

**TOWN OF BOONE
SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, MAY 16, 2019
5:30 P.M.**

Members Present:	Chairperson Quint David, Vice-Chairperson Harvard Ayers, Ben Scarboro, John Prickett and Nancy LaPlaca
Town Council Liaisons Present:	Sam Furguele and Marshall Ashcraft
Staff Members Present:	Marty Little – Senior Planner and Marlene Crosby-Committee Secretary
Others Present:	Pilar Fotta, Director of Cultural Resources

Call to Order

Chairperson Quint David called to order the Boone Sustainability Committee, held in the Town Council Chambers Room located at 1500 Blowing Rock Road at 5:30 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda

Member Scarboro made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairperson Ayers to adopt the agenda as amended with the addition of the topics of Greenhouse Gas Reduction Solutions and inviting Blue Ridge Electric Membership Corporation (BREMCO) and New River Light and Power Company (NRLP) to give presentations on their companies.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Approval of Minutes

Member Scarboro made a motion, seconded by Member LaPlaca to approve the April 11, 2019 meeting minutes as presented.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Planning and Inspections Update

Mr. Marty Little, Senior Planner, began the update by stating that the Earth First Friday Event occurred on Friday April 26, 2019. He said the event went well except for some rainy weather at the time of the event. He said the Town plans on continuing this event in the future.

Mr. Little informed the committee that Boone Town Hall had received a new Ford Fusion hybrid vehicle. He also noted that the Boone Police Department has not received the new police vehicle because it is still being outfitted with the necessary police gear. He further noted that the Police bicycles have already been received and are in use and they are helping the Police officers do a better job at patrolling the Downtown area.

Vice-Chairperson Ayers asked Mr. Little if the bicycle lanes will be improved in the Town. Mr. Little noted that the Town has a Bicycle-Pedestrian Plan that has been adopted by Council. Mr. Little explained that the Town-maintained streets can be updated and the Town does install bicycle lanes where possible.

Mr. Little informed the committee that he had recently attended a "Complete Streets" workshop in Marion, North Carolina and some of the things discussed in the workshop were: access to transit stops, bike lanes, and road diets. Mr. Little further explained that "Complete Streets" incorporates "multi-modal" transportation.

Mr. Little gave a Council meeting update. He said there was a request for discussion regarding the Waste Water Treatment Plant and a system that can capture green-house gases admitted by this plant. Council Liaison Furgiuele explained that after the discussion on green-house gases at this meeting, Mr. John Ward, Town Manager, may be coordinating an analysis of the Waste Water Treatment Plant, as well as researching a DEQ grant.

Mr. Little said there is no update on the contract on the NRLP solar project at this time.

Mr. Little said at the Council meeting, Council approved three large trees to be planted along Queen Street and the planting of 100 seedlings in the Town.

Overview of Town Department Operations

Ms. Pilar Fotta, Director of Cultural Resources, began a presentation on the Jones House and Town of Boone Cultural Resources Department, which included a handout (permanently attached). She explained that the Jones House is open seven days a week. She explained that the electricity costs were reduced by converting over to natural gas.

Member Scarboro reviewed the handout and suggested that the number of dollars per square meter of carbon offset be added to the handout.

Discussion ensued on dog waste stations in the Town. Ms. Fotta talked about the dog waste stations that the Town provides for the public to use. She said that she provides supplies for two of the stations near the Jones House. In her experience of purchasing dog station bags, it has

been difficult to locate a commercial-grade bag that is biodegradable or made of a sustainable material.

Discussion ensued on the disposing of dog waste bags at the landfill. Council Liaison Ashcraft noted that the landfill will accept any type of bag but it would be better to have compostable bags. Ms. Fotta said the used dog waste bags are usually taken away by the public. She explained there are two waste containers near the Jones House for the public to dispose of the dog waste bags.

