

TOWN OF BOONE
SUSTAINABILITY, ECONOMICS AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, JULY 13, 2017
6:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Chairperson Quint David, Vice-Chairperson Harvard Ayers, Bailey Winecoff, Chris Gentry and Lee Ball
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COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:	None
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STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:	Christy Turner, Senior Planner and Marlene Crosby, Committee Secretary
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CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson David called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. He welcomed Dr. Lee Ball from the Appalachian State University Sustainability Office as a member of the committee.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Member Gentry made a motion, seconded by Member Ball to accept the agenda as written.

Vote:

Aye – All
Nay – None

The motion passed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Member Winecoff made a motion, seconded by Member Gentry to accept the June 8, 2017 minutes as written.

Vote:

Aye – (Ayers, David, Gentry, Winecoff)
Nay – None
Abstain – 1 (Ball)

The motion passed.

REVIEW OF 2017 GOALS

Chairperson David compared the Boone 2014 Sustainability Task Force Recommendations short-term and medium-term goals to the short-term and long-term goals of the Boone 2017 Sustainability, Economics, and the Environment Committee Recommendations (permanently attached) which included: Transportation, Energy, Water, Food, Education and Environment. He reminded the committee members that they voted in January of 2017 to present to Council their proposed short-term and long-term goals of the Boone 2017 Sustainability, Economics, and the Environment Committee Recommendations. He noted that Council has not assigned funding to

any of the proposed goals. He said he would like to go before the Council to ask for an update on the proposed goals. He noted that with the help of various people with expertise in the proposed goals that some of goals may still be accomplished even if no funds are approved for them by Council.

Transportation:

Chairperson David talked about making May bike month. It was decided that the bike shelter/maintenance stations could be funded by a donation. It was decided that the locations of the stations need to be identified based on need. It was suggested to do a survey at the July 23, 2017 Cyclo Via Bicycle event to see what the cyclists' thoughts are on the location of the bike stations. It was suggested to create a budget for the stations once their locations are identified. Ms. Christy Turner, Senior Planner said the Staff could do the survey at this event.

Chairperson David suggested having a community meeting to get feedback on what could be included in the green infrastructure plan which includes sidewalks and bike lanes. Ms. Turner said the Staff could start a map to identify the green infrastructure.

Energy:

Chairperson David suggested starting with a map of the locations for possible solar projects in the Town. Member Ball said he was interested in collaborating with the Town on a solar project at Jimmy Smith Park located on River Street and S. Depot Street. Member Ball suggested adding solar benches with USB ports or retro-fitting the existing benches in the park. Member Ball also talked about the possibility of making wi-fi available at this park.

Member Gentry talked about trying to get wind-power from Howards Knob. He noted that a wind study has already proven that there is enough wind power there to produce energy.

Member Ball talked about two options to reduce the energy costs. He said one option is for the Town to buy solar energy from New River Light and Power because the university is looking at offering it to their customers. He said another option is that ASU is thinking about being involved in the PJM corridor which is located in Northeast North Carolina. He said there are large utility farms going into this area. He said the energy can be sold at a premium investment in the Northeast and the Renewable Energy Credits would be kept by ASU. He said that the larger the scale the better and that ASU may want to partner with other Towns or Cities on it as a long-term goal.

Discussion ensued on getting funding to help reduce energy costs. It was suggested to ask for a small donation of funds from the Town of Boone's monthly water bills.

Member Ball told the committee that ASU is using a company called Sterling Planet which is a broker for Renewable Energy Credits. Chairperson David said he would contact this company and get preliminary pricing.

Water:

It was noted that the Town water replacement program is underway and it is coming out of the water and sewer department budget. Ms. Turner said she would get an update on this topic for the next meeting.

Chairperson David talked about the need to work on the storm water run-off requirements. He said this requires setting a rule that developers will be required to follow.

Food:

Chairperson David said curbside composting program is a budget issue. He talked about needing a commitment from the Town to move this item forward.

Member Ball noted that the university has a 250 ton-composting facility that is about one-half full. He said that one of the largest barriers for composting is there is not a local trucking company to move the composting away like larger cities. He said the university is using the composting in their landscaping and on their farms. He suggested a study be done to find out who needs the compost. He talked about finding out the need for compost from local residents and farmers. He said the university would like to sell the composting back to the local farmers, if they have a surplus of compost.

