



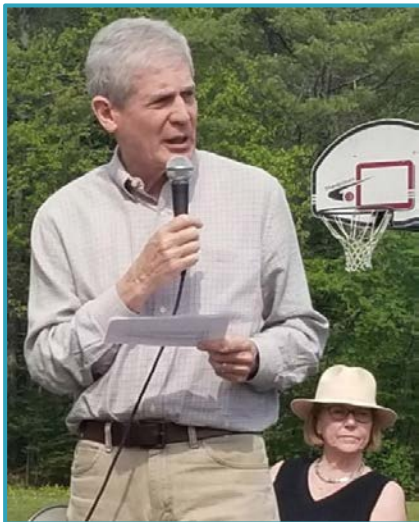
Coalition Membership Expands!

In the second quarter of 2021, the Nashua Board of Aldermen and the Select Boards of Exeter, Harrisville, and Rye¹ each voted unanimously to join Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire as founding members, by authorizing adoption of the Joint Powers Agreement.

Alongside the City of Lebanon and the Town of Hanover, these communities bring the Coalition's membership to six communities — with an approximate annual electricity load of 500,000 megawatt-hours — actively working together to launch Community Power programs.

Coalition members now range in population from ~1,000 in Harrisville to ~88,815 in Nashua. "*Harrisville represents one of the first New Hampshire 'micro-towns' to join the Coalition as a founding member,*" says Selectwoman Andrea Hodson.

Through the participation of volunteers like Harrisville's Ned Hulbert and Mary-Day Mordecai (pictured below), the Coalition has been designed to serve the interests of all New Hampshire communities regardless of size, geography or local program goals.



Ned Hulbert, Co-Chair of Harrisville's Electric Aggregation Committee and member of the Coalition's Organizing Group, speaks at town meeting. Photo Credit: Jack Rooney, Sentinel Source.

Membership in the Coalition is open to all New Hampshire towns, cities and counties.

The Coalition's Organizing Group has been actively working with several communities that anticipate joining as founding members during the coming quarter — in advance of the Coalition's formal incorporation as a non-profit Joint Powers Agency and the subsequent competitive solicitations issued for professional services and power supplies.

Listen to [NHPR's interview with Lebanon Assistant Mayor Clifton Below](#).

¹ Rye's membership is subject to town attorney review of the Joint Powers Agreement.



Community Power Plan Approvals Underway

[RSA 53-E](#) (“Aggregation of Electric Customers by Municipalities and Counties”) requires that local governments appoint a committee to draft a Community Power Plan and stipulates that the committee shall (1) hold public hearings to solicit public input in the planning process, and (2) vote on whether their plan “*is in the best, long-term interest of the municipality or county and the ratepayers.*”

To ensure that the local approval process meets statutory requirements, the Coalition provides members with templates for Community Power Plans along with educational materials for public outreach, and actively supports local volunteer committees throughout the drafting, public comment and local approval process.

On May 22, the Town of Harrisville became the first New Hampshire town to approve a Community Power plan at its annual town meeting. Listen to [coverage by NHPR](#) and read [more from Sentinel Source](#).

The Town of Hanover will hold its town meeting on July 13 where voters will consider a Community Power plan. Read the [full article by Valley News here](#).



The City of Lebanon will hold its first [public hearing on its Community Plan](#) on July 15 (download [Lebanon’s Community Power Plan](#) and [FAQs here](#)). A column by LEAC member Jonathan Chaffee is also featured in the Valley News under the title “[Community power promises lower rates, greener electricity.](#)”

For updates regarding the status of all other Coalition members’ plan approval process, please click on the local committee pages listed on [our website under “Members”](#).

Legislative Victories

The Coalition thanks all the (hundreds!) of citizen volunteers, local elected officials and staff, and other civic and business organizations that responded to our “*Legislative Action Alerts*” on House Bill 315 and Senate Bill 91 to participate in key legislative hearings:

- [Coalition Campaign Summary: House Bill 315](#)
- [Action Alert: Senate Bill 91](#)

Your informed support for these critical bills allowed Coalition leaders to negotiate the compromises needed to shepherd each one through the legislative process!

