

Town of Concord
Climate Action Advisory Board
Meeting of January 19, 2022

Attendees: Courtney Eaton (Chair), Michael McAteer, Paul Kirshen (notes), Warren Leon, Jake Swenson, John Bolduc

Staff: Amanda Kohn, Director of Sustainability

Select Board Liaison: None

Members of Public: None.

Opening: Discussed meeting schedules and clerks (see agenda). The minutes of the December meeting were accepted. Warren moved. Jake seconds. Unanimously approved.

Chairs Update: Courtney Easton is transitioning to Chair. There was general discussion about need to recruit 2-3 new members. Decided to advertise through Amanda's Sustainability Network Newsletter. There was some discussion about seeking an applicant to add diversity to CAAB, also perhaps add a high school student. Board requested that the Chair and Sustainability Director work together to finalize candidates.

Director's Update: Some discussion of holding a joint meeting with CSEC in the future.

The town supported the Home Rule Petition at a hearing with the joint Telecommunications, Utility, and Energy Committee. Hopefully the bill will leave committee with a favorable recommendation.

The town will be getting a UNH Sustainability Fellow to help with community engagement.

Several questions arose on the legislature to track at the state level. Amanda is going to get more information on the MA building ordinance bills including information related to residential energy and the Green Futures Act. More information was requested on the recent deal between Energy New England, which represents the municipal light plants,

and Vineyard Wind. What does the deal mean for the town's electricity supply and our emissions.

Vice Chair Discussion: There were no volunteers for the position. We decided to table a search for a few months until new members are added.

This prompted a discussion of the need for a process to decide upon Chair and Vice-Chair positions. Courtney and Amanda will draft a process for the board to review.

CAAB Priorities: In late 2021, CAAB started a process to select its priority projects for 2022. It was decided that Courtney and Amanda would assemble a workplan template for each possible action that would include the CAAB champion, steps to achieve it, staff resources etc. The work plan is to be submitted by each champion over the next 1 -2 months for discussion at the CAAB meeting. Amanda is available to help with this. Eventually this process will result in CAAB making recommendations to the town.

Warren wants to broaden the priority for financing residential upgrades beyond zero interest loans, which the board supported.

New Business:

- Paul recommended having some of the Town departments coming to speak. It would be interesting to hear what the DPW is doing in regards to vulnerability and preparedness since that hasn't been a major focus in the previous years. We could also have dedicated members to certain topics or departments.
- Jake supported that members could have meetings with other groups and staff members to get feedback and to also check in on progress. This could be something to add to the workplan.
- We need to draw upon the indicators in the blueprints. Courtney reiterated that it's helpful for us to go to other people rather than wait for them to come to us. We can reexamine liaison roles in the future.
- Amanda gave an example of how she reached out to departments to track the indicators in the blueprints.
- Courtney raised the discussion of how to obtain some of the infrastructure funding coming up and highlighted that the Select Board has an upcoming meeting on this. Need to figure out how this dovetails with other grants and potential funding streams.

- Assessing where we are at a regular interval. John proposed that we didn't need to do an emission inventory every year, but we should be tracking electricity and gas use, rebates, etc. Paul agreed that indicators that could be easily tracked each year would be helpful.
- Ithaca might be a good example to look into in the future to be more strategic. BlocPower is an interesting model. Ithaca raised \$100M, but BlocPower said they'd need closer to \$2B. Michael urged that we need more basic numbers for the transition of homes and other EVs so that we know how close we are to our goals.
- At the Concord Heat Electric meeting– 75% of the heat pumps installed were not engaged in the rebate or coaching program. So we need a strategic approach to targeting folks and tracking data.
- We also decided that at the February meeting we would discuss any articles we want to support for the upcoming Town Meeting and also review the possible use of sustainability indicators.

Jake motioned for adjournment. Warren seconded. Unanimously accepted. Meeting adjourned at 8 PM.