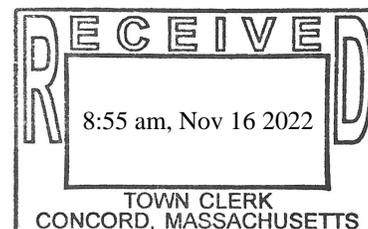


**Climate Action Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
September 21, 2022**



Pursuant to a notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, a virtual public meeting of the Climate Action Advisory Board (CAAB) was held on September 21, 2022, at 6:00 pm via Zoom.

Members present: Courtney Eaton (Chair), John Bolduc, Paul Kirshen, Jake Swenson, Brian Crouse, Ben Slayden, Gavin Colbert

Select Board Liaison: Matt Johnson

Staff: n/a

Members of the Public: n/a

1. Welcome (Courtney) [6:00]

- It's been several months, welcome back. We lost a few members and gained several.

2. Introduction of Existing & New Board Members [6:05]

- The members all introduced themselves to one another.
- New members are Ben Slayden and Gavin Colbert
- Ben Slayden – Moved here 8 months ago. Working for a start-up on decarbonizing transportation. Originally from Texas, worked for Lockheed Martin.
- Gavin Colbert – Grew up in Concord, recently moved back. Graduated from Dartmouth in sustainable energy. Interested in renewable energy, heat pumps, sustainable transportation.

3. Meetings and minutes (Courtney) [6:20]

- a. Approval of minutes from Joint June Meeting
 - The meeting minutes from the June meeting with CSEC were motioned for approval, seconded, and approved.
- b. Fall meeting availability / in-person vs. virtual
 - Team provided input on in person vs. virtual. Input provided on in person vs. virtual and a proposal for pushing back the start time to 7pm for in person
 - Question asked about when extension provided, clarified that it was extended to February.
 - Chair proposed that CAAB meet in person

4. Chair's update (Courtney) [6:25]

- a. Review of Board procedures
 - Created a process description for CAAB governance, roles and procedures.
- b. Membership policies
 - Started but didn't finish the process of evaluating the specific elements of the membership structure that were outlined in the charter and whether we want to provide more flexibility.
 - A suggestion was made to review the notes from the prior discussion we had on this topic as there were some thoughtful comments and discussion.
 - Courtney said she would follow up to find those notes and ensure they are available for CAAB to review prior to next time.
- c. Sustainability Director search update
 - Call put out for resumes for interest and there were many candidates and interviewed several but none of them blew folks away

- Decided not to make an offer to existing slate. Requisition is open and renewed search again to find the best candidate.
- Important to ensure people understand the nature of working in a municipal setting. Came out as part of feedback from the prior Directors.

Question asked about several of the items in the notes relating to the UNH intern, the middle school, and the hazard mitigation plan. Courtney said that CAAB was invited to send a representative of the middle school sustainability committee in lieu of former Director of Sustainability who has left. Meeting at 4pm. Question about middle school and geothermal. Some comments that the team evaluating the HVAC had participated in some evaluations with the firm hired to design building and provided input.

Comment that IRA could support middle school and the light plant with getting funding to support sustainable designs and on-site solar installation

Municipal fleet electrification study was presented to Select Board, Matt Johnson said that the study is informing action by the town departments.

5. HB5060, An Act Driving Clean Energy and Offshore Wind [6:40]

a. Updates from Select Board

- Courtney sent around the letter that the Town Manager sent to the MA DOER at the end of August seeking participating in the demonstration program prohibiting new construction and major renovations that are not fossil fuel free. Asked if Matt Johnson had additional comments.
- Matt said he doesn't have any new information or near term actions, the letter was very thorough in describing the current interest. The town is very interested but without the final language getting finalized around the actual rules, it is hard to know what will happen.
- There is an open question about whether Concord will meet the affordable housing threshold based on the timing of the regulations so that might be a barrier.
- He added that Select Board discussed and the legislation in process and that there isn't necessarily some immediate near-term actions at this time, have to wait until the legislation is complete.

b. Initial Reactions from CAAB members

- Comment there isn't much we can do until the rules are passed and that the legislation also requires energy data to be shared for all buildings that are 20,000 ft² or larger, town should determine how we can leverage for benchmarking.
- Matt said while still up in the air depending on specific rule language, but that there may need to be a warrant article to align with the language in HB5060.
- Comment whether there is a need for a conversation with Light Plant to ensure there is a program to ensure developers comply with the law? Response from Matt Johnson that the building commissioner would need to be involved as well. Also comment about capacity and whether we have and sounds like the town does.
- Chair asked a question about a new affordable housing development that may be falling through, Matt Johnson said there are requests for additional funding and not clear if it will come through. Legislation says that as of end of December 2021 meet threshold, we met that but if you go with new census there could be challenges.