The bills wound up becoming linked together, which required Coalition leaders to negotiate a compromise between the House and Senate to advance both bills to the Governor.

[Coalition member Clifton Below](#) (Lebanon’s Assistant Mayor) warrants particular recognition for his critical role in drafting much of





legislative language and successfully building bipartisan consensus across both chambers of the New Hampshire State House.

House Bill 315: Expanding Community Power & Net Metering

As summarized on the [“Public Advocacy” of our website](#), earlier compromise language negotiated by the Coalition (1) preserved Community Power authorities, (2) clarified utility data sharing requirements, and (3) provided a significant credit enhancement: a “Purchase of Receivables” program that ensures comparable financial protections for Community Power programs and utilities when customers do not pay their bills on-time.

Subsequently, House Bill 315 was amended to significantly expand Net Metering for public entities of various kinds. Under the new policy, a group of customers that are all “political subdivisions”² will be able to receive net metering credits generated by local “behind the meter” energy systems up to 5 megawatts in capacity — which may be owned by public or private entities — provided that all accounts in the group take service from the same electric distribution utility.

Note that the expansion of Net Metering is not dependent upon adoption of a Community Power program; these are separate policies that increase local control authorities, enabled under a single bill.

Senate Bill 91: Opening New Markets for Distributed Generation

Senate Bill 91 is linked to House Bill 315 in regard to Net Metering in that it requires the Public Utilities Commission to balance *“the interests of customer-generators with those of electric utility ratepayers by maximizing any net benefits while minimizing any negative cost shifts from customer-generators to other customers and from other customers to customer-generators”*.

Coalition leaders played a key role in crafting this compromise language and will continue to engage at the Public Utilities Commission to ensure that Net Metering cost allocations are fairly constructed.

Other aspects of Senate Bill 91 promise to unlock even greater benefits across the state:

- Part I authorizes *“bring your own device”* programs for customer battery storage systems and updates the requirement that the Public Utilities Commission *“investigate ways to enable energy storage projects to receive compensation for avoided transmission and distribution costs . . . while also participating in wholesale energy markets”* — this is a seminal, market-enabling bill considering that there is currently no mechanism in New Hampshire law that generally allows customers to benefit from energy storage systems!
- Part III ensures that current benefits for low-moderate income customers receiving bill credits from Group Net Metering programs are maintained.

² A “political subdivision” means any city, town, county, school district, chartered public school, village district, school administrative unit, or any district or entity created for a special purpose administered or funded by any of the above-named governmental units.



- Part IV establishes a commission to study the creation of an entirely new market structure to benefit distributed energy generation and battery storage facilities built in New Hampshire.

The new market envisioned under Senate Bill 91, Part IV has the potential to modernize the state’s energy market by accelerating the construction of new, cost-effective clean energy resources located within New Hampshire:

- Under current market rules, power bought from in-state resources incurs the same transmission cost charges as generation outside New Hampshire does — even though power bought in-state decreases the power we have to buy and import from outside the state via the regional transmission grid.
- Transmission charges are significant (~20% of customer bills, on average) and levying the expense on in-state generators represents an unfair tax that makes power bought from NH-based distributed generators and battery storage facilities more expensive than it should be.
- Removing the transmission charges would immediately make power generated in New Hampshire less expensive in competition with power imported from out-of-state — and allow Community Power programs to buy more power from local clean resources for resale to their residents and businesses via ‘Community Solar’ and ‘Community Storage’ programs.

The Coalition will engage throughout the legislative committee study process and intends to support legislation next session to provide fair compensation to clean energy and battery storage resources located within New Hampshire.³

Regulatory Updates

Coalition leaders have been actively engaged on multiple fronts at the Public Utilities Commission over the course of the last three months:

Drafting Administrative Rules for Community Power

At the request of Public Utilities Commission staff, Coalition leaders have drafted and submitted revised administrative rules for the Community Power market, taking into account the new clarifications and authorities provided for under House Bill 315.

