

**TOWN OF BOONE
SUSTAINABILITY, ECONOMICS AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2018
5:30 P.M.**

Members Present:	Chairperson Quint David, Vice-Chairperson Harvard Ayers, Benjamin Scarboro, John Prickett and Nancy LaPlaca
Council Members:	Sam Furgiuele and Marshall Ashcraft
Staff Members Present:	Christy Turner - Senior Planner and Marty Little - Planner

Call to Order

Chairperson David called to order the meeting of the Boone Sustainability, Economics and Environment committee, held in the Planning and Inspections Department – Upstairs Conference Room located at 680 W. King Street at 5:36 p.m.

Ms. Turner explained that the Council has directed this committee to focus only on the Town's conversion from fossil fuels to carbon neutral fuels in accordance with the commitment of the Town. She said the Council will give direction on this committee's next project to work on.

Ms. Turner explained that Council has directed this committee to meet every other month instead of every month as a result of the Council's review of Town committees. Member Furgiuele explained that the Council wanted to reduce the number of Town meetings. He further explained that Council also approved the Council members attending the committees to no longer be voting members or count towards the quorum.

Member Scarboro talked about adding an agenda item to this meeting's agenda to discuss moving the meeting location as a result of meeting every other month and needing a larger space for the additional people that may be attending the meetings.

Adoption of Agenda

Member Scarboro made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairperson Ayers to approve the agenda with the addition of adding the topic of moving the meeting location to a larger space to allow for more public involvement.

Vote:

Aye – All
Nay – None

The motion passed.

Approval of Minutes

Member Scarboro made a motion, seconded by Member Prickett to approve the June 14, 2018 meeting minutes as written.

Vote:

Aye – All
Nay – None

The motion passed.

Discussion of the Energy Action Plan

Chairperson David began discussion on this agenda item. He said he wanted to make sure that the Planning Staff and the Town are provided clear goals on what the SEEC is doing for the energy action plan.

Vice-Chairperson Ayers said he would email the board secretary the most current draft proposal for the Planning Staff's records.

Member Furgiuele explained that the Council direction was for the SEEC to focus on specific topics and make recommendations on them.

Vice-Chairperson Ayers talked about his informational document dated September 7, 2018 (permanently attached). He talked about possible ways to best use the \$100,000.00 approved by Council for 100 percent renewable energy by 2030. Member Furgiuele and Marshal agreed that the Council discussed that it is 2030 and not 2050.

Vice-Chairperson Ayers said he felt that the Town should begin to install solar collectors somewhere in the Town on a government or Town building. It was suggested to put solar at the old Bolick property purchased by the Town. Ms. Turner pointed out the potential for flood zone issues at this property, therefore, the solar may need to be placed on the roof top.

Member Furgiuele explained that the Council adopted a resolution that says the design of any new Town buildings will be climate neutral. He said we would not want the designers to propose the building footprint where money has already been spent to install solar collectors. He said there are other ways to get started with the solar collectors. He confirmed that everyone is on board with the general concepts but the Council is looking for implementation steps in a specific way and the Council wants to use the expertise of the SEEC members to provide these steps on a step by step basis.

Member LaPlaca talked about a number of policies that the SEEC should consider that would not cost the Town. Some of the policies that she talked about were right to solar, solar bill of rights and right to a 3rd party. She said these policies are needed, if clean energy is going to be developed. Chairperson David agreed with the SEEC looking into these policies and he pointed out that these policies are in the approved 2017 goals. He said discussing these policies is almost a different topic. He said we have to get 100 percent clean renewable energy from the Town which means the Town needs ten mega-watts of solar. Vice-Chairperson Ayers said only about eight mega-watts of solar are needed.

Member Furgiuele he supported the SEEC putting into place the policies that will facilitate the conversion of fuels.

Chairperson David talked about the Town owning its own mega-watt plant or would the Town want to purchase its power from another mega-watt plant generators. Member LaPlaca asked would the contract be allowed to purchase from a third party. Chairperson David noted that the Town is spending \$1 Million dollars a year on carbon producing electricity or fuel.

