

ADOPTED

City of Keene
New Hampshire

CITIES FOR CLIMATE PROTECTION COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, January 4, 2017

8:00 AM

**2nd Floor Conference Room
City Hall**

Members Present:

Dr. Ann Shedd, Chair
Mari Brunner
Terry Clark, Councilor
Dick Cornelius, Alternate

Staff Present:

Michele Chalice, Planner

Members Not Present:

Peter Hansel, Vice Chair
Gary Lamoureux, Councilor
Megan Straughen
Larry Dachowski, Alternate

1) Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Shedd called the meeting to order at 8:00 AM. She introduced Dr. Chris Brehme of Keene State College (KSC) who will soon be a new member of the Committee.

2) Approval of December 7, 2016 Minutes

Councilor Clark made a motion to approve the minutes of December 6, 2016, which was seconded by Ms. Brunner.

Chair Shedd noted a correction on page six, paragraph two, under item six should read: "There is a telling graph from ISO which shows New England forecast demand with the addition of photovoltaic and energy efficiency measures."

The minutes of December 6, 2016 were accepted unanimously as amended.

3) Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Councilor Clark nominated Dr. Ann Shedd to continue as Chair of the Committee, which was seconded by Mr. Cornelius and carried unanimously.

Ms. Brunner nominated Peter Hansel to continue as Vice Chair of the Committee, which was seconded by Mr. Cornelius and carried unanimously.

4) Working Group Reports

Working groups did not meet last month.

5) GGEI Status

Ms. Chalice noted she is in the process of setting a meeting with Tim Murphy, Director of the Southwest Regional Planning Commission (SWRPC) about contracting services to finish the greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory report. The person the Committee is interested in, Ms. Brunner, has other commitments and deadlines so the discussion will continue.

Chair Shedd reminded the Committee that December 2015 was the end of the GHG emissions reduction deadline target. An Antioch student and KSC senior worked on the report last spring, both have now graduated. The data are in but a narrative report still needs to be developed and the Committee is struggling to get that completed. The data have been presented to staff many times for municipal feedback. It has the possibility to garner national attention if written carefully.

Councilor Clark asked how much work remains on the report. Ms. Chalice estimated 300 hours. Ms. Brunner noted if she is the one working on the report, it will take extra time to gain familiarity with the data, software, etc. The International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), of which Keene is a part, provided the Clearpath software to process and analyze the data for free. Dr. Shedd noted the City's membership in ICLEI is the only expense in the Committee's budget each year.

Councilor Clark suggested asking Council to add a line item to the City Budget to fund hiring someone to complete the report. Ms. Chalice replied the Committee has discussed having someone to keep track of the inventory on an annual basis. Chair Shedd added it is an unfunded mandate of the Comprehensive Master Plan and the Planning Department is too overextended. Councilor Clark suggested writing a letter to the Mayor and City Council requesting they look into hiring a professional to finish the report – for this final stage the Committee is unsure a student can effectively complete it because of the complexity of the data. Ms. Chalice noted that the Planning Director indicated there is some budget available for 300 hours at \$13/hour – but that was the student rate and the Committee now wants to hire a professional, so the cost will have to be adjusted. Ms. Chalice will continue this discussion with the Planning Director.

Next Steps: continue discussion with SWRPC, a project and position description, and continue working with the Planning Director.

6) Retreat Status – Plans for 2017

Ms. Chalice sent out a survey with potential dates, which she will share with Mr. Brehme. The retreat would ideally be from 4-6 PM. The Committee has tried to have a retreat each year to look at bigger picture goals. This will stay on the agenda for February. Ms. Brunner suggested looking again at the full Climate Action Plan to think about what has been accomplished and new targets. The Committee agreed a moderator from Antioch could be beneficial, Ms. Chalice will look into that. The retreat is open to the public and all details will be posted online.

7) Follow-Up Discussion: shared sustainability officer position

The Climate Action Plan written in 2004 calls for Keene to have a sustainability coordinator, which has yet to be fulfilled partially for budgetary reasons. The discussion has shifted to, if Keene can not afford such a position on its own, reaching out to other institutions and businesses who are interested in sharing that need. KSC, Antioch, and Franklin Pierce all have positions dedicated to sustainability. Ms. Chalice will solicit similar position descriptions for the Committee to use in guiding initial conversations with interested institutions. Chair Shedd and Ms. Brunner noted it might be easier sharing that position with another municipality as opposed to a business, which might not have the same objectives.

Ms. Chalice asked if it would be helpful to have Tim Murphy of the SWRPC come talk about this topic and Chair Shedd replied yes. Ms. Brunner, who works for SWRPC cautioned Mr. Murphy may not have much to contribute because a sustainability coordinator is not a planning position. Ms. Chalice replied she sees the sustainability coordinator as a planner. Chair Shedd said the higher priority right now is completing the GGEI report.

Ms. Chalice spoke with the Peterborough Development Officer and they have not considered a sustainability officer because there is insufficient funding. Still, all Peterborough municipal buildings are run without oil (using pellets, solar, etc.). The Committee also discussed crowdfunding as a potential funding source.

Chair Shedd noted the potential economic benefits of such a position align with the City's economic development goals. Additionally, such a position will require finding a professional with the right combination of skills. Many local institutions, like Antioch and Spirit of Place, may already have such a professional.

Next Steps: gather background on how other municipalities have approached this, find opportunities to bring multiple stakeholders together for discussion, and gather financial details.

8) Follow-Up Discussion: regional energy hub concept

Chair Shedd will share the mission statements of the six existing energy hubs with the Committee.

9) Follow-Up Status: Community Solar Advocacy Memo

Ms. Chalice has been in touch with the Mayor's office about the memo but has not seen a draft yet because the Mayor was away. Chair Shedd noted it is not as time sensitive as some of the other letters requested but she does not want it to fall by the wayside.

Chair Shedd will share a link to the New England Sustainable Energy Association website that tracks legislation. In the new legislation cycle, there are proposals to pull NH out of RGGI and eliminate the renewable portfolio standard. The Committee may need to ask the City for a letter again demonstrating what RGGI funding has done for Keene and potentially send a delegation to speak at the Cheshire County legislative hearing. The Committee has drafted such a letter in the past and Ms. Chalice will try to find that. Ms. Brunner reminded the Committee that the savings from RGGI are invisible to the tax payer, but everyone is saving because of it. She suggested calculating those savings to Keene taxpayers and said it would be a powerful message. Those figures could also be helpful to the City in requesting that RGGI not be discontinued. Chair Shedd will contact Kate Epsom of the NE Sustainable Energy Association about calculating the average rebate per household.

10) Adjournment – Next Meeting, February 1, 2017

Ms. Brunner announced the Monadnock Alliance for Sustainable Transportation annual meeting on January 18 from 4-6 PM at the HCS conference room in Keene. The focus is on improving car sharing in the region. The public is welcome to attend.

Charles Daloz of the Keene Agricultural Commission asked the Committee to keep agriculture in mind during their retreat and suggested to find out if Keene's sister city, Einbeck, is taking any climate actions.

The Committee discussed the increasing experimentation with solar lighting in Keene – some informational materials were sent to the committee. Councilor Clark will continue discussions with the Planning Department.

Hearing no further business, Chair Shedd adjourned the meeting at 9:06 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Katie Kibler, Minute Taker