

APPROVED
Hartford Climate Advisory Committee
May 6, 2020

Present: Erik Krauss, Jack Spicer, Courtney Williamson; Alan Johnson, Selectboard Liason; Geoff Martin, Energy Coordinator

Act 92 Compliance: Geoff read the Statement of Act 92 Compliance.

Additions/Changes to the Agenda: No additions or changes were made.

Introductions: Everyone introduced themselves and explained why they wanted to serve on the Climate Advisory Committee (CAC).

Election of Officers: Jack noted that he will be moving out of Hartford in the near future, and as such does not feel it is appropriate for him to serve as Chair even though he was the chair of the short-term Climate Action Committee. Jack suggested that Erik would make a good chair, as he has had experience and knows the subject well. Erik said he would be happy to serve as chair, but that he looked at the formation of this committee as a blank slate, and that any member could be chair. Erik also pointed out that Jack can continue to be a member of the committee even after he moves because two members of the committee can be non-residents.

Jack nominated Erik for Chair and Courtney seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Jack nominated Courtney for Vice Chair and Erik seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Courtney nominated Jack as Clerk and Erik seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Geoff agreed to take minutes for this meeting.

Alan noted that the committee can always elect new officers when more members join the committee, so these positions do not have to be permanent.

Review Committee Charge and History: Erik discussed the history of the committee, as well as the goals that the committee is working towards achieving (carbon neutrality for the municipality by 2027; net zero GHG emissions town-wide by 2030). He stated that the committee has been charged with developing an action plan to meet the net zero goal by the end of September. There is \$30,000 budgeted for a consultant for the action plan.

Erik mentioned that the committee will have to constantly refer back to the Climate Emergency Resolution to ensure progress towards the goals of the resolution, and use the action plan as a guidance document. Erik noted that meeting the carbon neutrality goal will need to heavily involve Town staff, but that the committee and the public should be a part of the conversation about the type of equipment used, etc. The committee should also address the types of carbon offsets the Town should or should not use and help develop policy to that effect. Jack added that offsets are a tricky subject, which is why the committee needs to be involved as much as possible in those discussions.

Erik mentioned that going forward, the Town will need to account for GHG emissions in the same way that it does financial accounting. It should be a rigorous, transparent process. The CAC should advise the Selectboard on best practices around carbon accounting.

Courtney pointed out that as the CAC develops projects, there will be a need for interested citizens to come to meetings and participate. Erik commented that the last part of the CAC's charge is to collaborate with parallel committees, school board, etc.

Jack thought that these new goals and targets necessitate an expanded roll for the Energy Coordinator, and asked how the Energy Coordinator position was created. Alan explained the history. Jack noted that this history is important in case the CAC advises the Selectboard to expand the Energy Coordinator role or hire another staff member to help. A discussion followed on the need to ensure that the next Town Manager is aware of and understands the carbon neutrality and net zero goals.

Regular Meeting Schedule for 2020: Erik suggested that the CAC should meet monthly. He mentioned that there may be a need to call special meetings in between regular meetings in order to get the job done, and to have work group meetings as well.

Courtney moved to schedule regular meetings at 5 PM on the second Wednesday of the month. Jack seconded. The vote passed unanimously. The next meeting will be next Wednesday, May 13th.

Identify and Prioritize initiatives, Draft Work Plan: Erik noted that the action plan has a looming deadline. He suggested the CAC consider what it will need a consultant for. He thought that the CAC could look at the Energy Chapter of the Town Plan to see what pieces will work for getting to net zero. But he thought that a consultant could provide assistance with modeling and examining different policies for legality and ease of implementation.

Alan suggested looking back at the RFP the Energy Commission put together for a consultant on the Five-Year Energy Action Plan. **Geoff will find the RFP and send to the committee.**

Jack suggested contacting Burlington because they developed a plan to get to net zero by 2030. **Geoff will try to get the RFP and send to the committee.**

Alan thought that the recovery from COVID could be done in a way that accelerates climate action. Courtney agreed and suggested that a focus of the committee should be on the recovery and ensuring a just and fair transition. The CAC should be ready with ideas of how to spend recovery money when it comes.

Erik asked if there were any other action items the committee should start working on besides developing the action plan. Jack said finding new members should be a top priority, and that

the posting for the committee should be moved back to the top of the Town website. **Geoff will ask Lana to repost.**

Erik mentioned that he is working on getting someone to join who would be very helpful. She hasn't committed but has volunteered to assist. Alan suggested Paige Heverly, and a discussion followed about regenerative agriculture. Alan thought there is real potential for Hartford to be a leader and make a difference on this subject.

Courtney suggested posting the opening for the committee on "Daybreak". Erik thought that the CAC should actively recruit members, in addition to getting the message out. Alan suggested making the committee an inter-town and inter-state committee. **Everyone agreed to bring a list of people they thought would be good additions to the CAC.**

Geoff suggested that the CAC could start accounting for the Town's GHG emissions.

Jack thought the CAC could start examining offsets and recommending a policy for offsets. Erik pointed out that even though this is important, it may not be a priority now because the Town won't need to purchase offsets until 2027.

Jack moved to adjourn the meeting, and Courtney seconded. The vote passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:46.

Respectfully submitted,

Geoff Martin