



**TOWN OF HOLLISTON
SELECT BOARD**

**703 Washington Street
Holliston, MA 01746**

508-429-0608

**SELECT BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
HOLLISTON TOWN HALL
SEPTEMBER 12, 2019**

Present: Mark Ahronian, Chairman; John Cronin, Vice Chairman; Tina Hein, Clerk

Also Present: Jeff Ritter, Town Administrator and Beth Greenblatt, Beacon Integrated Solutions

At 6:01p.m. M. Ahronian called the special meeting to order for the purposes of interviewing solar developers for the reuse of the former landfill off Marshall Street.

1.) Advanced Solar Products (ASP), Inc.: Peter Sudano, Vice President and his development team from ASP were present and provided an overview of their development proposal.

ASP established a partnership with IGS a company from Dublin, Ohio in 1989 which allows for ASP to make an optimized proposal. The partnership has resulted in ASP being one of the largest solar developers in the northeast.

T. Hein asked about their experience in the redevelopment of former landfills in Massachusetts.

P. Sudano said they did the former landfill in Kingston, and Needham, MA. They propose to use a racking system which is a ground mounted system. It is easy to move and maintain. Also, it is low to the ground. The entire site would be fenced and it would be a low profile project.

T. Hein asked about the site and the decommissioning plan. P. Sudano said options for the site could include a stone base or grass. Solstice is the mounting system not the actual array.

We would need to maintain the site and control the weeds. B. Greenblatt noted the operational and maintenance plan is included in their proposal and there would be no cost to the Town.

Page Two

Meeting Minutes, 9-12-19

T. Hein asked what makes their proposal unique. P. Sudano said that would be their special engineering approach to the project.

B. Greenblatt said this is one of the Town's most valued asset. Please talk about your operations and maintenance (O&M) plan. P. Sudano said if at some point in the future IGS were to sell their assets the O&M would be transferred. That would be baked into the Contract.

T. Hein asked about the challenges to the Holliston location. P. Sudano said connecting to the grid.

T. Hein asked about traffic. P. Sudano said there should be very little impact but they were planning to work with the Police Department and there would be little impact on the transfer station.

P. Sudano said truck traffic would be like three (3) days per week until completed. Normal hours are like from ten a.m. until four p.m. but these hours could be adjusted. The build out would take about five (5) months to complete.

T. Hein asked when they could get started. P. Sudano said the interconnection application could take six (6) to twelve (12) months to file and get approval. The reuse permit with DEP could take two (2) to three (3) months.

B. Greenblatt said the DPU is reviewing the permitting process and are seeking improvements.

T. Hein asked about other projects in they are working on. P. Sudano said they are a mid-size company they have people here in the area and they would do the design work in house.

T. Hein asked about local contacts. B. Greenblatt said an award would happen in the very near future.

P. Sudano said they are looking at a tax credit from 30% to 28% over four (4) years.

B. Greenblatt asked about the soft costs. P. Sudano said they are developing the program. B. Greenblatt said DOER are developing good policy but there are good policy implications that might benefit the Town. This is a Town financial issue and question about the straw proposal and asked how this would help the Town financially.

M. Ahronian said it is import to link the project to the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) grant recently received.

Page Three

Meeting Minutes, 9-12-19

The Select Board thank ASP for making their proposal.

2.) Citizens Energy Corporation: Peter Smith, CEO since 1979 was present and explained his nine (9) to ten (10) years of experience with the development of solar projects. They offer low income solar projects and discount electric rates. They offer site control and owner operators and negotiate start to finish projects. They are the most experienced in Massachusetts with fifteen (15) landfill sites.

They construct and operate solar landfill site as an asset. Introduced a team approach in Dennis where there were environmental challenges. That was a 2.3 megawatt installation there was nothing below grade and is in compliance with getting DEP permitting including gas vents. There is a buffer including fencing and a good O&M plan in place.

T. Hein asked about the staging area in Dennis and how that worked. What about the transfer station. P. Smith said the footprint could be expanded.

T. Hein asked about the start date and hours of operations. P. Smith said they would start at 7a.m. and check with the construction team every two (2) hours.

T. Hein asked about the height of the proposed solar panels. P. Smith said they are proposing approximately 36 inches off the ground.

M. Ahronian asked about how heavy the based is. P. Smith said they are pre-fabricated ballast blocks that are made off-site and that is what has been used in their fifteen (15) landfill sites in Massachusetts. Each slab is about 2,000 pounds.

M. Ahronian asked about wind. P. Smith said in Dennis they took wind calculations. Their engineers worked on developing the best systems.