Discussion ensued on municipal composting. Member Scarboro suggested the Town starting a composting program, and to add composting bins alongside regular garbage receptacles. Member Scarboro further stated that the waste bags could be placed in the composting bins.

Member LaPlaca asked Ms. Fotta about the cost to use compostable service materials. Ms. Fotta said the cost for paper is about 20 to 25 percent and the utensils cost around 25 to 30 percent more, but she tries to purchase these items in bulk to receive a discount to help offset the increase in cost. Ms. Fotta suggested that each Town department research and decide which products they want to purchase that fits within the department budgets.

Council Liaison Furgiuele pointed out that Ms. Fotta is the point of contact for all of the use of the Dan'l Boone Park. He asked her if there has been any discussion on mandating the products that are used by the groups that use Town property. She said there has not been any discussion on this topic but she felt it was a great suggestion. He said he thought the license agreements should be reviewed to mandate the use of more sustainable products. Council Liaison Furgiuele also talked about the Town using a certain percentage of local foods from Farmers Markets.

Discussion ensued on the www.drawdown.org website. Chairperson David explained things like wind power and reducing food waste from this website and suggested that each Sustainability Committee member review the website.

Discussion ensued on the reduction of electricity. Member Scarboro asked Ms. Fotta about how she achieved the reduction in electricity. She said she had motion sensors installed and she turns the lights off when they do not have any visitors in the house viewing the galleries. She also explained that she invested in the Ecobee system, which includes monitors in all of the rooms that regulate the temperature throughout the house.

Discussion ensued on the windows of the Jones House. Ms. Fotta explained that because of the historic designation of the house that applying window film on the front of the house is not allowed. She explained that she has checked on changing out the windows so they can be opened during warmer weather.

With no other updates or questions, Ms. Fotta left the meeting at 6:34 p.m.

Greenhouse Gas Reduction Solutions

Discussion ensued on greenhouse gas reduction solutions. Chairperson David referred to www.drawdown.org and explained the report. Member LaPlaca pointed out that www.drawdown.org has global information. She suggested using the www.rockymountaininstitute.com website. She further explained that the United States is different from the global area because of its impact of electricity and food. Chairperson David suggested looking at both websites to look for ideas to help reduce the carbon footprint in the Town of Boone.

NRLP and BREMCO Invitations to Present

Discussion ensued on inviting representatives from Blue Ridge Electric Membership Corporation and New River Light and Power Company to give a presentation to the Sustainability Committee. Member LaPlaca suggested providing a list of questions to ask these power companies to learn what they do for their customers.

Discussion ensued on developing a business model. Member LaPlaca talked about a co-op named Roanoke Electric located in eastern North Carolina. She said the co-op has been participating in a program called E-Clip, which is a federal efficiency program that has helped around 400 low-income households to get personal loans and save money.

Discussion ensued on the committee charge. Chairperson David asked the Council Liaisons about committee recommendations outside of the new committee charge. Member LaPlaca talked about the committee needing to discuss the obstacles and opportunities of moving towards clean energy. Chairperson David suggested making a recommendation for every Town Department to install enough solar to achieve the zero energy goal in the next 20 years. Member LaPlaca explained that if there is no net-metering, it will never work and it will cost twice as much as it needs to. Council Liaison Furgiuele responded to Chairperson David's question regarding the recommendations outside of the new committee charge. He explained that Council asked the Sustainability Committee to work on forming recommendations for Town Department operations, which includes the creation of the toolkit. He suggested that the Sustainability Committee make a recommendation to Council to have a joint meeting with Town Council and the power companies, if the Council as a whole is interested in it. He further suggested the Sustainability Committee making a recommendation to ask Council to have a joint-meeting with Council and the Sustainability Committee, and inviting elected representatives from Raleigh, North Carolina to attend. He explained that if the Sustainability Committee is suggesting the State taking over the regulation of co-op's, or changing the configuration of the way that electricity is distributed in the State, these concerns will have to be taken to the General Assembly.