Chairperson David talked about the possibility of integrating the Farmers Market and the Winters Farmers Market into a space at the Horn in the West area. He said that a USDA grant is being worked on for this area and a university group is working on how this area can be improved to open up more space. Ms. Turner said she would ask Mr. Ward for an update on this topic.

Education

Discussion ensued for a long-term goal to ask Council for funding for a full-time or part-time position to take care of the educational information on the Town website. Ms. Turner said other committees have been turned down, when they requested additional funding for positions. Chairperson David said there are non-profit organizations that can help with similar things. Ms. Turner suggested an option is to possibly have an intern until a full-time or part-time position may be funded. She also noted that there is office space available for interns to work in the Planning and Inspections Department. Member Ball said the work through this position could in some ways fund itself for a while because it is streamlining the processes and efficiencies.

Chairperson David said the committee members will create a list of what they would like to see on the website.

Environment

Chairperson David talked about Bee City USA, he said the Town has to apply for it and have a workshop during the year.

Chairperson David talked about the Tree plans of the Town. He noted that he would like to draw attention to these plans. Mr. Turner explained that Mr. Brian Johnson, Urban Design Specialist maintains the tree program which includes having an annual Arbor Day Celebration. She said that Mr. Johnson also coordinates the Tree City USA.

Vice-Chairperson Ayers talked about coordinating with Mr. Johnson with the help of volunteers to plant Red Spruce trees in the town to help stop climate change.

Member Ball talked about working with Mr. Johnson to identify the trees that cannot be cut down.

OTHER MATTERS BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS OR STAFF

Ms. Turner recommended to the committee members about changing the meeting time from 6 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month. The committee members were in agreement to move the meeting time to 5:30 p.m. and to submit it to Council for their approval.

Chairperson David recommended presenting to Council the recommended proposed options to the 2017 goals that were discussed at this meeting. The committee members were in agreement with this recommendation.

Motion and Vote:

Vice-Chairperson Ayers made a motion, seconded by Member Gentry for Chairperson David to present the recommendations to the proposed options to the 2017 goals to Council at their August, 2017 Council meeting, along with changing the meeting time from 6:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Discussion ensued on the combining of the Boone 2030 Land Use Plan with the 2006 Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Turner said the High Country Council of Governments is working on the combining of these documents.

Ms. Turner said the Planning Commission will be discussing the combined documents this fall. She suggested that the Sustainability, Economics and Environmental committee make a recommendation to Council to have a joint meeting with the Council and Planning Commission to discuss potential Sustainability recommendations.

Discussion ensued on the Sustainability, Economics and Environment Committee members having a joint meeting with the Council and the Planning Commission members to review the Town plans and make recommendations to continue to include Sustainability into the proposed combining of the Town Plans. The committee members were in agreement to request a joint meeting from Council.

Ms. Turner noted that the UDO is now requiring that single-family homeowners submit storm-water calculations for impervious surfaces, when applying for permits.

Motion and Vote:

Vice-Chairperson Ayers, seconded by Member Gentry made a motion for Chairperson David to request the joint meeting from Council at their August 2017 meeting.

Vote:

Aye – All
Nay – None

The motion passed.

Guest Speaker, Dr. Matthew VanDyke from the Communication Department at Appalachian State University talked about the “Stars Community” rating system. He said that he has worked on getting a Sustainable Technology grant with Dr. Marie Hoephel from the Sustainable Technology and the Built Environment Department of the university. He also noted that he also works with environment communications. He said he can help the Town align their goals with the Star Community framework to help the Town achieve their goals. He suggested in the first meeting to work on transportation and energy. He said that Dr. Hopeful’s students may do a flexibility study on these two topics. He also noted that one of his classes is working with the Middle Fork Greenway. He said he is willing to help the Town with any type of public reception, when needed.

AJOURNMENT

Member Winecoff made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairperson Ayers to adjourn the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

Vote:

Aye – All
Nay – None

The motion passed.

Quint David, Chairperson

Marlene Crosby, Committee Secretary