

Agenda and minutes for Climate Emergency Task Force 8/9/21

Call to Order: 4:09PM Erin Cough, Brian Booher, Norm Burdzell, Tobin Peacock, Millard Dority, Jen Crandall,

Acceptance of the Minutes: TOBIN MOVES TO ACCEPT, NORM SECONDS All in favor, Millard abstains.

Acceptance of the Agenda: Tobin moves to accept, Millard seconds. All approve.

Public Comment: none

Regular Business:

1. *Election of officers:* Brian would like to step down as chair, and Ruth would like to do it. Brian moves to nominate Ruth as Chair, Millard seconds. All approve. Millard moves that Tobin be vice chair, Brian seconds. All approve. Brian moves for Jen to be secretary. Millard seconds. All approve.
2. *Thoughts on CES presentation at 7/26/21 meeting-* Jen: I think they know what they are talking about and thought their recommendation of buying RECs and pursuing local green power source was good. It sounds like they would be good to employ to analyze the cost benefits of the Higgins Pit Solar Farm and whether or not the Town should keep the RECs, own the farm outright, outsource etc. I propose we recommend hiring them. Tobin: felt like we should back off immediately buying RECs. Some RECs really promote more green electricity production in our area and we should do more research to buy those types if that is what we want to do. Also the Town should support the State's greening of the grid. Still a firm believer in distributed energy so the more solar that is being produced locally the better. Norm: not our job to figure out HOW the town gets green energy but our job to make a recommendation to do it. Figuring that out is beyond our scope, so the Town can hire CES or not but it is not our job. Maine Power Options may have options for the Town. Don't buy RECs from a Texas solar farm. Erin: The Council discussed that a % of our energy is already from green sources and we do have an energy broker (Maine Power Options). We don't want to buy RECs from Texas but if we are helping to make sure that local farms get built the Town is more likely to buy those. That specific recommendation going forward to Council would be heard. Using a power broker like CES could be a segway to showing the council that we need a sustainability coordinator. Brian: the % of renewable energy is not that great and some of it is biomass burning so not really renewable. Norm: CES gets their power from different sources which is how they can get a higher % of renewables. Brian: The Town won't know what to do with a general recommendation. We need to send them very specific recommendations. Let's let the ghg audit do the work for us in terms of pushing this forward. If the Town doesn't sell the RECs from the local panels on the public works building then it will show in the ghg audit. Selling RECs offsets costs but not ghg. Tobin: politically concerned that our first recommendation from the task force is one that costs money. Looking at the long game is how we should go forward. Where do we want to be in 5 years? If we don't buy RECs now, but in 4 or 5 years the State's mix (of green and brown energy) goes way down then that is OK, as long as they don't go up in the meantime and we could have a bigger splash down the line. Erin: If we can buy the solar panels on the high school and build a new energy efficient elem school those two things will be huge in terms of our ghg reduction. There are some steps we can take that will slowly drop us down. Brian: we don't have that kind of time...this is a climate emergency. Tobin: does anyone else have realy concerns about a costly recommendation coming out of this? Jen: I think we have to honor the

emergency. Of course it is going to cost a bit more. Tobin: thank you! Brian: depends on how much \$ we are talking about. If we can show that for X dollars we can get our ghg down to zero the Town can decide if it is worth spending the money. Millard: the concern is real. There are folks who don't believe. Many folks won't be willing to pay more for a problem they don't believe in. Norm: is it possible to find out when the Town's energy contract run out? If there is a penalty to get out of the contract we might have to wait. Erin: I will ask Cornell and if we are going to buy our RECs on the public works building. Also what does the current power broker cost the town? CES charges 0.03%. Erin: can we use our parking revenue to offset the costs of reducing our ghg? The total this year is almost \$2 million. Norm: for Jax's perspective they pay less for their green energy through CES than for the brown energy (about a 50/50 mix). Erin: if we look harder at the state recs, would it be a good time for CES to make a small presentation to the Council. Tobin: yes, especially once we get some of our questions answered. Norm: we should have the Town draft an RFP to see if there are other providers. Millard: we could even pay CES to do a presentation to remove any potential sense of patronizing. Erin: or we can ask Cornell to write an RFP. Brian: there might be a deadline so we need to move quickly.

3. Continuing work on Climate Action Plan.

i. *Suggestions of consultants who could assist with CAP*--Norm has 2 names that he can ask. Tobin talked to Laura Berry who does environmental consulting. She might be interested. She will also get back to Tobin with any other ideas. Millard: a possible student who might work on this in the fall...Anne Kozack will suggest some names. **Calli Martinez** is a 4th year student who works for Millard. She is excellent and is possibly interested. Needs to know the scope of the job. Millard could ask her to come in. Norm: all for having students work on this. It is part of our education goal. Millard: what do we need? Tobin: clean it up, fact check, compare it with others, what is missing in ours? Millard: will ask her to come to our next meeting after she gets out of work at 5pm.

ii. *Ruth/Sirohi steps to completion*: (Brian took these steps and lined them up next to Tobin's timeline to see how they align. Discussion of where we are and what needs to be done when is listed under Aug 9 heading).

