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**TOWN COUNCIL**

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### **For Immediate Release:**

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#### **Southampton Town Board Awards Contract for the First Municipally Led CCA/CDG Community Solar Project on Long Island**

At the October 12<sup>th</sup> Town Board meeting, the Town Board unanimously awarded a contract to Kearsarge Energy Limited Partnership of Boston, Massachusetts to construct and to operate a community solar installation of approximately 4.5 megawatts at the North Sea Landfill.

The Town issued an RFP for this project with a deadline of July 22 for proposal submissions. Seven firms responded to the RFP. After a series of interviews with a number of the firms, Kearsarge was selected because of their experience with similar projects on capped landfills and the strength of their management experience with community solar projects after the projects were commissioned and operational.

In addition, the Town will enter into a 20 year lease agreement with Kearsarge for the use of the landfill site. As a municipally led community choice aggregation (CCA)/community distributed generation (CDG) community solar project, the Town will receive an annual lease payment of \$60,000 with a 2% annual escalator from the developer, a one-time payment to the Town estimated at \$25,000 from its CCA administrator and the opportunity to provide a 10% monthly energy bill credit to community members who participate in the program. The energy bill credit equates to one free month of electricity annually for participating community members for the life of the lease – 20 years. “Many residents in our community have wanted the benefits of solar energy,” stated Councilman Bouvier, who has led many of the Town energy initiatives, “but were not able to access those benefits for several reasons – shaded roofs, structural issues, etc. This project brings renewable energy resources into the community with direct benefits to our residents and at no cost to the residents.” The Town will also have the opportunity to apply some of the energy credits created by this project to meet its own energy needs. As a result, reducing energy operating cost for the Town with renewable energy.

Eligibility criteria for resident participation in the program will be decided by the Town Board in the months ahead. Board members generally agreed, however, that this initial pilot project will focus on making the energy credits available to community members possibly based on age and/or income requirements, similar to the eligibility criteria for

programs such as STAR, as an example. Once the precise participation criteria for this program are established, the Town will launch an information and enrollment campaign for community members in mid-2022. The Town hopes to launch similar community solar projects in the future, thus making these energy credits available to more and more members of the community.

Kearsarge expects to begin construction of the solar array in November of 2021 with an anticipated completion date in November of 2022. The community will be able to keep track of the project progress on the Town's Community Projects page on the Town website once the construction commences in November.