



Environmental and Energy Stewardship Subcommittee

200 College Street, Room 310

May 20, 2022

Meeting Minutes

Subcommittee Members Present

Chairman Newman, Commissioner Wells, Commissioner Sloan, Lena Hansen, and Maggie Ullman

Staff Members Present

Sybil Tate, Jeremiah LeRoy, Jessica Hughes, Michael Frue, Jennifer Harrison, Rafael Baptista, Brandon Freeman

Commissioner Sloan called the meeting to order at 10:05am.

Approval of Agenda & Minutes

- *Terri Wells made a motion to approve the May 20, 2022, agenda and April 8, 2022 minutes, seconded by Maggie Ullman, and the motion passed with the vote.*

Public Comment

- There was no public comment.

Floating Solar Follow-Up

- Chairman Newman presented a draft resolution in support of a feasibility study for floating solar projects in Buncombe County.
- The Duke Energy plant was under construction and was unable to host an initial meeting regarding the floating solar project.
- Chairman Newman shared it is about four miles from the North Fork Reservoir to the nearest Duke Energy power plant and while it could be feasible it will come with a hefty cost.
- Commissioner Wells shared a hesitation with the cost versus benefit analysis between something that we know to be successful in this area versus this new project. Chairman Newman shared there is a possibility that these projects may not work but if they do Buncombe County would be leading the way in innovative solar projects.
- Lena Hansen and Maggie Ullman supported moving forward with the feasibility study to know whether this type of project would work well in this area or not.
- Chairman Newman shared the estimated cost of a feasibility study is between \$50,000-\$85,000 per site.
- Michael Frue stated it could be problematic to build floating solar and paying for the feasibility study on the Lake Julian site because it is private property.
- See Draft Resolution for full text.

Residential Services

- Dane Pedersen presented on residential services offers through Solid Waste.
- There is a power purchase agreement with Duke for landfill gas, this is a 3-year contract.
- Landfill expansion is underway, construction began in March 2022.
- Solid Waste had a study planned for FY24 to assess how landfill gases can be used.
- The Waste Pro contract endings in 2024 and an evaluation is underway to ensure residents are being served in the best way.



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- Charging residents monthly would be challenging as other governments show there is a high number is delinquency. Commissioner Wells asked if there was any research on if the convenience centers help lower the illegal dumping and/or burning.
- A convience center is specifically for residential users whereas transfer stations are for commercial stations.
- Solid Waste or Waste Pro could collect waste at the convenience centers and haul to the landfill. Convenience centers can take 5-10 years to site the locations of the center. Residents are typically not receptive to the centers being near their home which make it difficult to site.
- The Subcommittee supported moving forward with a study on convenience centers in Buncombe County.
- See Residential Services for full presentation.

Mountain Mobility Fleet Update

- William High shared a presentation regarding the Mountain Mobility fleet. See Mountain Mobility Fleet Update for full presentation.
- CNG is a carbon gas that has a lower carbon footprint than typical gasoline used in vehicles.
- Buncombe County only pays 10% of new vehicles, State pays 10% and the federal government pays 80%. There are limitations in place as to what type of bus or van that can be purchased as far as car manufacturer and gas types. Currently there are not options for electric within the approved vehicles from the federal level. If Buncombe County wanted to approve the purchase of electric vans or busses the county would have to pay full price for those vehicles.
- The Mountain Mobility fleet has future goals to be diverse in the vehicles available such as electric and gas vehicles. This would ensure there would not be a service disruption in case of gas shortages or power outages.
- The Subcommittee requested staff propose the appropriate EV phase in fleet while accounting for any safety or other regulations.

Review of Future Meetings

- Jennifer Harrison presented a review of future meetings.
- The next meeting will be on June 10, 2022 in-person at 49 Mount Carmel Road, Asheville, NC 28806

Adjourn

- *Terri Wells made a motion to adjourn at 12:11pm, and the motion passed with all in favor.*