T. Hein asked about the steep slope in some areas and it appears the array will be seven (7) to nine (9) feet off the ground. They will keep the array as far away from the slope as possible. The MVP process is important and she is concerned about high wind events.

P. Smith said they have project on the Cape only in Westfield was there an issue. It is really important that the panels are installed properly.

T. Hein asked about the problem in Dennis and if additional gravel would have helped around the base of each panel.

Page Four
Meeting Minutes, 9-12-19

M. Ahronian asked if the installation was larger than what was proposed. B. Greenblatt said it is important to stay off the slopes. They need to address the inverts like string inverters instead of central inverters.

M. Ahronian said there appear to be two (2) different signs. P. Smith said they have to look at the assets over the next thirty (30) years. The access road will have to be reviewed as well as shading.

B. Greenblatt asked about the vegetation plan and their approach to that. P. Smith said he anticipates the field would be mowed four (4) or five (5) times per year. Which would be included in the Contract.

T. Hein asked who the contact person would be for the project. P. Smith said Emily Byrne would be the project manager. T. Hein said this would fall in line with the internal development and timing pulling the financing together.

B. Greenblatt said the financing can be short term or long term and it would most likely take a couple of months to get it together.

T. Hein asked if there were unique challenges to the project. P. Smith said not really the quicker we move the more money can be earned. Financing never really holds up a project once awarded we will proceed to the construction schedule.

B. Greenblatt asked about the straw proposal going forward DEOR has a positive impact on this project there will be other questions about the coming impact design and the financial proposal to be considered.

P. Smith said that are working to maximize the financial impact to the Town but would also consider shifting some of that benefit to low income individuals.

M. Ahronian asked about the specific possible financial benefit to low income residents. P. Smith said it could be in the range of \$300 to \$600 bill credits per household

3.) Solsystems: Representatives from Solsystems and their agents were present and reviewed their proposed solar field at the former landfill off Marshall Street. They have ten (10) to twelve (12) years of experience with project management in the redevelopment of former landfills into solar fields.

Page Five
Meeting Minutes, 9-12-19

T. Hein asked how make Massachusetts landfill projects they have experience with. The response was none at the moment but they have experience with many communities in the Northeast.

T. Hein asked who would design the system. The response was Solsystems want to maximize the benefits to the Town and to work in partnership to manage this asset. They would use a ballasted system that would be six (6) o eight (8) feet off the ground. They understand and know about the existing gas vents. The interconnection application is important.

T. Hein asked if they walked the site and they might want to consider a more detailed topo survey be completed the slopes and their protection are important to the DEP and the Town.

Anna Nocas, Senior Manager, Business Development said there could be other problems as well. There are unknowns that could come up.

M. Ahronian asked about power generation. A. Nocas said that centers around the design they might be able to get more generation per s/f but again that depends on design.

M. Ahronian asked about the pre-cast ballast blocks that are to be made off-site and about their size. A. Nocas said approximately 18' – 24' inches and the array would be six (6) to eight (8) feet off the ground and weigh about 2,000 pounds each.

T. Hein asked about the stakeholders and public outreach to the abutters. A. Nocas said they have already developed a public outreach plan that includes the School Department.

T. Hein asked further about the community outreach and how those interconnections would work. A. Nocas said there are central intervals that would be established.

T. Hein asked about the placement of the panels as they relate to the slopes and maximum slope analysis would be needed. B. Greenblatt said DEP would weigh in on any plan and asked if string or central inverters by used. A. Nocas said the string option provides more flexibility.

They might not use the entire footprint the Dover project is a good example and the string inverter on that project worked well it was a space saver.

M. Ahronian said he understands the central invertor is also louder.

T. Hein asked about the O&M plan. A. Nocas said they might consider using sheep to control the grass and weeds which would drive the O&M pricing down. They are trying to implement a similar project in New Jersey. It is worth exploring.

Page Six
Meeting Minutes, 9-12-19

T. Hein asked about timeframe for getting started. A. Noucas said the interconnection application and approval is a long process. But within 1.5 months the application can be submitted. They would need to develop a site lease document. The initial site study would take a couple of months. There is also the environmental assessment with DEP. Engage the community discussion. The buildout would take four (4) to five (5) months.

T. Hein asked about their ability to complete the project and other projects ahead of Holliston. A. Noucas said their projects do not compete against each other. But they have about five (5) project in the works. It is important to give back to the community.

T. Hein made a motion to issue a notice to proceed to Solsystems. Second, J. Cronin. Voted 3-0

Adjourn

J. Cronin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:49p.m. Second, T. Hein. Voted 3-0

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Jeffrey Ritter".

J. Jeffrey Ritter
Town Administrator