Chairperson David talked about incentives for people to install solar collectors just like the incentives for toilet replacements. He said the incentive could be per panel for installation and this could be counted toward the usage.

Vice-Chairperson Ayers talked about discussing with NTE about building a 100 mega-watt plant in western North Carolina and the Town will purchase seven to ten watts or higher of power from them.

Chairperson David noted that the Town does not have a ten-acre field available to build a mega-watt plant to provide their own energy.

Discussion ensued on the town departments reducing their carbon usage. Ms. Turner reminded the SEEC about the quarterly reports and the SEEC needs to discuss what they will do with the information once they receive it.

Chairperson David said he would create a baseline for usage with the level of efficiency that we think we can get to. He talked about the Town employees using the Toyota Prius or the Chevrolet volt to travel on Town business to help reduce usage.

Member Furgiuele asked if the SEEC could layout over the next twelve years with implementation steps that both reflect realistically what the Town can do.

Member Furgiuele talked about waiting to purchase electric vehicles until they come down in price.

Member Scarboro asked about the status of the Town's energy audit. Chairperson David said the Town hired a company to look at several Town buildings and the company provided some good suggestions.

Ms. Turner said for the energy audit for each department, there needs to be instructions about which numbers are needed. She asked is the SEEC going to convert the numbers or does the various departments going to convert the numbers.

Chairperson David said based on his calculations the Jones House may need 16 kilo-watts of power to go 100 percent renewable. Ms. Turner reminded the SEEC that the Jones House is on the National Registry and there will need to be precautions taken when adding solar to it.

Member Prickett thought the Town departments should convert the numbers and create the budget for their own departments.

Member Scarboro asked for a list of resolutions that the Town has already taken and the resolutions that need to be taken. He said one resolutions is that new buildings work in a neutral climate way. He said that he would like to make a list of the objectives and create the action that needs to be taken for each objective. Chairperson David said when the committee wrote the goals, they created a to-do-list for the Town and he reviewed the goals.

Member Prickett suggested that the SEEC chose an item from the 2017 goals that is achievable and the Town would support. Chairperson David suggested working on the list they already have taking each item at a time. Member Prickett suggested prioritizing the first few years of time. Member LaPlaca suggested seeing what other towns and cities are doing and try to start pushing the policies as a Town. Member Furguele talked about using our lobbyists based on Council approval but will need a specific proposal on what the lobbyists will be lobbying for and how it fits into the overall goal.

Chairperson David said he would work with the Council members to give them the type of plan they are looking for whether it is a budget item or a carbon reduction goal. He said he can present to Council what other Towns and Cities have done to complete their goals.

Member LaPlaca talked about a list of obstacles and opportunities for clean energy for Boone, North Carolina (permanently attached). She said she would email the list to Ms. Turner.

Chairperson David said this year Applacart is in discussions to go to zero energy for the building itself. He said the bus shelters were angled to have solar panels but that part of the budget ran out.

It was the consensus of the SEEC for Chairperson David to prepare a draft action item list to review and discuss at the next SEEC meeting and then send to Council for their consideration once the SEEC has approved it.

Member Scarboro talked about including specific ideas in with the future agenda items that need to be discussed along with the energy action plan. He said he would bring to the next SEEC meeting a list of the resolutions that the Council has approved which states what the Council's responsibility is going to be. He said the SEEC can look at those resolutions and see how they can meet those goals.

Other Matters by Committee Members or Staff

Ms. Turner said she would send out a doodle poll to help identify a larger space for the new SEEC meeting location.

Ms. Turner informed the SEEC that Mr. Marty Little, Planner will be the Staff person attending the SEEC meetings in the future.

Discussion ensued on the Earth Day Celebration event held on September 7, 2018. Ms. Turner stated that the Planning Staff recommended having the next Earth Day event on Earth Day in April 2019. Ms. Turner said she did not know this event was not on the Jones House event schedule.

Member Furgiuele talked about the mandate from Council, he explained that if the agenda has too many items on it at one time nothing will be accomplished because there are too many complicated items to deal with.

