



Town of Shirley

Response to Request for Proposal Re: RFP ID: Mass CEC 2012-SMP-02

21 March 2012

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Shirley Summary

Shirley is a rural suburban community in Middlesex County with a population of 5,926 and a prison population of 1,285 (at the 2010 census) for a total of 7,211. Shirley was settled in approximately 1720 and became incorporated in 1753. The town has a well preserved historic New England town center. Shirley also houses the States last remaining maximum security facility. Shirley is surrounded by Devens, Ayer, Groton, Townsend, Lancaster and Lunenburg. The first inhabitants were either Nipmuc (or Pennacook) Indians, who called the area Catacunemaug. The town was named in honor of William Shirley, governor of Massachusetts (1741 - 1757). Currently Shirley has an increasing senior population. Residents over age 55 total 995 and residents over age 60 total 1,015. The median Household income is \$52,660 based on current economics. A large percentage of our senior population (over 60 years of age) has an income level of \$20,150. The current property tax rate is \$13.69 making Shirley 177th in tax rate, meaning 174 towns have a LOWER tax rate than does Shirley. The Average Assessed Value of Single Family Homes is \$265,968, which represents a significant decrease in values from FY 2007 where the average value was \$328,228. In Shirley the average single Family Tax bill is \$3,641 making Shirley 130th in property tax billing out of 351 cities and towns. A total of 86.6% of Shirley's taxable income is generated from residential property taxation and 45% of Shirley's property is minimally or non-taxed. A total of 60% of the residents in Shirley have lived here five years or longer, which is reflective of the senior population. The State average of 5 year or longer residency is 40.1%. Based on the economy the foreclosure rate has reached an epidemic proportion. The town has a total area of 15.9 square miles. It is bounded by the Squannacook and Nashua rivers and contains Mulpus Brook and Catecunemaug Brook.

Shirley was designated a Green Community on 21 December 2011 and received a grant of \$152,975. As soon as the spending plan is approved Shirley will have a RFQ initiated to enter into performance contracting concerning for our town owned properties. We are aggressively pursuing the 20% reduction in energy mandate and hope to have same completed within one year.

Additionally Shirley has accepted two responses to RFP'S for the construction of two large scale Solar Arrays on publically owned properties. One array will provide 6 megs of power, the other to provide 3 plus megs of power. Shirley's plan is to provide power (Less than 1 meg) to the town owned properties at a greatly reduced rate and sell surplus to suppliers. We fully expect to be a significant supplier of power by year's end.

Shirley government and its residents are embracing energy alternatives as a road to the future. Shirley's interest in and response to this RFP and our motto for this endeavor is: "To do for our residents, what we are doing for our town, reduce energy costs and protect our environment."

Statement of Commitment

The Shirley Board of Selectman is by virtue of approving this statement of commitment, is committing the municipality's full participation and cooperation with the Massachusetts Clean Energy Commission (CEC) in this program.

It is the opinion of this board that the aggregation of multiple small-scale solar photovoltaic ("PV") installations within our community will realize economies of scale and ultimately cost savings for our interested residents and small businesses. It is therefore the intent of this board to wholeheartedly endorse this program and work with the Shirley Energy Committee, the DOER and the CEC to insure a successful program with a direct benefit to our residents, small business and our environment.

David Swain	Chairman	Shirley Board of Selectman
Armand Deveau	Selectman	Shirley Board of Selectman
Kendra J. Dumont	Selectman	Shirley Board of Selectman

See Attachment C for the signed statement

Identification of Municipal Representative

The Shirley Board of Selectman hereby formally identifies our Chief Administrative Officer, Mr. David Berry to be Shirley's Municipal Representative.

Mr. Berry shall act as the community official, representing the Board of Selectman and in working with the Energy Committee will help to facilitate the program within our community, further to act as official liaison as may be required, between the Town, Energy Committee, DOER, CEC and assist in resolving any potential issues between the aforementioned parties and potential Solar PV installers.

See Attachment A

Identification of Community Solar Coach

The Shirley Board of Selectman, concurring with the recommendation of our Energy Committee, hereby identifies Mr. Bryan Dumont, Chair Shirley Energy Committee to the position of the Shirley Solar Coach.

