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Minutes of the Peacham Energy Committee – August 6, 2026

Zoom Meeting hosted in Peacham, VT

Time	August 6, 2026, 7:05 PM - 8:30 PM (EST)
Committee Members	Charlie Byron (chair), Tom Bryer, Bevin Barber-Campbell, Dick Browne,
Public	Laura Cavin Bailey, (Vermont Council on Rural Development), Dave Edwards, Dart Thalman

Summary

The committee aligned on a tabling-at-transfer-station strategy as the primary outreach method to reach residents needing winter heating assistance, replacing (or preceding) a town-wide meeting. Key insight driving this shift: people who most need help are unlikely to attend a formal meeting. 1 The group also agreed to explore presenting at an AWIP (Aging Well in Peacham) meeting on September 1st and coordinating with the Peacham Emergency Relief Fund (PERF) for joint outreach and a potential fuel-assistance sub-fund.

Decisions

1. Tabling first, town meeting later: Run several Saturday sessions at the transfer station, then reassess whether a formal meeting is needed. 4
2. Target date: August 15th as a soft start (Tom tabling for Window Dressers anyway); August 22nd as the more realistic full committee debut. 5
3. AWIP September 1st session: Dart to confirm with Dina Danielson if the slot is available for an energy/heating topic. 26
4. Messaging approach: Find an engaging slogan for a sign.
5. Free lemonade / light refreshments to attract visitors to the table; VCRD has slush funds available if MERP grant restrictions are an issue.
6. Next committee meeting: August 17th at the library to debrief from the 15th and finalize materials.

Key Resources Identified

- PERF Emergency Fund: \$17,000 remaining; reimburses vendors directly (fuel bills, utilities); anonymous one-page application.
- Free firewood woodshed at the transfer station, maintained by Dave Stauffer; also delivers wood to elderly residents.
- Green Mountain Power energy assistance: 25% discount for households at/below 185% federal poverty level; apply through VT Dept. of Children & Families. Similar program at Washington Electric Coop.

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- NECA (Northeast Community Action Agency): Key navigator for fuel assistance programs in the Northeast Kingdom.
- WARMTH program / LIHEAP: Distributed through NECA (community action agency for the Northeast Kingdom). (May be WEC analog to GMP program.)
- Efficiency Vermont: \$100 rebate for DIY home improvements (e.g., window inserts); potential source of tabling giveaways.
- Wood for Good: Free firewood program aspiring to serve Caledonia County.

Followups

Bevin

- Draft short talking-points/script document and a simple survey (e.g., "Do you have only one heat source? What's your plan for a 5-day outage?").

Tom

- Table at transfer station August 15 with window dresser displays; contact Efficiency Vermont for giveaways and ask about group presentations; reach out to Bruce Croteau.

Charlie

- Coordinate with Bevan on information repository; create sign-up sheet for tabling coverage; draft Energy Committee mission statement for table context; call Bruce (Efficiency Vermont).

Dick

- Ask transfer station worker Amber about busiest hours (this Saturday); reach out to NECA about available support and materials

Dave Edwards

- Produce a 5-bullet one-pager explaining the fund; contact Jeff & Joanna to redesign application; explore sub-fund designated for fuel assistance; attend August 17 meeting.

Dart Thalman

- Confirm with Dina Danielson whether September 1st AWIP meeting can be dedicated to heating/energy topic; coordinate planning with 1–2 committee members.

Laura Cavin Bailey

- Add vetted resources to shared document; BCRD can provide funding support for table supplies (lemonade, etc.) if MERP grant restrictions are an issue.

Pending Confirmation

- Whether MERP grant funds can cover food/refreshments at the table.
- Jeff & Joanna availability to redesign the Emergency Fund one-pager before August 22.
- AWIP September 1st program slot availability (Dart to confirm with Dina).
- NECA availability to present at AWIP September 1st event.

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Open Questions

- Best slogan/signage wording to draw people in without signaling "poverty assistance."
- How to handle confidential referrals gathered during tabling (need a follow-up protocol).
- Whether to solicit donations at the table (checks payable to Emergency Fund).