

**TOWN OF BOONE
SUSTAINABILITY, ECONOMICS AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY, MARCH 14, 2019
5:30 P.M.**

Members Present:	Chairperson Quint David, Vice-Chairperson Harvard Ayers, Lee Ball, John Prickett and Nancy LaPlaca
Town Council Liaisons Present:	Sam Furguele
Staff Members Present:	Jane Shook – Director of Planning and Inspections, Marty Little – Planner and Marlene Crosby-Committee Secretary

Call to Order

Vice-Chairperson Ayers called to order the Boone Sustainability, Economics and Environment Committee, held in the Town Council Chambers Room located at 1500 Blowing Rock Road at 5:39 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda

Member Ball made a motion, seconded by Member Prickett to adopt the agenda as written.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Approval of Minutes

Vice-Chairperson Ayers made a motion, seconded by Member Ball to approve the February 18, 2019 meeting minutes as written.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Committee Name

Discussion ensued on the possible changing of the name of the Sustainability, Economics and Environment Committee. Vice-Chairperson Ayers asked why is word “Economics” in the committee name. Chairperson David, who arrived during the approval of minutes, explained that Sustainability is usually described as the three E’s, which are ethics, environment and economics,

and the three P's, which are people, planet and profit. Chairperson David explained that by leaving Economics in the committee name, it lets the public know that the committee is discussing more than just Sustainability topics. Member Ball noted that if there needed to be a longer descriptor for the committee name, he would recommend adding "Equity" to the name. Member Ball explained that the proposed committee names could be "Sustainability, Economics, Environment and Equity Committee" or "Sustainability Committee". Member Ball said he felt in 2019 that everyone has an understanding of what Sustainability means. Member Ball further explained that if the committee had a mission statement on the Town website, a description of Sustainability could be on the website.

Vice-Chairperson Ayers asked if the SEEC had a statement of purpose. Chairperson David explained that when every committee is formed, a statement of purpose is created.

Ms. Jane Shook, Director of Planning and Inspections explained that at the 2019 Annual Planning Retreat, the Council discussed the charge for the SEEC and they may be possibly revising it. Ms. Shook noted that there is the possibility of changing the name to "Sustainability" and then describing the things that the Committee is doing. Ms. Shook let the SEEC know that if they have suggestions regarding the charge of the Committee, they can let her know and she will forward the suggestions to the Council for their review.

Motion and Vote:

Vice-Chairperson Ayers made a motion, seconded by Member LaPlaca to recommend that Town Council change the name of the Committee from "Sustainability, Economics and Environment Committee" to "Sustainability Committee".

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Planning and Inspections Update

Ms. Shook explained that every year the Council meets with the Planning Staff and they review the work of the committees and the workload of the Planning Staff. Ms. Shook said that the Council does recognize that the topics being discussed by the SEEC are broad and complex topics. Ms. Shook said that Council has asked the SEEC to re-focus their energies and to set aside their past topics, with the exception of the 2050 Resolution, which includes moving forward with the budget allocation. Ms. Shook explained that the Council is discussing the new charge for the SEEC, which includes working on the New River Light and Power power purchase agreement with Appalachian State University and working with the Town of Boone Departments.

Ms. Shook explained that the Council has asked the SEEC to begin working with the Town Manager and Town Department Heads to learn about the operations of all of the departments of the Town through individual meetings. Ms. Shook further explained that the Council would

like for the SEEC to create a toolkit of options on how the Town Departments can help meet the Town's proposed sustainability goals.

Ms. Shook asked the SEEC what other types of information could the Planning Staff provide for them to review and discuss.

Discussion ensued on the Boone Clean Energy Project. Vice-Chairperson Ayers began discussion on this topic, talking about the \$100,000.00 that was approved by Council for this project. Ms. Shook noted that there might be some confusion on this topic and other topics, such as 2030 goal for climate neutrality. Council Liaison Furguele explained that he has requested that this topic be placed on the Council's March 2019 meeting agenda for further discussion by the Council. Council Liaison Furguele noted that there needs to be buy-in from the Town of Boone Department Heads.

Discussion ensued on the new charge of the Sustainability, Economics and Environment Committee. Member Ball said he fully supports the change in the charge of the committee to narrow the focus and research of the SEEC on the topics approved by Council. Member Ball said that Appalachian State University is doing the same thing. Council Liaison Furguele further explained that the focus of the SEEC should begin with the Town's operations.

Discussion ensued on greenhouse gas emissions. Chairperson David talked about making larger scale decisions on gas emissions. Chairperson David explained that Appalcart is looking to purchase seven buses, costing around \$20 million with the help of a local 10 percent match to get a grant through the State of North Carolina and the Federal Transit Authority.

Council Liaison Furguele pointed out that after the SEEC makes concrete recommendations for the toolkit for the operations of the Town, then the SEEC may be able to move to other topics. He pointed out that some progress has been made on the Sustainability goals, but more progress needs to be made.

Discussion ensued on the Planning Staff providing information to the SEEC. Chairperson David said he is interested in the Planning Staff providing the SEEC with information on gas usage for the drying of the solids at the Town of Boone Waste Water Treatment Plant. Ms. Shook pointed out that there are recommendations that could be made for each operation in each Town facility. Member Ball said the Town of Boone may find it helpful to bring in a professional consultant to review the Town's energy usage.

Ms. Shook informed the SEEC that Mr. John Ward, the Town Manager, was not able to attend this meeting, but he plans on attending the future meetings with the Town Department Heads. Mr. Ward had asked Ms. Shook to give an update to the SEEC on the New River Light and Power power purchase agreement. Ms. Shook said they are in their final legal review with NTE on the power purchase agreement.