Mr. Dumont along with the Energy Committee will collaborate with CEC in organizing community meetings and identifying volunteers to support outreach efforts. Further Mr. Dumont will participate in CEC's training program and facilitating events and outreach efforts around the program. Mr. Dumont has provided a signed, personal statement demonstrating interest and commitment to the program.

See attachment A and attachment D

Confirmation of Utility Area Network

The Town of Shirley residents and businesses are entirely supported by National Grid. Communication with our Account Representative

indicates that there are no existing prohibitions on National Grid's part for residential Solar Arrays, nor are there any issues with utility interconnection constraints.

Contract Review

The Shirley Energy Committee has, at the request of the Board of Selectman, read the contract that would be signed should Shirley receive the grant. No issues/concerns exist, and if Shirley is ultimately selected the contract would be signed at the earliest convenience of the CEC.

Community Outreach Plan

The parties involved in the Shirley Community outreach will consist of members of the Shirley Energy Committee. Membership in this committee includes;

Bryan Dumont, Chair.

Mr. Dumont comes with years of volunteer work and activism. In these efforts he has a demonstrated ability to organize events and activities for varied efforts. From fund raising to others areas, he has been a leader in

“Operation Cookie Drop” recently completing the 10th annual event. This effort started with seven volunteers and the most recent had over one hundred. This endeavor involves months of planning, fund raising to support large shipments of personal care, snack and other items essential to the military serving in harm’s way. Each event is larger than the prior event, involves larger and more expensive shipments, and more volunteers and donated goods.

Armand Deveau, Vice Chair and sitting Selectman

Mr. Deveau comes with years of volunteer efforts within the community and currently is serving his second term as a member of the Board of Selectman as well as being on multiple town boards and committees. A contractor by trade Mr. Deveau has given of his time and money to assist in a wide array of community related efforts, too include but not limited to repairs to a community church, replaced due to a fire; the renovation of the communities’ new Senior Center, a first for Shirley, giving our seniors a “new home”. Mr. Deveau is also involved in many organizational efforts involving organizational skills and follow through to insure successful outcomes.

Ms. Ann Towne, Secretary

Ms. Townes efforts in this community are profound, her commitment to any given project she becomes involved in, insures a successful outcome, her efforts include; Elected Member of Board of Water Commissioners for 15 years; member Shirley Seniors Friendship Fund, under Shirley Charitable Foundation -applied for and was granted \$5,000 award to provide food delivery to seniors without transportation to local food -pantry and fuel/utility assistance for seniors; Volunteers at Loaves and Fishes; Member Community Assistance Collaboration, under Shirley Charitable Foundation to provide monetary assistance to non-seniors in need; Project coordinator- work with Manager of Lura White After School Program for Senior Holiday Bag Program; Project

coordinator for craft programs at Senior Center; Former elected member Board of Health for 5-1/2 years; and former Member Council on Aging for 3 years

Mr. Kevin Johnston, Committee Member

Mr. Johnston is a member of Shirley Government serving as the Town Treasurer. His involvement in the town above and beyond his required duties currently include; Treasurer and member of the finance committee for, St. Anthony's Parish Holy Name Society; Volunteer, Massachusetts Special Olympics; Administrator, Shirley Charitable Foundation; Member, International Association of Approved Basketball Officials (IAABO), Board #44; Member, Eastern Conference Athletic Conference (ECAC) Basketball Officiating Staff;. Past Community involvement included; Town of Shirley Cemetery Committee, Shirley Personnel Board, and 250th Anniversary Committee; Executive Committee St. Anthony's Parish Church Building Project and 100th Anniversary Committee; Executive Board Member IAABO Board #44 and past President IAABO Board #44; President, Country Day School of the Holy Union Parent Teacher Guild, Finance Committee, and Building Committee; And President, St. Bernard's Central Catholic High School PTA.

