

TOWN OF BOONE
SUSTAINABILITY, ECONOMICS AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2017
5:30 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairperson Quint David, Vice-Chairperson Harvard Ayers, Christian Gentry, Bailey Winecoff, John Prickett, Benjamin Scarboro and Lee Ball

COUNCIL Charlotte Mizelle
MEMBERS PRESENT:

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Christy Turner, Senior Planner and Marlene Crosby, Committee Secretary

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson David called to order the meeting of the Boone Sustainability, Economics and Environment committee, held in the Planning & Inspections - Upstairs Conference Room located at 680 West King Street, at 5:32 p.m.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Member Scarboro made a motion, seconded by Member Gentry to adopt the agenda as amended with the addition of the topic of Carbon Reduction being added to the Discussion on Bio-Diesel Fuel.

Vote:

Aye – All
Nay – None

The motion passed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Member Ball made a motion, seconded by Member Scarboro to approve the September 14, 2017 meeting minutes as written.

Vote:

Aye – All
Nay – None

The motion passed.

STARS COMMUNITY RATING SYSTEM UPDATE

Chairperson David noted that the many classes of university students that have been working on the STARS system will give their presentation on it on December 11, 2017 from 2 pm to 4:30 pm in Room 17 of Katherine Harper Hall located off River Street on the university campus. Member

Ball and Member Gentry noted that they would more than likely be present for this presentation. Chairperson David noted that the Staff will send out an email reminder regarding this presentation.

ENERGY ACTION PLAN UPDATE

Vice-Chairperson Ayers said that he has been working with Mr. John Ward, Town Manager on the topic of renewable energy in the electrical and transportation categories. Vice-Chairperson Ayers said this would mean having 100 percent electrical vehicles which is not possible at this time.

Vice-Chairperson Ayers talked about his discussion with a sales person at the Boone Chevrolet dealership. He said that the sales person is researching some information for the Town's goal to have more electric vehicles.

Vice-Chairperson Ayers said that Ford and Chevrolet have made the announcement that they are coming out with more electric vehicles. Vice-Chairperson Ayers and the salesperson is going to meet with Mr. Ward to discuss this topic. Vice-Chairperson Ayers said they will ask Mr. Ward what types of vehicles the Town needs.

Vice-Chairperson Ayers talked about making electricity from fossil fuel.

Vice-Chairperson Ayers said there is a possibility of being able to add a capacity of several hundred kilowatts of solar to rooftops in the first year. He talked about in the first and second year of doing an extensive study of all the sites that we do have solar on.

Ms. Christy Turner, Senior Planner asked Vice-Chairperson Ayers if the electric vehicles are on the fleet-government price list. He said that Mr. Ward has that information.

Vice-Chairperson Ayers said that currently Chevrolet's electric car is called a Volt. It was noted that this type of car is too low to the ground to take on construction sites by the Planning and Inspections Department.

DISCUSSION ON BIO-DIESEL AND CARBON REDUCTION

Chairperson David said that in the City of Asheville, North Carolina carbon report, it states that they have 42 electric vehicle charging stations and seven hybrid buses. He said they started their 80 percent reduction goal in 2008. And they have already reached 29 percent towards the 80 percent reduction goal. He also said the City of Asheville initially set a two-percent carbon reduction goal (permanently attached).

Discussion ensued on the electric car chargers that are located on the Appalachian State University campus. Member Lee said there are four electric car chargers at the Legends parking lot located off of Hardin Street.

Discussion ensued on the possibility of installing a windmill on Howards Knob. Member Gentry handed out a copy of the wind studies that have been done on Howards Knob (permanently attached.) He said he has two legal opinions that a windmill can be placed on Howards Knob. He

said that the Town's position is that it is okay to put a windmill on Howards Knob under the current Ridge Law.

Discussion ensued on transporting a windmill to the top of Howards Knob. Member Gentry said the estimated cost to put a windmill on Howards Knob is \$3.6 Million Dollars which includes the \$500,000.00 for installation costs. It was noted that approximately another \$50,000 to \$100,000 for road infrastructure may be needed to get the windmill from Downtown Boone to the top of the mountain. It was noted that a crane with new technology may be needed to transport a windmill to the top of the mountain. It was noted that the installation company usually stays in constant contact with the weather while installing the windmill so they can adjust their movements with the weather changes.

Discussion ensued on the service life of a windmill. Member Gentry said it depends on the model but you can get around 30 to 35 years of service life from a windmill. It was noted that the service team for the windmill would have to come to Boone, North Carolina from Minnesota.

Discussion ensued on the date of the last change to the Ridge Law. Ms. Turner said she read that the last change was made in 1983.

Chairperson David said the committee's renewable energy goal for the Town of Boone is to be 100 percent which is the equivalent of eight-megawatts of solar.

Chairperson David pointed out that a two-megawatts from a wind turbine is different than two-megawatts from solar. He said that the wind turbine method might produce more energy than the solar method could do to produce energy. He said there are wind model programs that can tell exactly how much energy one wind turbine can get the Town of Boone. He suggested using a wind model program to see how much energy can be obtained from it.

