

TOWN OF BOONE
SUSTAINABILITY, ECONOMICS AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, JUNE 8, 2017
6:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairperson Quint David, Vice-Chairperson Harvard Ayers, Bailey Winecoff and Benjamin Scarboro

COUNCIL
MEMBERS PRESENT: Charlotte Mizelle

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Jane Shook, Director of Planning & Inspections, Christy Turner, Senior Planner and Marlene Crosby, Committee Secretary

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson David called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. Chairperson David welcomed Dr. Lee Ball from the Appalachian State University Sustainability Office to the meeting. It was noted that Dr. Ball is interested in becoming a member of this committee.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Member Winecoff made a motion, seconded by Member Scarboro to accept the agenda as written.

Vote:

Aye – All
Nay – None

The motion passed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Member Scarboro made a motion, seconded by Member Winecoff to accept the April 13, 2017 minutes as amended with one change made in the first sentence of the Windmill Update to change one-watt to one mega-watt.

Vote:

Aye – All
Nay – None

The motion passed.

COMMITTEE MEMBER TERM DATES

Ms. Jane Shook, Director of Planning and Inspections explained that this Committee has three year staggered terms and all terms expire on June 30. She said as each new term comes up the beginning of the term will be retro-active back to July 1. She also explained that Member Scarboro, Member Winecoff and Vice-Chairperson Ayers terms will expire on June 30, 2020. She said Chairperson David, Member Gentry and Member Cochran's open position will expire on June 30, 2022. She

said Member Winecoff term expires in November of 2017, Vice-Chairperson Harvard term expires in October of 2017 and Member Scarboro term expires in September 2017.

Discussion ensued on quorum issues for this Committee. Chairperson David talked about the possibly changing the date and time of this committee meeting. He said he put out a doodle poll to find out what the Committee felt about changing the Committee meeting date and time. He had not received any response as of this meeting on it. It was suggested to start the meeting at 5:30 p.m. rather than 6 p.m. He said he would like to talk about this topic more at the next Committee meeting.

RENEWABLE ENERGY ACTION PLAN

Chairperson David said that this Committee is wanting renewable energy to be 100 percent. He said some of this percentage could be obtained by the use of solar farms or rooftop solar.

Council Member Mizelle gave an update from the Council's Budget hearing. She noted that the Town as a whole is not at this time ready to go with hybrid or electric vehicles. She noted that the Planning and Inspections Department had recently purchased a Toyota Prius Hybrid fleet vehicle. It was noted that these types of vehicles can get up to 50 miles to the gallon.

Chairperson David handed out a copy of the Town of Boone's Municipal Utility expenses broken down by department (permanently attached). He reviewed the 2014 actual expense totals for electricity, NG/Propane and Fuel/Gas. He reviewed the estimated calculations on each category which came to a total usage of \$1,160,062.00.

Chairperson David said that he would like to recommend a professional payback study that includes insurance, maintenance, and other costs. Vice-Chairperson Ayers said that Mr. Tyler Cook, the Town Manager's intern is doing a study for 2016 on this topic along with a university intern associated with the Climate Times.

Council Member Mizelle said that the Town is now requesting that rooftop solar be included in new developments in the Town. Discussion ensued on solar. Dr. Lee Ball from the Appalachian State University noted that it is more cost efficient to put solar in fields than on roof tops.

Chairperson David talked about placing solar on parking lot roof tops. It was noted that you see a lot of rooftop solar in airport parking lots. It was noted that you can get approximately one megawatt of energy per five acres. It was also noted that it is important to work with the power companies on solar.

Chairperson David explained that Buncombe County in North Carolina is also working on renewable energy by using their landfill and they are producing four to five mega-watts of energy at no cost to them. He suggested that Watauga County do the same thing at their landfill.

Council Member Mizelle said the Town is working on a contract to replace all of the water meters by the end of the year. She noted that as each light bulb in the Town needs replacing, they are being replaced with LED bulbs.

Vice-Chairperson Ayers recommended an “Energy Efficiency” study be done so the Town will know how much they are using to help reduce consumption of energy.