Mr. Frank Esielionis, Committee Member

Mr. Esielionis's contributions to the community are extensive and all involve the ability to effectively communicate with varied groups and organize the work into a singular effort, all of which have been a success and betterment for Shirley, His efforts include; Volunteer for Shirley Public Access, Council on Aging; Board of Directors, Shirley Rod & Gun Club and past member of the Finance Committee, Conservation Commission, and Sewer Commission

In preparation for this submission and to effectively gauge interests, local committees were contacted and the below organizations have either expressed interest or already initiated a commitment to the program;

1. Shirley Board of Selectman (see attachment C)
2. Shirley Public Access Television
3. Shirley American Legion
4. Shirley Recycling Committee
5. Shirley Council on Aging/Senior Center
6. Shirley Hoedown Committee
7. Shirley Farmers Market Committee
8. Shirley Volunteer (Local Newspaper)
9. Shirley Oracle (Local Newspaper)
10. Shirley Economic Development Committee
11. Fidelity Bank
12. North Middlesex Savings Bank

Marketing and Outreach

Shirley's marketing and outreach has already begun, to gauge community interest, and will be fully covered in the "Local Interest" section of this RFP response. Going forward the Energy Committee with the approval of the Board of Selectman intends to use a multi faceted promotional campaign our efforts will include but not be limited to the following;

1. Live Appearances (booth or manned displays) at the following venues
 - a.. Shirley Business Roundtable:, a new event to involve all Shirley businesses at a local restaurant sponsored by Chamber of Commerce and Mass State Agencies (April 2012)

b. Annual Town Meeting, Informational both set up at the entrance to Town Meeting (May 2012)

c.. Shirley Hoedown; annual town fair (June 2, 2012) at Town Commons

d. Shirley Farmers Market; (July/August)

2. Media/Press Releases

a. On a regular basis we will introduce press releases to our two supporting papers, The Shirley Volunteer and the Shirley Oracle, updating the progress of the promotion and a reminder of the promotional period deadline

b. We have a commitment from our Local cable access (Shirley Public Access Television) to run, on a regularly reoccurring bases the promotion on their community bulletin board.

c. Local Program, we have a commitment from a highly watched program on Shirley Public Access Television, “Your Government in Action” to regularly brief on the status of the promotional period and any additional information that may come up.

d. If a recipient of the grant we intend to procure signage and place same in strategic locations, entering the community and other locations of high traffic and visibility

e. If a recipient of the grant we intend to do at least one town wide mailer, focusing on the program, in an effort to recruit other interested residents and business.

f. If a recipient of the Grant we intend to do at least one town wide “Robo” call announcing the opportunity, the enrollment period and methods of contact to express interest.

g. We have established a email address/account, a website/blog and a Facebook account to frequently update interested residents as to the status of the program. Additionally our involvement is being placed on the Town of Shirley Website, on the main page with a link to the Shirley Energy Committee page.

h. We intend to have follow up communications, (email and/or telephonically) of those residents/businesses interested in the program and solar and have them alert and advise friends and associates of the program, its potential and then initiate follow up conversations with those potential interested parties.

i. We will regularly brief the Shirley Board of Selectman on the project status, on live and replayed televised Selectman’s meetings.

j. We will deposit flyers containing educational materials, program information and enrollment periods throughout local businesses and other local high traffic areas. (Library, Town Offices, etc)

k. Our primary objective is to have the fullest extent of community awareness possible and will frame our efforts based on successful political, educational and standardized marketing campaigns to insure the maximum level of participation.

3. Community Meeting Locations

a. For groups of approximately 100 or less we have the ability to use the primary conference room located in the Shirley Town Offices, and/or the conference room located in the Shirley Library.

b. For groups of 100 plus up to 250, the Shirley Legion, one of our interested and supportive groups has volunteered the use of their function room.

All facilities have (or will be supplied with) presentation materials/equipment.

Shirley Public Access Television is additionally committed to run the programs. If in the Town Office, Main Conference Room, programs will be live, and then replayed, if in the other two locations programs will be taped and then replayed.

4. Awareness of Required Materials

The Shirley Energy Committee (4 members) and the Towns Chief Administrative Officer were in attendance in Harvard Mass earlier this year when Harvard presented their overview. Additionally two members of the Energy Committee were in Harvard for the Bidders Conference along with the Chief Administrative Officer and again viewed the presentation. Finally all members of the Committee were provided with the link to the RFP announcement and additionally provided hard copies of the Solarize Massachusetts Pilot overview and related materials.

5. Financial Assistance for the program,

Please see “local Interest” of the proposal response.

