

**VECAN 2022 Workshop Series: The Results are In! A Post-Survey Session for Energy Committees  
to Learn, Connect and Collaborate - March 16, 2022**

**Resources Shared:**

Katie Buckley, Director, ARPA Assistance and Coordination Program at Vermont League of Cities & Towns: [kbuckley@vlct.org](mailto:kbuckley@vlct.org)

Ann Janda, Senior Energy Project Manager at Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission: [ajanda@ccrpcvt.org](mailto:ajanda@ccrpcvt.org)

Efficiency Vermont's new, free municipal energy consultation program:

<https://www.encyvermont.com/towns>

VECAN Municipal Energy Resources:

<https://vecan.net/municipal-energy-resources/>

**Introductions:**

Stephanie Moffett-Hynds: Hi! From Arlington Energy Committee

Jeff Forward: Jeff Forward, Richmond Climate Action Committee and Richmond Town Energy Coordinator

Michael Oman: Michael Oman, Underhill EC

Kurt Haigis: Kurt Haigis from the rekindled Ferrisburgh Climate Action Committee

Lauri Scharf, Middlesex: Lauri Scharf of the Middlesex Energy Committee

Yves Gonnet: Yves Gonnet - Huntington EC

Gwendolyn Nagy-Benson - Weybridge: Gwen Nagy-Benson, Weybridge Energy Committee

Amy Gamble - Montpelier: Amy Gamble, Montpelier Energy Advisory Committee

Daniel Wright: Weybridge Energy Committee

Ed Wendell: Hi Ed Wendell from Bradford Energy Committee

Margo Ghia: Hi All, Margo Ghia from Windham Regional Commission

Reed Parker: Reed Parker from Williston Energy Committee

Alexis Leacock (she/her): Lexi Leacock, Warren Energy Coordinator

Laural Ruggles Danville: Laural from Danville Energy Committee

Bruce Lierman: Bruce Lierman, Bennington Energy Committee

Steven Isham: Steve Isham, St Johnsbury energy committee

Erin Dickinson: Erin Dickinson, Williston Energy Committee Staff Support

Jennifer McDuffie: Jen McDuffie, Guilford Energy Committee

Keith Epstein (South Burlington Energy Committee): Hello from the South Burlington Energy Committee!

Ann Zimmerman: Ann Zimmerman (she/her) Guilford Energy Committee

Rebecca Foster, Charlotte: Nice to see everyone! Rebecca Foster, Charlotte Energy Committee

Jeff Dexter, Sunderland EC: Hi from Sunderland. Nice to see many friends....and all the hard workers.

### **Chat and Q&A:**

**Jeff Forward:** What are reporting requirements for ARPA if a town goes the Revenue Replacement route?

**Katie Buckley:** ARPA Reporting requirements: 1X annually, for period ending March 31st, reporting due by April 30th through an online portal created by Treasury. If towns take the standard allowance, then they will report this under a single "Expenditure Category 6.1 Provision of Gov't Services", check a few boxes and provide a written explanation of how the money will be spent.

**Michael Oman:** If arpa funds must be obligated by 12/24, do they need to be in fy24 budget, ie approved @TM 2024?

**Jeff Dexter, Sunderland EC:** Can ARPA \$\$ be used for muni bldg. ENERGY AUDITS? How about ENERGY EFFICIENCY UPGRADES to those bldgs.?

**Katie Buckley:** Both! But why use ARPA funds for energy audits when there are other funds to do this? Watching how other funds will land (ex. H.518) to see where best to use your town's ARPA funds.

**Michael Oman:** Since transit has been so badly affected by covid, can arpa funds be used to enhance/support local transit services?

**Todd Tyson:** Same query for Tunbridge re: municipal buildings re: this new partnership w/ EFVT and VLCT?

**Lauri Scharf, Middlesex:** Very valuable! When Katie said that there are LOTS of other opportunities for support for energy projects, is there a list somewhere?

**Jeff Forward:** Can ARPA funds be used to set up a reserve fund to pay off a solar project that was installed with a third party power purchase agreement?

**Keith Epstein (South Burlington Energy Committee):** Jeff Forward: If no, maybe you could use ARPA funds to build a new solar system that generates income. And then that income can be put into a reserve fund to pay off the original solar project.

**Bob Atchinson- he, him - unceded Abnaki land:** Any heavy-duty vehicle electric replacement money, such as pickups, plow trucks, etc.?

**Keith Epstein (South Burlington Energy Committee):** The ARPA funds are a fantastic opportunity to set up a revolving loan fund. Invest the funds in efficiency, and create an accounting plan to dump the energy-savings dollars into a reserve fund that can then be used in the future for more efficiency projects. South Burlington did this a few years ago with income from a 2MW solar array, and it has worked well to fund several projects.

**Daniel Wright:** On the revolving loan fund idea: glad it worked in South Burl. Our town energy committee looked at it briefly and stumbled on the question of who would administer the fund and track down repayments. A question of capacity for small town energy committees.

**Keith Epstein (South Burlington Energy Committee):** in SB the city accountant set up a pretty time-efficient system for tracking the energy revolving loan fund. And since it is only for municipal projects, there is no tracking down of payments. It's all internal.

**Brian Sewell:** Have RPCs assisted towns with economies of scale bulk purchases of energy efficiency products such as lighting or insulation in the past? If not is there a reason they cant?

**Keith Epstein (South Burlington Energy Committee):** I'm not sure what the cost was, but South Burlington just built a new city hall and library that is heated and cooled with ground source heat pumps.

**Yves Gonnet:** Can ARPA funds be used for residential assessments?

**Jeff Forward:** School districts also have similar funds called ESSER funds. Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (or ESSER III)

**Bruce Lierman, Bennington EC:** Use ARPA funds to set up revolving low income energy retrofits, to be paid back from energy bill saving? Allows better penetration to low income households for both in-depth weatherization & renewable generation?

**Deirdre Holmes:** How can this group best stay in touch to compare notes on process and proposed projects to motivate, inspire and potentially collaborate on actual ARPA projects?

**Keith Epstein (South Burlington Energy Committee):** I was just thinking about communication of potential energy projects to town leaders. With energy projects, we are "investing" the ARPA money, rather than "spending" it. Just a note about how we can talk about it.

**phillip mulligan:** Waste water plants are a major electricity consumer in pumping. Has anyone done work at making these plants more efficient?

**Keith Epstein (South Burlington Energy Committee):** We have, in partnership with Efficiency Vermont. They can provide excellent resources to help.

**Ethan Goldman:** Efficiency VT has done a lot of work with waste water plants

**Amy Gamble - Montpelier:** Montpelier has done a lot of work on their waste water plant

**Marc Olhoeft:** Consideration for residential energy efficiency should be given more focus here , I have heard that there is funding available but there are challenges to set up local energy guidelines , committees, these should be preformatted on the state level to aid local communities in this process

**Amy Gamble - Montpelier:** I got a note from a member of my committee that I haven't looked at in depth but he mentioned that there is a grant possibility through ACCD Northern Border Regional Commission State Economic and Infrastructure development grant