



City of Somersworth – Resolution

Resolution No: **19-22**

CITY COUNCIL VOTE TO OPPOSE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION (PUC) ORDER #20-092

December 13, 2021

WHEREAS, energy efficiency is the most cost-effective way for us to meet our energy needs; saving a kilowatt hour by investing in better lighting, heating, or processes typically costs around half as much as building new power plants to supply rising demand; and investing in efficiency keeps electricity rates low for all Granite Staters, even those that don't take part in the incentive programs; and

WHEREAS, Public Utilities Commission (PUC) Order 20-092 directly contradicts the focus on energy efficiency in Governor Sununu's 2018 update to the 10-year energy strategy; and the order significantly and negatively impacts small businesses that offer energy efficiency services in NH, and municipalities like the City of Somersworth, who just last month saved over \$122,000 through the Energy Efficiency program; and

WHEREAS, this order rolls back years of progress on energy efficiency, ignoring the State of New Hampshire, energy savings goals and capping and reducing budgets; and there is already overwhelming evidence in the record that the settlement agreement in this docket is just and reasonable, serves the public interest, and is cost-effective; and

WHEREAS, the Commission's efforts to ignore the well-established record of cost-effective energy efficiency programs in this docket is blatantly dismissive; and this order strips away opportunities for the Granite State's most vulnerable populations to take advantage of energy efficiency programs at little to no cost, and energy efficiency programs protect lives, keep homes warm, reduce energy bills and saves municipalities like the City of Somersworth thousands of dollars that would otherwise be paid for by Somersworth property taxes.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Somersworth strongly opposes Public Utilities Commission (PUC) Order #20-092 and urges immediate reversal of this order by the PUC, and a return to the settlement agreement agreed upon by industry and statewide stakeholders, which would reinstate public interest and ensure more energy efficient progress and cost savings for Granite Staters and Hilltoppers.

Authorization

Sponsored by Councilor:
Crystal Paradis

Approved:
City Attorney

City of Somersworth – Resolution 19-22

History

First Read Date:	12/13/2021	Tabled:	
Public Hearing:		Removed From Table:	
Second Read:	12/13/2021		

Discussion

12/13/2021

Councilor Paradis made a motion to waive Council Rules to allow for a second reading of Resolution No. 19-22. The motion was seconded by Councilor Austin and passed 9-0. Clerk Slaven performed a second reading of Resolution No. 19-22.

Councilor Paradis made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 19-22 as submitted. The motion was seconded by Councilor Vincent.

Councilor Paradis gave a brief history of the energy incentive program and Order from the PUC while also mentioning the Sustainability Committee unanimously voted to support this Resolution.

Councilor Vincent said this roll back of energy efficiency practices is pathetic. He also mentioned that the State is willing to pay subsidies to oil and questioned why they would not do the same for this.

Councilor Witham said it makes no sense to get rid of this incentive program and added that the NH PUC has their priorities out of order.

Councilor Dumont stated his support for the Resolution, but added that the Resolution is perhaps not worth the ink on the paper since the agency it is directed to does not heed our advice.

Councilor Vincent mentioned how Massachusetts and Maine both have great energy incentive programs while New Hampshire continues to move backward toward oil. He added that it is a complicated issue, but that it is terrible Representatives keep attacking the well-being of the people.

Councilor Gerding said he doesn't see this as a partisan issue, rather the State's choice to downshift costs to local municipalities and their taxpayers. He noted his disappointment while expressing his lack of surprise.

The Vote to Adopt Resolution No. 19-22 passed 9-0 by roll call vote.

Voting Record		YES	NO
Ward 1 Councilor	Pepin	X	
Ward 2 Councilor	Vincent	X	
Ward 3 Councilor	Dumont	X	
Ward 4 Councilor	Austin	X	
Ward 5 Councilor	Michaud	X	
At Large Councilor	Witham	X	
At Large Councilor	Gerding	X	
At Large Councilor	Cameron	X	
At Large Councilor	Paradis	X	
TOTAL VOTES:		9	0
On	12/13/2021	Resolution 19-22	PASSED
			FAILED