Adjournment

Member LaPlaca made a motion, seconded by Member Scarboro to adjourn the meeting at 7:08 p.m.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Quint David, Chairperson

Marlene Crosby, Committee Secretary

Sept. 7, 2018

Boone Town Council and John— I first want to thank you for your generosity and foresight in helping with the \$100,000 grant to launch what is one of the most forward-thinking initiatives that any decision-making body can possibly make in our world. We are beginning on a 10-12 year effort to start the change that will lead to the world's energy system of the future, i.e. the building of a renewable energy system based on our local resources like solar and perhaps wind.

We all know that if one changes an important part of human efforts, it will affect others in significant ways. One of the most important ways is that the ability to produce clean renewable energy will make possible a means of revolutionizing our transportation system, namely shifting from polluting and climate- change-exacerbating fossil fuels such as gasoline and diesel to electricity.

The change from utility grid power to renewable sun- and wind-powered electricity is the basis of this ambitious project, in fact the only such project in our state at this time of which I am aware. I will take the rest of this brief project description with several specific suggestions. I would expect this little list to generate evaluation of its ideas, and perhaps lead to other ideas both of how we do it and what else we could do that you might like to propose. I want to make it clear that we look to you folks, our partners, for ideas of other related aspects of this project we might want to consider.

*** Build a renewable energy system of solar and perhaps wind that will provide electric power for all the Town's needs, including to power the transportation system for the Town's approximately 140 vehicles and perhaps for electric buses.

*** Include a well-designed plan to utilize as appropriate all solar sites from existing rooftops, to plans from the ground up for any planned buildings such as those on the old Bolick property, parking lot covers, and ground-based solar.

*** Begin during this fiscal year or as soon as possible to purchase electric vehicles. Develop a three-year plan to purchase the first electric vehicles.

*** Install solar collectors beginning this fiscal year to build momentum.

Respectively Submitted, Dr. Harvard Ayers

Hello SEEC:

Following is the list I promised of obstacles and opportunities for clean energy in NC and Boone. There's a good list at <http://www.ncwarn.org/policy-roadblocks/> I realize some of these would take years to happen, and would only happen with changes at the legislature (North Carolina General Assembly). However, I believe SEEC should consider taking positions on the following suggestions:

- We could implement '**on-bill financing**' i.e. pay for Energy Efficiency (EE) and Renewable Energy (RE) with bill reductions (i.e. bill savings from RE/EE). Also, NC's **EE goals** could be much higher, and remain cost-effective.
- We could implement **retail net metering** (i.e. utility credits customer for electricity fed into the grid the same amount that customer pays for electricity from the grid; in other words, what we have now is that while the average BREMCO customer pays ~11 cents/kWh, if that same BREMCO customer feeds solar electricity into the grid, the customer is paid 5 cents/kWh)
- We could implement **LED streetlights**
- We could implement a **Right to Self-Generate**, or **Solar Bill of Rights**; right now, NC doesn't have what's called 'third party' access to the grid, in other words, **ONLY** the incumbent utility can sell electricity. Practically speaking, this prevents households and businesses from *financing* solar so that it can be paid for over time, rather than a lump sum up front. See this PPT for a map of which states do not have third party solar -- and notice that the entire southeastern U.S. doesn't allow this critical policy. <http://www.dsireusa.org/resources/detailed-summary-maps/> (click on Third Party PPT)
- We could implement **community solar**; currently, Duke Energy has committed to 20 MW of community solar per year; however, to put this in context, NC currently has 33,000 MW of power, so 20 MW is a very small amount. <https://www.eia.gov/state/print.php?sid=NC> Also, nearly all utilities -- including cooperatives like BREMCO and municipal electric systems -- purchase all power from Duke Energy.
- We should be able to add **LED streetlights** at a cost savings.
- Other states are using **Community Choice Aggregation** to allow cities and counties to aggregate load, and then purchase clean energy on the open market.
- Although NC has **PACE, Property Assessed Clean Energy**, it's not being utilized as the requirements are too complex.
- The North Carolina Utilities Commission (NCUC) does not hold **evidentiary hearings** for many critical dockets, such as Integrated Resource Planning. Evidentiary hearings would allow various parties, including wind, solar, battery storage and other providers to present clean energy solutions that can be vetted publicly.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Nancy