Ms. Shook asked about the status of the bicycle trailer on Howard Street. Chairperson David said that there is an Appalachian State University bicycle group that is using the trailer. Chairperson David also mentioned that another larger bicycle trailer had been purchased because the original one was too small. Member Ball asked if Mr. Ward could talk to SEEC Member Benjamin Scarboro to check the status of the bicycle trailer. Member Ball said he would be glad to work with Mr. Ward on seeing if the University has an interest in utilizing the bicycle trailer.

Ms. Shook talked about some issues that the Planning Staff has been having regarding the posting of the SEEC agenda. Ms. Shook explained that the Planning Staff has been receiving meeting information after the agenda has been published on the Town website. Ms. Shook further explained that most committees set their agenda at the end of each meeting and there are no other agenda items added until the next meeting under the Adoption of Agenda.

Discussion ensued on reducing confusion during SEEC agenda item discussions. Ms. Shook suggested that the SEEC try to be more specific when they are referring to the Town, whether it be the Town operations or the community as a whole, when the SEEC discusses their various topics. Member Ball agreed with the SEEC being more clear in future meetings during their discussions.

Ms. Shook explained that the SEEC is an advisory committee and the recommendations from the Committee need to come through the Committee so an action item can be placed on the Council's meeting agenda.

Planning and Inspections Operations

Ms. Shook handed out information to the SEEC that contained basic information regarding the operations of the Town of Boone Planning and Inspections Department (permanently attached). Ms. Shook stated that this is an introduction to some of the department's usage and it is a starting point for the SEEC to begin reviewing Town operations. Council Liaison Furguele said he thought it would be helpful for the Planning Staff to provide the steps of how they are reducing energy consumption. Ms. Shook outlined some of the things that the Planning and Inspections Department is doing to reduce energy consumption, such as using compostable cups, using digital photo copies, installing automatic shut-off light switches, changing out light bulbs to LED's, and recycling paper products.

Discussion ensued on the usage of vehicles in the Planning and Inspections Department. Ms. Shook gave a brief summary on how the department uses the vehicles. Ms. Shook noted that the department does need a vehicle that can go onto building sites for inspection purposes. Member Ball explained that a quick return on energy usage savings can begin with changing desk lamp bulbs to LED bulbs. Member Ball also talked about the Town departments working on the process to change-out vehicles over time.

Discussion ensued on maximizing energy efficiencies. Member Ball talked about maintenance being worth the investment on various things like HVAC units to help reduce energy usage. Member Ball said there may be expertise in house to help with the topic of energy efficiencies.

Discussion ensued on working with the other Town Departments. Member LaPlaca asked Ms. Shook if the SEEC could email her their ideas for working with the other Town Departments. Member LaPlaca suggested that the SEEC begin tours of the other Town departments. Ms. Shook said the tours can be coordinated with the other Town departments.

Discussion ensued on using the STAR system when working on the options for the toolkit. Chairperson David suggested using systems that are already in place in other locations, when working on the options. Member Ball said he supported using this type of system.

Discussion ensued on working on possible changes to the Unified Development Ordinance. Member Ball suggested providing incentives and density bonuses in the proposed changes. Ms. Shook said this topic is already on the Planning Staff work plan.

Council Liaison Furguele talked about trying to get the sales tax returned to the Town to help pay for some of the Town sustainability initiatives such as replacing current vehicles with electric vehicles. Discussion ensued on sales tax distribution. Council Liaison Furguele explained how the sales tax distribution has affected the Town. Council Liaison Furguele further explained that the Watauga County Commissioners changed the sales tax distribution, which resulted in a loss of discretionary funds for the Town in an amount of \$2 million dollars.

Ms. Shook told the SEEC that she will ask Mr. Ward to coordinate the facility tours with the other Town departments and Mr. Little, Planner will track the progress in the toolkit.

Other Matters by Committee Members or Staff

Vice-Chairperson Ayers informed the SEEC about workshops on Executive Order 80 being held in Asheville and Charlotte, North Carolina. He said the first workshop will be held on March 22, 2019 at 8:30 a.m.

Adjournment

With no other matters to discuss, Chairperson David made a motion, seconded by Member LaPlaca to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Quint David, SEEC Chairperson

Marlene Crosby, Committee Secretary

Town of Boone Planning & Inspection – Operations

Location: 680 West King Street (share's facility with downtown Post Office); 2 story-building

Hours of Operation: 8 am – 5 pm (plus evening meetings)

Staff: 9 FTE/1 PTE

Vehicles: 6 (1 hybrid sedan & 5 SUV)

YEAR	MAKE/MODEL	Vehicle Mileage
2004	FORD EXPLORER	78,178
2005	JEEP LIBERTY	69,668
2009	TOYOTA RAV	49,637
2011	JEEP LIBERTY	35,120
2015	CHEVY EQUINOX	22,698
2017	TOYOTA PRIUS	6,396

Note: Staff has noted to Town Council that fleet changes for the department could be modified so that with vehicle replacement, needs are at least 50% to be AWD/4WD and 2-3 with higher vehicle clearance.

Maintenance Costs for past 12 months: \$2,116.15

Gallons of gas used in past 12 months: 983.21 gallons

Estimated miles driven in past 12 months: 15,589 mile

Cost of vehicle related gas for past 12 months: \$2,236.07

Building-Electricity for past 12 months:

Kilowatt Hours: 73,513

Cost: \$6,277.10

Building-Gas for past 12 months:

Gallons: 2,535.39

Cost: \$2,584.64

Educational Programs:

Arbor Day/Tree City USA

Bee City USA

Earth First Friday

Watch For Me NC