Mr. Little said the next step would be to make a recommendation to Council for Council to schedule a joint-meeting with the Sustainability Committee. Council Liaison Furgiuele noted that Mr. Ward, Town Manager, would need to be involved in the joint-meeting. Council Liaison Ashcraft said that he felt that the Sustainability Committee should work through the Town Departments first, before having a joint-meeting. Member LaPlaca said it will take six months to work through the Town Departments, which will take too long, in addition to waiting on the Council's decision regarding a joint meeting. She suggested starting the process because time is

of the essence and the obstacles are formidable. Council Liaison Furguele explained that the Council's direction for the Sustainability Committee to meet with the Town Department Heads and work on the toolkit be carried out.

Chairperson David said he would work with Member LaPlaca on a recommendation to discuss at the next Sustainability Committee meeting. Mr. Little said he would add this topic to the next meeting agenda.

Other Matters by Committee Members or Staff

Council Liaison Furguele asked if it was necessary for the committee members to meet in the Council Chambers for just the month of June, 2019. The Sustainability Committee agreed to meet in the Planning & Inspections Department Upstairs Conference Room located at 680 W. King Street for the June 13, 2019 Sustainability Committee 5:30 p.m. meeting.

Motion and Vote:

Member Prickett made a motion, seconded by Member Scarboro, for the Sustainability Committee meeting, scheduled for June 13, 2019 at 5:30 p.m., to be held in the Planning and Inspections Department Upstairs Conference Room located at 680 W. King Street.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Adjournment

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

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Quint David, Sustainability Committee Chairperson

Marlene Crosby, Committee Secretary

Town of Boone Jones House & Cultural Resources-Operations

Location: 604 West King Street; 2 story-building

Hours of Operation: 8 am – 5 pm M-F

11 am-4 pm Saturday and Sunday

Tuesday evening 5-9

Thursday evening 5-11

Additional weekend and evening hours for special events as requested

Staff: 3 FTE/3 PTE

Vehicles: 1

YEAR	MAKE/MODEL	Vehicle Mileage
2010	F-250	46,092

Note: Staff trades vehicles with Planning and Inspections for trips out of town. Our vehicle was “recycled” from the Fire Department and meets our needs for moving materials and towing our stage for events.

Maintenance Costs for past 12 months: \$ 429.55

Gallons of gas used in past 12 months: 86.218

Estimated miles driven in past 12 months: 840

Cost of vehicle related gas for past 12 months: \$ 267.65

Building-Electricity for past 12 months: *Please see graph for usage trends

Kilowatt Hours: 28,692

Cost: \$ 2,990.52

Building-Gas for past 12 months:

Therms: 151

Cost: \$ 303.31

Building-Water for past 12 months:

Gallons: 25,000

Current Events Promoting Sustainability:

Solar Christmas Tree

Earth First Friday

Initiatives we've taken to reduce carbon footprint:

- Switched to recycled paper for schedules and flyers (\$\$)
- Switched to compostable or recycled event supplies: cups, plates, and utensils, and towels (\$\$)
- Recycle event waste
- Over a two-year period made the conversion to LED light bulbs (\$)
- Put parade forms online (not paper)
- Plant pollinators in the yard at the Jones House
- Keep lights off when not needed (tried to install motion detectors but were not able to retrofit)
- Purchased Ecobee system to help regulate temperature and keep it static (\$)
- Use natural cleaning products (no aerosols) (\$\$)
- Eliminated the use of straws at events
- Use reusable grocery bags when we shop
- Large water dispenser instead of bottled water
- Regularly monitor replace threshold seals (\$)
- Eliminated use of helium balloons at events (\$)
- Switched to OXO-Bio dog waste bags for the two stations we supply (Made with 98% recycled plastic with 2% EPI additive to make them biodegrade with exposed to elements in landfill). Even though it's made with 98% recycled plastic, it is still plastic (please see below for suggestions on how we can continue to improve this) (\$\$)