6. Workplan Check-Ins [7:00]

a. Home Energy Scores (Jake)

- Jake mentioned that hadn't been able to make much progress over the summer on the research over summer except for attending/watching NEEP energy score cohort meetings,

reviewing RMI materials on the topic, and making some adjustments to the research and presentation materials previously developed. Hoping to make more progress this fall.

- Jake provided a brief background on home energy labeling and scoring and what we have been investigating for Ben and Gavin, recapping prior discussions and research.
- b. Planning Board Support (Courtney)
- Seeking to have more alignment between Planning and CAAB.
 - Courtney is exploring additional coordination with Haley to align.
 - Site plan review draft is still in process, effort to incorporate some sustainable check points.
 - Courtney asked Haley about sustainable development guidelines but not something that Planning has been engaged with Sustainability Director or CAAB in past.
 - Getting more sustainable principles into the planning process could be a win for town.
- c. Climate Vulnerability Assessment (Paul and John)
- Courtney did sit in on a session for MVP grant the other week. Town applied for funding for a climate vulnerability assessment and drought model to support both stormwater and drought impacts to Concord's water systems. Also wanted to look at it on a regional level. However, the proposal that was submitted was not accepted, so don't have the funds available. Real opportunity for additional environmental justice efforts.
 - Question asked about who was at the meeting. Courtney shared that Melissa Simoncini and Alan Cathcart were there. Allison Field-Juma from OARS, the SuAsCo watershed organization, were also part of the meeting
 - John provided some background for Ben and Gavin. The Climate Action Plan for town is mostly about mitigation, these efforts are more around adaptation to coming temperature and precipitation changes. Put proposal in to build a hydrological model to better understand future risks to water supply including groundwater. Unfortunately, not supported. Other piece was to do a more robust vulnerability assessment to better understand risks and to mitigate them. 97% of towns in state are part of the MVP program, may explain why we didn't receive
 - John committed to draft a memo to emphasize the importance for a more detailed vulnerability assessment that could also open up opportunities for funding to help mitigate.
 - Paul provided some additional context, knows from discussions that the DPW manager is interested in the topic. Also given the summer we had there was a reminder of the need for some of this. Paul is one of leaders of a greater Boston group related to threats to water infrastructure. Will lay out how changes in flooding patterns, groundwater levels, river, ecological impacts and others will impact our landscape and the character of the town. This is the general direction we will be trying to go in with the memo.
- d. **Financing - what to do with this??**
- Just before Warren stepped off the Board, he presented a great memo outlining the key elements of financing mechanisms for energy efficiency / renewables and what we can do with them
 - Courtney asked for feedback from members. It was suggested that the memo get re-circulated and that CAAB put on the agenda to discuss in a future meeting.
 - Ben suggested that he could help support if had some more context, has a lot of experience in finance.
 - Question about process and how to manage ideas. CAAB aligned on priority actions over 4 months, then proceeded as a Board to identify the top priorities and bandwidth.
 - Fifth action item was holding town accountable by using a tracker against the KPIs in the Climate Action Plan and a process to help determine the best way to keep that updated.
 - Bringing in new members, we may want to look at list and determine best match and other project opportunities. Can we pair new members with projects they are interested in?

- Question on meeting in smaller groups, time outside of CAAB. Answer that smaller groups of a few members can work on projects and report back to CAAB but have to ensure comply with open meeting law requirements.

7. New business [7:45]

- a. Kicks for Cancer - Compost / Recycling Event
 - Brian described upcoming kicks for cancer
- b. School Committee Sustainability Liaison – Zoom meeting tomorrow at 4pm.

8. Public comments [7:50]

- No public comments were received, no members of the public were present during this part of the agenda

9. Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 8:03pm