



City of Middletown
CLEAN ENERGY TASK FORCE
MINUTES
MEETING OF FEBRUARY 1, 2023, 6:30 PM
WEBEX

Members Present: Anna Salo-Markowski (Chair), Howard Weissberg (ex officio), John Giuliano, Vincent Loffredo, Ray Lumpkin, Mike Marino, Krishna Winston, Catherine Young

Members Absent: Demetrius D'Alessandro, Augie deFrance, Erin Dopfel, Christopher Holden (ex officio), Patrick McKenna, Sara Mendillo

Also Present: Kim O'Rourke (left at 6:55),

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 PM by Chair Salo-Markowski.

2. Approval of Minutes

The January meeting having lacked a quorum, there were no minutes to approve.

3. Old Business

A. Modification of Agenda

The Chair asked for a motion to amend the agenda to allow discussion of CETF's Web sites to take place first. M. Marino presented the motion, seconded by V. Loffredo. The motion was adopted unanimously.

B. Discussion of CETF's Web Presence

The Task Force members agreed that it made sense to merge the two Web sites, and the following components should be kept:

- The Common Council's resolution on the climate emergency;
- The calendar of meetings for the current year;
- A list of Task Force members;
- Contact information for the Chair;
- The WebEx link for meetings;
- Dashboards for municipal renewable-energy facilities;
- Other relevant data such as numbers of solar-panel and heat-pump installations, energy audits, etc., and monetary and energy savings realized;
- Information on measures individuals, businesses, and the City could take to reduce energy use and convert to renewables, with summaries of past accomplishments and current projects.

As for the format of the site, there was general agreement that more visual elements should be included, such as a graphic representation of the monetary and environmental comparison between energy supplied from fossil fuels and that supplied from renewable sources.

C. Electric Conversion

H. Weissberg reported that he, Director Holden, and the manager of the City fleet had met to discuss possible conversion of tools. He said two of the utility trucks were equipped with power inverters that

could charge the batteries of non-emergency-use tools such as weed-whackers and drills. Attention needed to be paid to standardizing electrically powered equipment so that batteries could be swapped from one device to another. Later in the meeting the Task Force discussed Westport's ban on gasoline-fueled leaf-blowers, which had been enacted after five years of deliberation. M. Marino stressed the advantages of using incentives rather than outright bans, the difficulty of policing bans, and the risk of alienating neighbors from each other. In response to a question from R. Lumpkin, he offered to contact Westport to learn how landscapers and other heavy users of motorized equipment had dealt with the conversion. K. Winston suggested educating residents on the harms caused by engine noise and emissions. C. Young urged advocating for conversion and having the City show the way. J. Giuliano reminded the Task Force of the problems associated with disposing of depleted batteries and of the harm to human health and the environment caused by mining for lithium and cobalt.

D. Presentation on EV Chargers to Chamber of Commerce

No report

E. Building Committee Updates

The Chair proposed scheduling updates only at every other meeting unless new developments needed to be reported.

F. New Positions for Energy and Sustainability

K. Winston reported that she and the Chair had received no response from the Mayor to their letter inquiring about progress toward posting the two positions. V. Loffredo reminded the Task Force that any new positions would have to be approved by the Common Council, and that the Mayor's budget proposal for the coming fiscal year FY24 would be due by April 1. He and M. Marino commented on the typical slowness of municipal processes and encouraged members of the Task Force to speak at public meetings about the importance of the two positions. R. Lumpkin noted that the idea of energy efficiency was rapidly catching on, along with awareness of environmental hazards such as the carcinogenic chemicals in firefighters' gear to which they were exposed when the gear was worn or carried in the truck cabs. The Chair commented that without an energy coordinator it was difficult to keep track of relevant legislative opportunities at the State and Federal levels.

4. Adjournment

There being no New Business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Krishna Winston, Secretary pro tem