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Woodstock vehicle charging station used far more electricity than expected last year

By William J. Kemble news@freemanonline.com

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An electric vehicle charging connection

File photo by Tony Adamis

WOODSTOCK, N.Y. — The addition of an electric vehicle charging station at the town's Rock City Road parking lot has proven both popular and costly.

The public restrooms that provide the electricity for the station churned out nearly three times the amount of power that was expected last year. As a result, their service designation was upgraded by Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corp.

Former Woodstock Councilman Ken Panza said at a Town Board meeting this week that the restrooms accounted for 37,450 kilowatt hours of electrical use in 2019, the first full year the charging stations were in use. Contractors previously estimated the charging stations would use

about 13,000 kilowatt hours, Panza wrote in a report about town electricity costs.

"The he restrooms used ... about three times the forecasted amount, at an extra cost of about \$4,000," he wrote.

Panza wondered why the power estimate for the restrooms was so off the mark when another recently added charging station, at the town's Mescal Hornbeck Community Center, did not significantly impact electricity consumption.

"Our calculations [for the restrooms] show a much higher usage, and because of this high usage, Central Hudson reclassified the restrooms as a 'demand' account," he said.

Panza recommended moving the Rock City Road lot's charging station to the town's Comeau Drive property as part of the renovation of the town office building at that site.

Overall in 2019, the town used 907,988 kilowatt hours of electricity, up just 0.09 percent from 2018, Panza said.. The town electricity costs for 2029 totaled \$121,828, up 1.7 percent from the previous year, he said.

Panza said the town saved 10 percent on power costs due to its contract to buy electricity from Natural Power Group.

But the town's reliance on electricity that results from fossil fuel use did not drop as much as expected because Natural Power Group had problems at its Wappingers Falls facility, Panza said.

"For 2020, we're assuming we will receive our full [hydroelectric] allocation," he said. "With these contracts, Woodstock will receive an estimated 90 percent of its electric power from zero-carbon hydroelectric sources."



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