

Sustainability Commission Meeting, April 17, 2023

Meeting Summary

SC Members in Attendance: Andrew Scholl, Rick Hawksley, Judy Nelson, Mary Starbuck, Mary Jayne Stone

Others in Attendance: Julie Morris, City of Kent; Bridget Susel, City of Kent

Julie Morris called the meeting to order at 5:32pm and roll was taken.

Julie advised election of officers was next on the agenda. Rick Hawksley made a motion to nominate as a slate Judy Nelson for Chair and Mary Starbuck for Vice Chair. Andrew Scholl seconded the motion. Discussion was offered and with none had, the vote was called. The motion passed unanimously.

Judy Nelson provided an overview of the Hudson Climate Roundtable event where she and Julie Morris presented on April 12th. Judy explained the purpose was to share information about the City of Kent's climate action process with the City of Hudson who is looking to start a climate action planning process of their own. Judy advised who the other panel participants were and they included: Linda Arbogast who is the Sustainability Coordinator for the City of Oberlin, OH; Albert Carbon who is the Public Works Director for the City of Oakland Park, FL; Greg Hannan who is the Community Development Director for the City of Hudson, OH; and Casey Weinstein who is the State Representative for Ohio House District 34 and who provided a state legislative briefing as part of his presentation.

In discussing the Hudson panel, it was asked by Mary Starbuck for clarification about what ICLEI stands for and what they do. Julie Morris accessed the ICLEI website to aid in answering the question and it was explained that the acronym ICLEI has changed over the years (it used to stand for the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives) but that while they have kept the acronym, they now refer to themselves as Local Governments for Sustainability. Judy Nelson and Julie Morris explained ICLEI's role in the development of our greenhouse gas inventory and climate action planning process.

The review of commission responsibilities will be tabled until next meeting, but it was noted that we follow Roberts Rules of Order for small groups and two key points were made: 1) allow others to finish speaking before talking oneself, and 2) do not email the group with any ideas to share or any other content that would require discussion (scheduling/dates etc. conversations are the exception to this) with the group in order to remain in compliance with Sunshine laws.

The process for getting new items added to the agenda and the proposed new agenda format was discussed. We will add a section item to the agenda, before the adjournment section, called Good of the Order/Open Comments that will serve as the place for members to bring ideas or items to the group so that they can be moved to the next month's agenda as New Business. Members can individually email or alert Julie about what they would like added to a meeting ahead of or in between scheduled commission meetings, or members can use that time on the agenda at the meeting itself to bring up the ideas.

Julie Morris reviewed the working database she is developing to hold all of the directives, information and action items that are outlined in our climate action plan (CAP). She walked members through each tab of the database, which correspond to each section of the CAP, and explained how they work. Julie also explained two other sections of the database that do not correspond directly to the CAP document, but that provide a place to house suggestions, ideas or other items being sent to Julie from various stakeholders, individuals and community

members regarding CAP action/initiatives (called Suggestions for Review), and a section called Funding that will help us keep track of what is being researched and/or pursued to help fund the CAP initiatives. Julie explained how the tabled business on the current commission agenda can be removed from same and added instead as items to the Suggestions for Review section of the database so that as we work through the CAP initiatives, we can move them accordingly to the sections of the CAP they correspond to or belong with. It was asked whether the database will be shared and if so, what levels of access people will have. Julie advised she will most likely remain the sole administrator of the database, and she and Bridget Susel advised that Julie will be checking with the City's IT director and others at the City to determine permissions and what is sharable and how, but we will be able to use it to help guide our prioritization discussions and implementation work during our commission meetings to start.

Discussion was had about how CAP implementation work will get done, the frequency of communication about the work to Council and the public, and ideas about various possible committee and subcommittees to handle areas of the plan were discussed. These topics will be continued as part of our further discussions around prioritization of the CAP work as we move into our working sessions in subsequent commission meetings after the CAP is approved by Council.

It was asked when the greenhouse gas inventory update suggested in the CAP would be started. Bridget Susel advised she will be making an appropriations request to Council to hire a consultant to complete the greenhouse gas inventory update, but that our intention is to start the update this year, using 2022 data as the baseline year for the update.

A motion to move to the proposed new agenda, which includes a section for Good of the Order/Open Comments, was made by Mary Starbuck and seconded by Rick Hawksley. Discussion was offered and after none was had, the vote was called. The motion passed unanimously.

Rick Hawksley had provided an idea to discuss the use of Citizen Assemblies as part of our community outreach process of CAP plan implementation. Rick shared a brief overview of what they are and why he feels they are important given their connection to Direct Democracy practices, and he will send Julie Morris a link to an article about same. Julie will send the article link to the Commission members for review so that members can come ready to discuss the idea at our next meeting. A motion to add discussion of the Direct Democracy/Citizen's Assembly article as new business at next month's meeting was made by Rick Hawksley and seconded by Mary Starbuck. Discussion was offered and after none was had, the vote was called. The motion passed unanimously.

It was asked whether the Commission could share a booth with the City of Kent at Heritage Fest this year to share news about the CAP. Julie Morris advised she will find out.

Mary Starbuck made a motion to adjourn and Andrew Scholl seconded. Discussion was offered and after none was had, the vote was called. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7 p.m.

The next Sustainability Commission meeting will be held Monday, May 1st, 2023, starting at 5:30 p.m. at the Overholt building.