Establishment of a Statewide Energy Data Platform

Coalition members helped finalize a [Settlement Agreement](#) in PUC proceeding [DE-19-197](#) with Eversource, Unitil, and Liberty Utilities to create a “*Statewide Data Platform*” to liberalize access to energy data needed to animate competitive markets and decarbonize our energy sector.

Under the terms of the Settlement Agreement, the evolution of the data platform would be overseen by representatives of different market participants and consumer groups.

³ This will require updating the “*Limited Electrical Energy Producers Act*” (LEEPA).



Community Power municipalities would be represented by Coalition member Clifton Below (Assistant Mayor of the City of Lebanon).

Creation of the Department of Energy

Effective July 1st, the Public Utilities Commission is being reorganized as a subsidiary agency under the newly created Department of Energy.

The reorganization is expected to have wide-ranging impacts, given that the Public Utilities Commission — in addition to its role as the government regulator that oversees New Hampshire’s investor-owned monopoly utilities — has exercised authority over numerous energy policy areas including: energy efficiency funding; development of alternative net metering tariffs; execution of a Value of Distributed Energy Resources study; development of the Statewide Data Platform; and promulgation of regulatory rules to enable Community Power. Some of these authorities have been transferred to the new Department of Energy.

Governor Sununu has appointed Jared Chicoine, Director of the Office of Strategic Initiatives, as interim Commissioner of the new Department of Energy.

Going forward, the Coalition will continue to actively support the development of the Statewide Data Platform and Community Power rules required to ‘open the market’ — and keep members apprised of any procedural impacts caused by the creation of the Department of Energy.

The Coalition looks forward to working closely with the new Department of Energy to minimize the regulatory burden imposed on the Community Power market.

Community Outreach & Education Updates

In May, the Coalition collaborated with Clean Energy New Hampshire to conduct an educational presentation and discussion series for community leaders to learn about the process required to (1) join the Coalition and (2) launch a Community Power program at no upfront cost.

Recordings of the two presentations are available on the Coalition’s website (scroll to the bottom of [our “Members” page](#)) and covered the following topics:

1. *“How to Join the Coalition and Approve a Community Power Plan”*; and
2. *“An Overview of the Coalition’s Governance and Business Model”*

This summer, the Coalition has partnered with the [University of New Hampshire’s Sustainability Fellows program](#) to develop an educational film series addressing the “*who, what, why and how*” of Community Power and the Coalition. [Cassandra Bull](#) (a graduate student at Tufts University) is shooting and producing the films, which will feature interviews of community leaders.

Stay tuned for film screenings in September!





Priorities for Q3 2021

Over the next three months, the Coalition will prioritize:

- Supporting Governor Sununu in signing House Bill 315 and Senate Bill 91 into law.
- Educating the public regarding the benefits of enabling Senate Bill, Part IV — to create a market for NH-based clean energy and battery storage resources — and how to voice support throughout the Legislative study committee process.
- Supporting municipalities in joining the Coalition as founding members (by authorizing the adoption of the Coalition Joint Powers Agreement).
- Supporting our members' local committees in drafting Community Power Plans, educating the public and approving their plans in compliance with RSA 53-E.
- Incorporating the Coalition as a nonprofit Joint Powers Agency, authorized to provide services to our members' Community Power programs on a statewide basis.
- Continuing to work with regulators to finalize administrative rules, so that municipalities are allowed to launch Community Power programs beginning in 2022.
- Finalizing the Coalition's financial projections and business plan, and then competitively soliciting the services required to operate the power enterprise — which will allow the Coalition to launch Community Power programs across New Hampshire at no upfront cost for our member communities.



**COMMUNITY
POWER COALITION
OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**
FOR COMMUNITIES, BY COMMUNITIES

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