Member Ball asked if the Town is required to do bids on work for solar and wind. Chairperson David said yes. Member Ball asked if the wind farms in Northwestern North Carolina are built out completely. He said if they are it would be convenient to use that same company for the windmill in Boone to help reduce the costs of installation, etc. Member Gentry said he would research that company and the costs associated with it. He asked if there is a way to get around the RFP process. Chairperson David said when the committee discusses the Energy Action Plan, he would suggest bringing someone in from the Town of Boone and Appalachian State University to answer these type questions.

Chairperson David talked about the City of Asheville making a goal in 2008 to reduce their carbon footprint by two percent. And in 2011 the City of Asheville made a goal to reduce their carbon footprint by four percent.

Chairperson David talked about the City of Asheville's goal to reduce the amount of carbon emissions 80 percent by 2050 and to reduce waste by 50 percent by 2035. He said that the City of Asheville has reached over one-third of their carbon reduction goal and 6.9 percent of the waste reduction goal (permanently attached).

Discussion ensued on reducing the carbon footprint in the Town of Boone. It was noted that rooftop solar is a part of the 100 percent renewable energy and the eight megawatts goal. Chairperson David asked the SEEC committee, if they wanted to recommend to Council the goal to reduce the carbon footprint in the Town of Boone by two percent.

Chairperson David explained that about two months ago the Council approved the long-term goal for the Town to monitor and manage carbon emissions and compile a zero-carbon report similar to Asheville, North Carolina (permanently attached). He said that extra money could be spent on planting trees or extending the greenway, start a composting program or a bicycling program because these types of things would help meet the carbon reduction goal as well.

Discussion ensued on changing all of the street lights to LED bulbs to reduce the carbon footprint. It was noticed that this change would decrease the servicing of the light bulbs.

Motion and Vote:

Member Gentry made a motion, seconded by Member Prickett to recommend to Council to set a goal to reduce the carbon footprint by two-percent in the Town of Boone.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Ms. Turner noted that this proposed recommendation would be on the Council's December 2017 agenda.

DISCUSSION ON THE ENERGY ACTION PLAN TASK FORCE

Chairperson David explained that the Council approved the Energy Action Plan Task Force to discuss the topic of 100 percent renewable energy.

Chairperson David suggested that all the members of the Sustainability, Economics and Environment committee act as the task force members and discuss specifically the Energy Action Plan topic of trying to reach an eight-megawatt 100 percent renewable energy at the next two meetings. He suggested to have the next SEEC meeting on Thursday, December 14, 2017 at the Watauga County Library located at 140 Queen Street. He suggested inviting other people to discuss future budgeting for renewable energy. Chairperson David asked to be informed of any other people that would be invited to the next meeting and he would include them on the next meeting agenda. It was the consensus of the committee members to move the location of the meeting to the Watauga County Library for the next scheduled meeting of the SEEC.

It was noted that \$10 Million dollars would be needed to reach 8 megawatts of renewable energy and this money does not necessarily have to come from the Town of Boone.

Member Ball offered to talk to Mr. Ed Miller from New River Light and Power regarding the proposed windmill project and possibility invite him to the next meeting.

Chairperson David said that Buncombe County was able to meet half of their goal because Duke Power Company performed the solar installation on their landfill. It was noted that Buncombe County is making around \$7,000 per year from their landfill. He said that Duke Power is paying for everything and Duke Power is renting the landfill and it is costing Buncombe County zero to operate their landfill.

Discussion ensued on the open meeting laws and electronic email discussions. It was noted that all emails must go through the board secretary and because they are subject to public records requests. Ms. Turner reminded the committee members that no decisions should be made outside of a scheduled and advertised committee meeting.

It was noted that the Town of Boone is purchasing its electricity from New River Light and Power Company. Member Scarboro asked if the electricity power provider for the Town is going to change. Member Ball said that New River Light and Power will be purchasing their electricity from a different supplier in six years from a company called NTE around January 1, 2022. It will come from a natural gas power plant currently being built near Kings Mountain, North Carolina.

Ms. Tatyana Ruseva, Assistant Professor from Appalachian State University and the Department of Government and Justice Studies Department gave a brief update on a workshop that she attended. She said the workshop talked about actual carbon inventory and monitoring requirements and various types of projects that are being worked on in North and South Carolina such as forest management practices and forest conservation. She said she would share some of this detailed information from the workshop with the SEEC members.

OTHER MATTERS BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS OR STAFF

Set agenda for next meeting.

Chairperson David said he would review Energy Action Plans from other cities and have an open discussion about what the Town of Boone should to work towards renewable energy goal.

Chairperson David told the SEEC members that the Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon for board members will be held on Friday, December 8, 2017 at 11:30 a.m. at the Dan'l Boone Inn Restaurant.

Chairperson David told the SEEC members that as a result of the election results he and Member Mizelle will be going off of this committee in December of 2017.

It was noted that eight members is the limit for the SEEC committee which includes the two Council members.

Chairperson David confirmed that the next SEEC meeting will be on Thursday, December 14, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. at the Watauga County Library meeting room located at 140 Queen Street.

AJOURNMENT

Member Gentry made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairperson Ayers to adjourn the meeting at 6:42 p.m.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Quint David, Chairperson

Marlene Crosby, Committee Secretary