

Task Force on the Climate Emergency  
Agenda for meeting 6/14/2021, 3:30 PM.  
Location: Bar Harbor Municipal Building

1. Call to order 3:32PM in person! Brian, Sirohi, Tobin, Jill, Jen, Millard, Ruth, Margaret, Mike Gurtler, Cornell Knight, Norm. Erin Cough joined late. She will replace Jill on task force.
2. Approval of Minutes Millard moves to approve, Ruth Seconds. All approve.
3. Adoption of Agenda Tobin moves to adopt, Sirohi seconds. All approve
4. Public Comment. None
5. Regular Business
  - A. Discussion of new Electric and Energy codes to improve efficiency and reduce emissions. Presentation by Deputy CEO Mike Gurtler. Handout available. BH is currently at 2015 codes except for energy conservation codes IECC which is at 2009. As of July 1, we will be at 2020 code for Nat'l Electric code and 2015 of IECC. Most changes are in regards to safety, but some are for efficiency. Currently 7 changes of air in a house per hour is allowed. By July, reduced to 3 changes an hour. This will apply to new construction and must be certified by a third party. Insulation will increase to R20 + R5 continuous wrap. Every part of the envelope of the building will be insulated. Also, some level of mechanical ventilation. Lighting efficiencies will also be required. Sealed high efficiency recessed lamps for 75% of lighting. Millard: what sort of effect will this have on affordable housing? Tobin: maybe pricing will be impacted a bit. The challenge will be more for additions and refurbishment rather than new construction. Mike: this doesn't apply to modular homes and mobile homes. Those have to meet different standards adopted by the State. Brian: What is the science behind this? How much does this save? Mike: yes there is definitely science behind this. We are adopting 2015 but there is 2021 codes coming that are developed by building scientists. Tobin: Modern well built house is a lot more comfortable than a house with 7 air changes. You will see significant gains in energy savings. Mike: also new ventilation requirements include heat recovery and humidity controls (ERV or HRV) so that the house doesn't rot and so hot air isn't lost. There will not only be energy savings but carbon emission reductions. Certifications in air filtration and compliance paths are prescriptive, performance or through check list energy rating index. Some safety changes: all plugs will need to be GFCI protected, whole house surge protection, emergency disconnects. Next: we will go to 2021 codes-- all new houses will need to be EV ready.
  - B. In Person Meetings? We need to decide our meeting time and location. We are moving to in-person meetings and this time is not ideal for all members. We could keep meeting time and dates and meet in person,; we could petition the Council to allow zoom, or we could change the time and dates to meet people's needs. Jill: Town wants in-person to allow for more public access. Cornell: we can zoom as long as there is a State of emergency but the governor will lift the emergency on June 30. A bill is in front of the legislature to allow for public meetings to be on zoom. Ruth: can you call in? Cornell: yes, but you can't vote. Also other groups meet in this space and we might need to change time and dates anyway. We can meet online for 30 after end of emergency. Brian asks if we can meet elsewhere. Cornell: more of an issue with staff and other logistic challenges. Front page of Town's website has a list of when all groups meet and we can see what is available. Changing the start time would help Jen, Ruth, Margaret and Norm. Margaret: perhaps we can change our format so that we meet as a group once a month and then a workshop format for the other date. Sirohi likes that format change. We talk a lot during meetings but don't have time to get much done. **Brian moves that we meet in person on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month from 4-5:30PM, moving location within the building depending on what is available.** (if the law changes we will reconsider meeting virtually). Norm seconds. All in favor.
  - C. Sustainability Coordinator discussion.
    - i. Review JD for Sustainability Coordinator
    - ii. RFP samples from Jennifer & Brian & Millard.
    - iii. Speak with Sustainability Coordinator for municipality.

