will check how much is in the CCPC budget to
49 pay for this project.

50 Edgar stresses that he believes we need to encourage participation in Community Power so that
51 residents don't go back to Unitil just because their rates are lower. Discussion followed about
52 messaging the importance of staying with Community Power, not only to take advantage of the
53 adder when possible, but also to support CPCNH purchases of energy from renewable resources,
54 and to support CPCNH's programs. The committee believes there is a substantial number of
55 residents who would be willing to pay a little more to support these ideas.

56 Edgar also stressed his belief that it is important to let new residents to town know about
57 Community Power and how it relates to their electricity bill. One idea is to make sure that either an
58 explanation, or a link to the Community Power page could be included on the Town website on the
59 "New to Town" or "How to..." page.

60

61 **EDUCATION**

62 Discussion continued about CPCNH rates in general, especially the rate that would include the
63 "adder". Since the lowest rate that CPCNH will be paying is already higher than the lowest utility
64 rate, it does not seem like many people would OPT UP to an even higher rate that includes the

65 adder. The committee feels that it is another important part of our mission to educate residents
66 about the importance, if possible and affordable, of choosing a rate that includes the adder so
67 that the Town will be able to add to the fund created for special energy projects. Beth McGuinn is
68 of the strong opinion that now is not the time to focus on this facet because of the current high
69 rates. There is general agreement on this point.

70 The committee reiterated the importance of messaging a clear explanation of what the “adder” is
71 and what kind of projects it can be used for.

72

73 **ADDER FUNDS**

74 Note: Beth McGuinn asked CPCNH about the amount that is earmarked for Canterbury because
75 of the adder that was available to us during the first rate period the Town was on Community
76 Power. There was more in the account than previously thought – approximately \$5,000. The
77 amount has not been precisely calculated for several reasons, one of which is when NHCP
78 transfers the money to Canterbury, they will not cash out those accounts that haven’t paid their
79 bills.

80

81 **CPCNH PROGRAMS**

82 Beth McGuinn has been sitting in on CPCNH meeting of their (Beth, which committee was this?
83 Didn’t get the name...) and suggested that there might be a project the Canterbury could
84 participate in where Residents might fill in a survey or participate in discussions about the benefits
85 of Community Power, especially from the perspective of a rural community. (BETH please define
86 the scope of this program better? Thanks!)

87 Note: CPCNH offers a wide variety of programs, and having Beth and Edgar advise on which
88 programs would be useful to participate in and is an additional reason for the Canterbury
89 Community Power Committee to continue.

90

91 **MEMBERSHIP**

92 It is critical for Canterbury Community Power Committee (CCPC) to attract additional members
93 so that in future we can have a Chairman and a Secretary to reliably take care of committee
94 functions.

95 Current members have been charged with thinking of prospective members, talking with past
96 members to see if they would like to rejoin the committee, and continuing to get our message out
97 via Email, newsletter, and word of mouth.

98 We briefly discussed holding a future CCPC info event and might be able to recruit at that time as
99 well.

100

101 **CELL PHONE USAGE AND COVERAGE**

102 At one point CCPC had discussed working on a plan to help improve Canterbury's cell phone
103 coverage. Fred got an app on his phone that allowed him to document Verizon coverage at
104 different points around town. He did not gather information about other cell service providers.

105 The committee decided that at this time, with our limited membership, that this project was
106 beyond our scope and ability. However, cell phone coverage in Canterbury is an important
107 concern!

108 While the committee in its current form can't take on this task, both Edgar and Fred are willing to
109 help do the legwork to gather information to help the Town pursue tackling this issue. Beth Blair
110 will investigate appropriate ways to connect with either carriers (such as Verizon) or companies
111 such as Vertex that build cell towers. Those present were clear that the discussion should not be
112 lead by assuming that building more cell phone towers is the only way to solve the problem. We
113 floated the idea of approaching the budget committee and of framing a Warrant Article to fund a
114 professional study of usage/possible fixes. Who will take on this project, appointed committee or
115 municipal officers or others, is to be determined.

116

117 **MEETING ADJOURNED** at 8:45pm

118 **NEXT MEETING** set for August 13, 7pm, Meeting House