Permitting

1. Identification of the Local Permitting Process

The permitting process is standardized throughout the state, Shirley Building and Electrical inspection will;

Building; Submit an application with a set of drawings. The inspectors to insure safety and protect to both parties, will watch additional roof load per square foot and how the panels are affixed to the structure. If array is ground mounted the building inspector will insure a secure mounting. If documents mentioned above are submitted, the permit will be issued within 48 hours.

Electrical; Submit an application with a set of drawings. The inspectors, to insure safety and protect both parties, will watch for adequate electrical service and related load capacity. If documents mentioned above are submitted, the permit will be issued within 48 hours.

Both Inspectional services have reduced the inspectional fees for those that enroll during the promotional period and ultimately contract with Solar, for this specific program. Fees will be as follows;

Building Inspection/permit	\$150.00
Electrical Inspection/permit	\$100.00

Local Interest

In order to gauge sufficient local interest prior to submitting this, response the Shirley Energy Committee initiated the following actions;

1. The Chairman of the Shirley Energy Committee appeared in front of the Shirley Board of Selectman on March 5th 2012, (this was a live broadcast and has been subsequently replayed) and presented a five minute program overview. It was also announced that we had a phone number established (978-425-2726) and a email account available for interested residents, shirleysolar@yahoo.com . As a result of that brief appearance we received 7 phone calls and/or emails expressing interest in the program and asking questions.
2. As a result of the initial inquiry a website/blog was established; to provide additional information; <http://solarizeshirley.blogspot.com> and A facebook account was linked.
3. The following article appeared in our two weekly papers, The Shirley Volunteer on March 7th, 2012 and the Shirley Oracle on March 9th, 2012;

Shirley Energy Committee is going to offer Energy Savings to Shirley Residents,

In the time of ever escalating energy costs to light and heat our homes and small businesses The Shirley Energy Committee is applying for a competitive grant, the project is entitled Solorize Massachusetts-Shirley. We are able to apply for this grant based on our recent designation as a “Green Community” One of the critical requirements is Community Interest!

In a nutshell, If we are awarded 1 of the 10 (out of 86) grants we will be able to obtain ONE vendor, who based on the town being “Closed” to others, discounts the Solar installation costs, add to that the tax rebates (State and Federal) and tiered energy rates, i.e. the more residents or Small local businesses that take advantage of this, the lower the kilowatt hour of energy ALL will pay. There are also potentials to sell power to the “grid” and benefit from the sale of Solar Renewable Energy Credits (S-RECS).. There will be several methods to accomplish this to include;

- 1. Outright purchase,*
- 2. Rent to own*
- 3. Third party ownership.*

There is also a program for solar powered hot water heaters.

As part of our submission we are going to partner with Mass Energy Save (Through National Grid) to have free energy assessments completed for interested residents/local business and they can take advantage of tax saving and/or free materials to reduce the overall costs of energy they are currently paying for.

We are also working with a local bank committed to make affordable “home improvement loans” for residents who are interested in making an outright purchase of the Solar or potentially instituting repairs as a result of a home energy audit. We hope to be able to announce this soon!

We also want interested residents/business to know we want to be able to do for the residents of this community what the two Solar Arrays are going to do for the town, reduce energy costs, generate income and

make Shirley environmentally sustainable, reducing our overall carbon footprint.

As mentioned earlier we have to demonstrate community interest and support. Should any residents or small businesses in Shirley be interested they can Email shirleysolar@yahoo.com or call 978-425-2726 to express an interest, Residents and local business should understand there is NO commitment on their part if they express initial interest. More information is going up on Shirley Solar Face Book, as we progress...

As a result of this article and the two appearances on Selectman's meeting we have received **eighty nine** total expressions of interest in this program, this includes **nine** small businesses in the community..

4. We have commitments from Fidelity Bank and North Middlesex Saving Bank, both local banking institutions to partner with Shirley in a multiple approach. Offering loans, sharing in some advertisement and making use of their email/social media to promote their involvement and the program and potentially loans to upgrade homes as a result of Energy Efficiency Surveys conducted by MassSave.

We believe that there is significant interest in residential and small businesses within Shirley, Our evidence is in part the strong showing of support with the minimal promotional activity completed and conversations within the community residents.

We also believe that with a concerted promotional effort that we plan to initiate in coordination with MASS CEC we could meet or exceed the levels of interest in the four initial Solarize Massachusetts communities.

Shirley Energy Committee