

Conservation Advisory Commission Meeting

April 15, 2021 at 5:00 pm

Online Zoom © Meeting

MINUTES

April 15, 2021 via Zoom

CLIMATE SMART SAUGERTIES TASK FORCE (TF)

Convened 5:03 PM; Chair Mary O'Donnell presided.

Present: Skip Arthur, Carole Furman, Mike Harkavy, Patti Kelly, Susan Murphy, Mary O'Donnell, Nicole Roskos, Elizabeth Shafer, Leslie Surprenant, Steve Wehr, Mary Anne Wrolsen,

Public: Kayleigh Zalonga, Cindy Saparito,

Representing Town of Saugerties: Vernon Benjamin, Town Board Liaison John Schoonmaker

Approval of Minutes Mary moved to approve minutes as amended (Mary Anne Wrolsen added to participants); Skip seconded; approved.

Clean Energy Community (CEC)

Climate Action Plan Annual Report – Greg Chorvas (Superintendent Parks and Buildings) reported that a new ice rink chiller will result in an estimated annual savings of \$32,811 – more than \$27K annual savings estimated. Mary updated the report with this figure.

Mary proposed renaming annual report “Annual Progress Report” - approved.

High Impact Actions Update – TF goal is to accumulate 3000 points in the CEC program for the town to obtain a \$10,000 grant. The town has 1600 points. High Impact Actions were identified at the February TF meeting.

Updates on the identified actions:

- Electric vehicle (EV) charging station and EV – T.F. had anticipated gaining 100 points for an EV purchased by the town but got only 100 points for EV Charging Station and none for EV. TF discussed and expressed concern as to why points for multiple EV Charging Stations or for the electric vehicle cannot be gained. Mary will resolve this with the new Community Coordinator and bring concerns to program managers.
- If implemented, Community Choice Aggregation (CCA), would make the town eligible for 1500 points in the CEC program and additional points in the Climate Smart Community program.
- NY Stretch – Kathleen is working on a CEC \$5K Grant Program thru NYSERDA (NYS Energy Research and Development) that will result in an additional 1200 points if the Town adopts the new NYStretch Code - a model code for New York jurisdictions to use to meet their energy and climate goals by accelerating the savings obtained through their local building energy codes. A presentation to the Town Board was scheduled for 4/21. If the Board adopts the code, it must be filed with DOS within 30 days. Deadline to adopt is December 31.

- Benchmarking – Carole working on it; time consuming; needs building-by-building information collection, 2-year comparison, and reporting. Discussion on benchmarking policy set up and available for consideration / adoption by town. Policy adoption makes town eligible for 300 points.

Mary noted that DEC is working to align its Climate Smart Community program with and NYSERDA’s Clean Energy Community program and is revising some actions.

Community Solar (CS) and Community Choice Aggregation (CCA)

CCA Outreach Update – Presentation made to Town Board on Community Solar and Community Choice Aggregate. CCA is opt-out. Some TF members met with Jeff Domansky – TF want 100% renewables in CCA. Joule is drafting letter for public to be sent to residents after RFP process results in supplier of renewables. Joule’s draft press release being reviewed. Low public turnout for online public outreach. Need to better reach and communicate with public. Some TF members will meet with Jeff D. to discuss concerns about public reaction if there is not sufficient outreach (letter, postcard) prior to receiving opt-out letter from Town / Joule. TF workgroup will draft outreach piece for discussion with Joule.

Climate Smart Community Pledge Element (PE) 9 – *Inform and Inspire the Public – Climate Change Education and Engagement.* Cornell Cooperative Extension proposed we participate in a project that would provide a template for Climate Smart Saugerties PE 9. Mary asked for more details. No action taken.

Multi-Family EV Charging Stations – Steve W. presented to the Town Board a draft code requiring new multi-family buildings provide EV charging stations for 10% of their parking capacity. Town has drafted law codifying proposed code. Public hearing 4/21. Planning Board drafted letter of support.

Electric Vehicles for Police Dept – Steve has been discussing the potential purchase of 1 or 2 hybrid cruisers with the police department. Hope to be able to use grant funds for purchase.

Announcements – Elizabeth S. reported that a presentation on Native American sites at Danskammer was going to be shown online.

Meeting Adjournment - Skip moved to adjourn the meeting, Steve seconded, approved. Meeting adjourned at 6:15pm.

CONSERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

MINUTES

Regular CAC Business 6:15 pm

Present – Members: Leslie, Mary, Elizabeth, Skip, Mike, Vernon, Carole, Niccole, John Schoonmaker, Mary Ann Wrolson, Town Board Liaison John Schoonmaker

Public: Kayleigh Zalonga

Approval of Minutes - Elizabeth moved to approve March meeting minutes, Skip 2nd. Approved.

Public Comment – Kayleigh Z. told CAC she was joining the meeting and was interested in seeing what CAC is doing.

Ashokan Reservoir Releases Update - Ulster Co Environmental Management Council is working on turbid water release issue. Ulster Co Environmental Office has consultant reviewing DEIS (Draft Environmental Impact Statement) proposals and deficiencies and alternatives to dealing with turbidity. Reviewing DEP's response to turbidity issue and deficiencies in its response.

Mary will send Riverkeeper's resolution – can use as information or model for Town's statement. Town Board has passed resolution opposing turbid releases. Discussion about potential sedimentation that may result from continued turbid water releases.

Ashokan Pumped Storage Project

Developer proposing a pump storage project under a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission preliminary permit using the Ashokan Reservoir canceled its proposal. Developer has indicated it will continue to pursue other locations in the vicinity of large waterbodies in this region.

Bristol Beach Grant Opportunity– Mike H. conducted a site visit to review progress in developing access to Bristol Beach. Discussion regarding potential to apply for Hudson R. Estuary grant for public access to river including access for people with disabilities. Future effort – grant writing for interpretive signage.

Announcements - Ecology Class – Leslie S reported that she finished teaching her 6-week online class offered to CAC and EMC. Participants were interested and engaged.

Meeting Adjournment - Elizabeth S. moved, Mike H. 2nd – Approved. Meeting adjourned 6:50 PM.