Discussion ensued on the Town purchasing electric vehicles in the future. It was suggested that the Town Police Department have Chevrolet Volt electric cars in their fleet because it will be more efficient and they have the speed necessary for this department. Chairperson David said the cost for fuel/gas will be reduced and the electricity usage will increase but it will be more efficient in the long run.

Discussion ensued on setting up budget goals to help with renewable energy. Council Member Mizelle suggested the Committee write a clear, concise and easy to read proposal for their goals of things that the Committee would like to work on.

Discussion ensued on Renewable Energy Credits. Chairperson David said if the Town buys everything in Renewable Energy Credits, it will increase the electricity costs. He said from a budget standpoint would floating a \$10 million-dollar bond help decrease the electricity costs. Vice-Chairperson Ayers said this could be addressed in the study.

Discussion ensued on the possibility of the Town switching to NTE. Dr. Ball suggested that the Town request from New River Light and Power the projected cost reduction to the Town for electricity.

The Committee members discussed working on the draft Sustainability proposal for Council’s review. Chairperson David suggested discussing this topic at the next meeting.

It was noted that solar is a better option than windmills for a better payback for the Town.

Vice-Chairperson Ayers noted that the renewable energy study will hopefully be completed by mid-September. He suggested inviting the Town and University interns to come to the next meeting to give an update on the study.

DISCUSSION OF SUSTAINABILITY DASHBOARD INFORMATION

Chairperson David explained that Council Member Mizelle, Member Winecoff and himself will work on this topic. Council Member Mizelle noted that she had previously emailed information to the Committee members on this topic for their review.

Chairperson David suggested that the Committee use the “Stars Community” for the dashboard to post awards and other topics for our community because it is eco-friendlier.

REVIEW OF 2017 GOALS

Chairperson David referred to the Boone 2014 Sustainability Task Force Recommendations document (permanently attached) and defined the 2014 short-term goal as one to three years and medium-term goals as five plus years.

Discussion ensued on the Committee submitting their recommended goals to Council for their approval. Chairperson David said he would submit this topic as an agenda item for the next

Council meeting. Council Member Mizelle said she would discuss it with Mr. John Ward, Town Manager.

Discussion ensued on the Committee taking a composting tour of Appalachian State University. Dr. Ball said he could set it up, when the Committee is ready to do it. Dr. Ball said that he had recently met with the Town and the County and he said the County did not seem ready at this time to partner with the Town or the University and maybe a third party which are companies called haulers who carry the composting away.

Dr. Ball said the University is limited on their composting with their 250-ton facility. He said that this is where a market study is needed which would include the local organic farmers who might be interested in the compost. He noted that some farmers buy their composting materials and some make their own.

Council Member Mizelle said she would follow the progress of the “water-meter replacement program” and report back to the Committee regularly on it.

DISCUSSION OF NC PUBLIC RECORDS AND COMMITTEE COMMUNICATION

Chairperson David handed out a copy of the North Carolina Guide to Open Government and Public Records (permanently attached). He explained that information that needs to go to the Committee can be emailed to the Committee secretary who can email it out to the whole Committee for their review. He further explained that each Committee member can call the Chairperson, Director of Planning and Inspections, Committee Secretary or another Committee member with less than four members being involved in the conversation because four members are a majority.

As Chairperson David reviewed the opening meeting and public records rules, he explained that anytime town business is discussed that information should be made transparent for all to see. It was discussed to email as little as possible especially if the topic could be controversial. It was noted that if there is information regarding Town business on a cell phone, it is a matter of public record.

OTHER MATTERS BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS OR STAFF

Chairperson David informed the Committee members that the Council has approved the July 23, 2017 Cyclovia event. It is the seventh year it has occurred on Rivers Street in Downtown Boone. He encouraged everyone to attend this event to celebrate bicycles.

ADJOURNMENT

Council Member Mizelle made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairperson Ayers to adjourn the meeting at 7:08 p.m.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Quint David, Chairperson

Marlene Crosby, Committee Secretary