- iv. Full time or contract? Jen: don't we need to hire a contracted person to prove that their work is worthwhile and will save the Town money before we propose a full time person/new position? Ruth: it seems like a perfect role for a consultant would be to assess all of the buildings to make a plan prioritizing how to increase their efficiency. Then a sustainability coordinator could be hired to make the plan happen, or building managers could follow the plan. Norm: a consultant who is going to go through every building is going to be very expensive. \$200/hr. There will be a return to the Town on energy savings but it will be very expensive in advance. Brian: Town of York spent \$150k to make a plan and then hired a sustainability coordinator. Norm: we could use our money to have someone look at just this municipal building. Millard: we could reach out and see what it would cost. Then we can decide how much they do. If we need more money we request more from Council. Ruth: biggest fear is we spend \$30K is that we get info that we already know. We want to also know how much this will save us. Sirohi: we could hire someone to come up a very specific plan that can be followed by anyone and then a building manager could do the work. Tobin: there is opportunity for gains: any work that needs to be done is going to be expensive. There won't be a lot of low hanging fruit. My fear is that there won't be enough gains for what we can afford. We need to continue on big plans for carbon reduction for the town rather than focusing on specific buildings. Use the money on a consultant to help us get a plan finalized. Also we need to think about how we can get a salaried person maybe one that is shared. It will be hard to get a position that pays for itself in carbon reduction. Norm: let's use the money to get our plan in place and then focus on green power for the town and transportation. The plan makes recommendations to the Council. Margaret: our buildings are here and are made to last. Our vehicles are not. We should focus on them more and the source of our energy rather than efficiency. Erin: not sure if it is aware that the Town assessor and Mike Gurtler will share a car and will lease an EV. Norm: we can recommend in our plan that the Town hires a coordinator and they decide if they spend the money. Brian: where do we start? The work that we've done has been pretty broad. The plan can be wide and cover a lot of directions which is why it might be worth it to spend the money to write it. We just learned that other people are doing things in Town so we don't need to know all of it. A sustainability coordinator would be on top of all that stuff. Jill: what is the best way to open communication so we don't duplicate effort? Sirohi: make a spreadsheet. Ruth: we can add that to the action plan. Next task with action plan would be to go over it as a group and then Erin or Cornell can fill us in and then it can go out to Dept Heads who can make notes on it. Erin: Am I hearing that you want a plan that could be implemented by Dept Heads of the town? Jill: if we can't get the money to hire someone then maybe we need a consultant. Millard: Is there a chance that we can include more than just Bar Harbor in this? Can we share funding with another town? Jill: that is what led me to the League of Towns. The only towns that wanted in were the MDI towns and Swan's Island, but even among those towns they are not quite ready. Jen: Can we hire someone to help coordinate with the town to make the plan happen? Sirohi: we need to polish up the plan, hire someone to help us finalize it and then give it to the town with a recommendation that they hire a coordinator to make it happen. Millard: if we go that way we need to clear the agenda going forward to work on the plan until it is done. Jill: yes, but we are going to get mounting pressure to look at Higgins Pit. Is this something that we want to work on? How do we know if this is the right thing to do? Norm: it can be in our plan. Brian: I thought ACTT was going to do the analysis? Jill: they did one for Higgins Pit. Brian: no, they were going to do green electricity. Jill: there is a sense that ACTT wants to do Higgins Pit so I don't feel like they are an impartial group. Norm: I can approach the Jax consultant to do a free presentation on this. Margaret: didn't Cornell send us something about what the Town was doing with green electricity. It was a

confusing email. Can we have someone like the guy from the Lab look at the info and let us know what they think? Jill: wants the Council to have info on Higgins Pit and RECs side by side to make an informed decision, rather than a proposal that gets to Council and acted upon before the task force could get on the agenda. Ruth: didn't we decide way back with Spencer's audit that the Town go with RECs for the short term until Higgins Pit is in place or producing? Process suggestion: can we focus on the plan at these meetings and then have 1 or 2 people work on various other topics like the green energy outside of meetings and then present to task force. Erin: as a councilor that is the plan the council expects to hear. The education piece needs to be part of it so the council fully understands. Sirohi: Norm and Ruth should get the Jax consultant to come and give an unbiased presentation to us first for 15 minutes and then make a presentation to Town Council. For action plan: write up job description for consultant and then set up time at next meeting to finalize plan. (Competitive Energy Services)

v. Jill reports to council on need for this position.

D. ACTT Higgin's Pit Solar Feasibility study response from Council: where to go next? Table for now

E. GHG Audit – where to next? Table for now.

i. Review audit and present to council

ii. Add 2020-2021 data for tracking

iii. Hire an Americorps Vista Volunteer for a year to assist with sustainability efforts (update GHG audit, other?) Ruth: can we assign someone to research this?

F. Climate Network (MDI Towns, Swans Island and Lamoine).

1. Items for next meeting. 6/28/21 CES presentation. Action Plan.

2. Task Force Comments. 7/20 present benchmarking slideshow to council and then the Energy comparison one in August. Jen: we need to get Erin on the shared folders and email.

3. Adjournment: Jill moves, Margaret seconded all approve.

#### Future Work:

A. Tourism carbon impact

i. Cruise ships

B. Climate Justice-- acknowledge impact of climate change and its disproportional impact on lower socio-economic groups and the intersectionality with other crises like racial equity. Climate change impacts developing countries exponentially more than developed countries and the developing countries are not the ones benefiting from the use of fossil fuels etc.

C. Ground mounted solar array.

D. Community composting.

E. EV chargers

F. Town based incentives for new buildings or renovations to exceed code requirements for efficiency, build electric and/or incorporating solar into design. Tax break? Cash back? What could the town actually do to incentivize? Could you forgive the first year of property taxes on a new build if there a solar array of a certain size or all electric house or passive house level insulation? A few thousand dollars might be enough to encourage some best practices.

G. Public Outreach

i. Engage the BH Chamber of Commerce