1. 1) (in the works) Review CAP as a group with the following questions in mind as we look at each action step or strategy: 1. Do we all agree with this item? 2. Is it clearly written, or could it be improved? 3. How high of a priority is this item?
2. 2) Add/Amend for department head feedback
3. 3) Compare our CAP with other town's CAP examples - are we missing something important? Is there better wording to use? Do we have something none of the others do & if so, why? - Email with ideas on this process to follow...
4. 4) Finalize our first full draft as a group!
5. 5) Initiate a Public Workshop to review the document and get public feedback. Possibly develop a survey for before (to help us

figure out how to facilitate the workshop), or after the workshop (if we have lingering questions)

6. 6) Make final revisions based on workshop feedback
7. 7) Present to the town council!

iii. *Current steps and timeline:*

1. June 28 - overall review and task assignments
 2. July 12 - content review/ design thinking
 3. July 26 - public input/department head feedback
 4. August 9 - public input/department head feedback
- Jen: Have all of these been done? Can we get their feedback into the CAP? Norm: we should debrief those interviews at the next meeting? Any actionable feedback should go into the CAP. Erin: leary of having direct public feedback on the action plan. The public should be brought in after the Council has had a chance to look at it. Millard and Tobin: totally agree! Now realize that it needs to happen after the Council gets a look at it. Norm: but don't we want some feedback to inform the action plan. Erin: yes that is different from getting feedback on the Plan. Jen: we don't want to open the floodgates for people to dump on us but put out a specific set of questions to get responses to. Tobin: "please come to this public forum where we discuss specific topics" Millard: maybe we have a meeting where we invite Nina to facilitate a discussion in which we tell the audience what we have been up to and ask for their input on 4 questions. Didn't we ask Nina to get us info that has been asked already on recycling etc. Millard is willing to touch base with Nina again to get that info. Brian: one question: would you be willing to see your taxes go up a little if it meant that our ghg emissions go down? Tobin: you can phrase questions on a survey to get what you want. We need to be careful how we do this. What do we really want to get out of public feedback? Brian: not a one word answer. We send surveys, we hold forums, we keep asking and it might not be pretty. Erin: but what are you going to do with the feedback? Is it going to be encompassed into the CAP? Brian: the questions will give us information to inform us in how we go forward. Erin: we are already a task force so we need to take the community information and make it part of an action to take to the council. We don't want to take the time to get feedback if it is going to delay our going to Council unless the feedback will change what we bring to Council. We need to be aware of our timeline. Our timeline as written is probably not realistic. We are looking at the end of September before getting poll results back. Sept 13th as deadline for hiring an editor. So sometime in the next month and a half have the survey go out or have a live forum. Millard: we are looking for confirmation that we are going in the direction. Tobin: we are looking for holes and affirmation. Erin: so content review isn't going to happen before end of October. Tobin: budget starts in October. If we present our recommendation to the Council in Nov or Dec are we too late to be part of the budget process? Erin: no, it gets presented in Feb. It

is presented and reviewed in Jan which means they had to have met with dept heads by end of Nov (nothing happens in Dec). We need to have an CAP to show Council by Nov. Will the CAP have a timeline? Tobin: let's give ourselves some deadlines of Jan to work on timelines within the CAP. Erin: it should be reviewed annually. Also you can't have a budget number until you have a priority, an RFP, and then an estimate of cost. We need to think about some of the budget stuff while we finalize this CAP. Erin: this will be a living document that we keep revising and working. Another thing we should be a voice in helping to inform is the Comprehensive Plan.

What about a workshop day to get some of this pounded out? Brian will see if we can come to the BH Yacht for a half day.

Tobin: are there any community members we want to target to look through our CAP? Ken Colburn?

RECAP: Brian and Tobin will get questions to us for Aug 23 mtg, then Nina can get those questions up to the public in 4 or 5 days (Millard will call her tomorrow). Poll stays up until Sept 13. If we get dept head feedback by then as well that will give us lots of good feedback. Review that info at 9/13. Have an editor for CAP by 9/ 20/21. (Deb Webber has a consulting co and proposed her services. Brian knows her and she may be another candidate). Check in with editor on week of Oct 11. Final draft of CAP for us on week of Oct 25. Bring to Council which meets on Nov 16 so have presentation ready by Nov 8.

5. August 23 - review and incorporation of public feedback
6. September 13 - content review
7. September 21 - Final review
8. September 22 - Present to council

4. **GHG Audit – where to next?** (recommendation to council? ongoing data tracking) At last meeting Brian volunteered to keep the audit data going. Tobin: do you want to recommend to us at the next meeting which software you want to use? Brian: maybe next year. Keeping it the same right now. Can't buy something until we have a person hired to do this formally and for the foreseeable future. They should choose the program.

Approve? i. Audit collection tools like Clearpath.

ii. Add 2020-2021 data for tracking – Brian and other members from TF on CE?

5. **Sustainability Coordinator discussion.**

Millard. i. RFP samples from Jennifer & Brian &

municipality. ii. Speak with Sustainability Coordinator for

for this position. Did this happen? iii. Council rep reports to council on need

Future agenda items: if burning items, send them to Ruth. Brian has been keeping a running tally of parking lot items.

Other business: Erin: do we want to do a workshop meeting? Brian: Can it be on a Saturday? Aug 21?

Motion to adjourn: Norm moves, Millard seconds. All approve.