

Press Release

**WOODSTOCK'S NEW 1MW SOLAR ARRAY PROJECTED TO SAVE
OVER 2.4 MILLION DOLLARS OVER THE NEXT TWENTY YEARS**

WOODSTOCK, CT, MARCH 21, 2016: First Selectman, Allan D. Walker Jr., recently provided details to the Board of Finance about the construction of a significant solar panel program that will generate enough power to save the taxpayers in Woodstock an estimated 2.4 million dollars over the next 20 years. Work has already begun at the old landfill, where the approximately 4,000 panel, 1MW project will be located.

Walker said, "I am so proud of the work our Board of Selectmen has done to get this project off the ground! These panels will allow all Town electric accounts to purchase electricity at a deep discount over the next many years. The greatest news? This has all been done at zero expense to taxpayers—ZERO!" The Woodstock Elementary and Middle Schools, the Town Hall, the Highway Garage, the Transfer Station, and the WPCA Pump Stations will all benefit from these fixed, discounted rates.

The Board of Selectmen has been working hard on this project since January 2014, when Green Energy Committee Chair, Jim Stratos, presented the proposal to the Board. The Selectmen were excited about the idea from the beginning, since using renewable and sustainable energy sources in Woodstock has always been a priority. Woodstock was the first town in Connecticut to purchase 100% clean, renewable energy and has won awards from the Green Power Partnership, been recognized by the Clean Energy Communities Program, and received a Power of Change award from the State of Connecticut.

During his budget presentation, First Selectman Walker also detailed some of the other programs that have resulted in savings to Woodstock residents. "Installation of wood-burning furnace at the Highway Garage has already saved over \$5K each year in propane costs; crushing our own gravel has saved over \$143K over a two-year span; and our participation in a shared equipment purchase program with Eversource has resulted in Woodstock being the proud owner of a roadside mower valued at \$115K. We are also certain that our ability to wash and shelter our trucks and equipment at the Highway Garage has significantly extended their life."

Other cost-saving measures mentioned at the Board of Finance meeting included ongoing efforts to replace full-time positions with part-time staff, collaborating with the public schools on various insurance programs, and partnering with area towns through NECCOG (Northeast Connecticut Council of Governments) on services such as animal control, regional revaluation, a GIS system, paramedic intercept service, and engineering.

First Selectmen Walker stated, "This is an exciting time for Woodstock! Although saving money has always been a top priority for this administration, it's very satisfying to see so much hard work and planning coming together to benefit our community. The solar program and many other initiatives will help ease some of our budgetary constraints now and for a long time into the future."

A formal ribbon cutting celebration is planned when the 1MW Solar project becomes fully operational, hopefully over this summer.