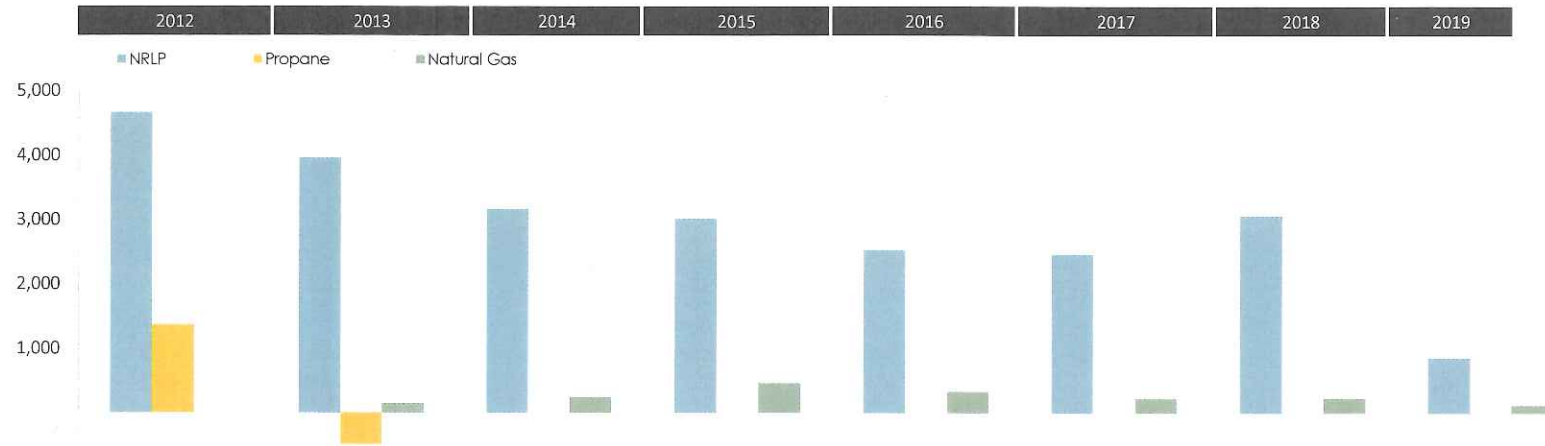
(\$) Indicates a one-time increase in cost

(\$\$) Indicates an increase in budget for ongoing expense

Suggestions moving forward:

- Upgrade toilets (will need to serve high use as we are a public facility)
- Replace windows with double pane windows (need to consider historic designation)
- Upgrade refrigerator to a more energy efficient model
- Continue to look for alternatives for dog waste disposal bags
 - Two new products are set to come out later this year and we will start using those products as soon as possible
 - June – Biobased bags (minimum of 38% plant matter)
 - August – 100% Compostable Bags are set to hit the market they are only available in rolls which would require us to replace two of our three stations
- Continue to look for ways to reduce packaging and waste for event giveaways

Jones House



Expenses	JH 2012	JH 2013	JH 2014	JH 2015	JH 2016	JH 2017	JH 2018	1st Q 2019
NRLP	4,666.00	3,960.43	3,168.00	3,016.00	2,530.12	2,466.55	3,057.46	860.84
Propane	1,372.00	-493.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Natural Gas	0.00	150.42	242.71	461.30	331.34	232.00	234.00	121.73
Total	6,038.00	3,617.85	3,410.71	3,477.30	2,861.46	2,698.55	3,291.46	982.57

NOTE: There are several factors that caused the increase in 2018 and 2019.

1. Effective May 2018 Price for meter rates doubled from \$8 per month to \$16 per month.
2. In May 2018 charges started for Cole Ash Recovery started this averages around \$10 per month.
3. There was a slight increase in rates.
3. We started operating 7 days a week.

Our usage has increased slightly, but the increase in charges you see are related mostly to the increase in costs and fees.

* Total cost includes sales tax.