

Green Team Meeting Minutes

April 19, 2023

Attendees: Patti Hamilton, Linda Frame, Jennifer Pawley, Dennis Strawn, Quenton King, Stephanie Hysmith, Director Brent Webster, Councilmembers Joe Solomon and Emmett Pepper, Andrew Workman, and Rowan Zoeller

Patti called the meeting to order at 12:03. Quorum established.

City Manager invitation delayed to a future meeting since most needed to be on Zoom this month. Jennifer moved and Quenton seconded adopting minutes from March 2023 meeting.

New business:

Presentation by Morgan King, climate campaign coordinator at West Virginia Rivers Coalition, divided into Climate Science, Climate Policy, Climate Solutions.

Global temperatures are reaching their limit 20 years earlier than scientists previously predicted/recommended. 1.5 degrees C is the limit but we are on track exceed 3 or 4 degrees C. At 1.5 degrees, 46 million people displaced, huge impacts on water, more severe flooding in West Virginia. and impacts on food insecurity. Now is the last opportunity to act. The IRA is a policy that could help could get emissions down to where they need to be by 2030.

Local governments can benefit by tax credits, grants, and loans. A solar project tax credit is 30% with an additional 10% for energy communities, 10% more for usage of US-made supplies, 10% more if in target communities. There are grant opportunities for energy efficiency, EV charging stations, urban and community forestry programs, EJ block grants. Many are due in the next couple of months with millions of dollars are available. Cities are beginning to lead, creating a municipal entity to take on this challenge.

Patti recommended Morgan make this presentation to the Environment and Recycling committee. Councilmember Solomon asked that the Green Team ask for that to happen. Linda suggested that the Mayor see the presentation. Morgan is meeting with the Mayor next week.

Jennifer offered to be the Green Team representative at meetings. Dennis asked if this would create a new office in the Mayor's administration or be a City Council subcommittee. Linda moved that the Green Team attend the meeting and recommend the Mayor create such an office. Discussion: the Office of Climate could need a full-time staff of 5 or 6, drawing down millions of grant dollars. Councilmember Pepper recommended that the Green Team put together recommendations to send to administration. Morgan said that her recommendations to Mayor have gone unanswered. Linda amended her motion to state that the Green Team recommends the establishment of a City of Charleston Climate Office. Quenton seconded. Councilmember Pepper recommended that the Green Team offer direction to the Mayor.

Motion passed unanimously. Recommendations will be presented to the Mayor and City Manager.

Next was discussion of a recommendation for hiring a consultant to write a report to implement benchmarking legislation. Linda asked Councilmember Pepper to recap the bill that passed. It requires 25% energy use reduction over a 10-year period and an audit of street lights and electric meters. Every city-owned building would be evaluated to determine if solar is appropriate. A GHG/carbon inventory is necessary for benchmarking legislation and would require an environmental consultant. Consultant would do all that's entailed in the legislation. Councilmember Pepper stated that this is only kilowatt hour reduction, not carbon. A parallel to this energy-saving goal is how it evolves into carbon-reduction goal. Linda asked if there's been discussion on city council.

Linda recommended we have a meeting to discuss all of our recommendations. Dennis asked if we can discuss this via email. This would not be allowed.

Councilmember Pepper requested that the Green Team use part of its fund to pay for the consultant, estimated cost to be under \$20,000. Quenton moved that the Green Team recommend to the Mayor that a consultant be hired via Request for Proposals process who would prepare a report for the city to use to enact the benchmarking ordinance. This recommendation would go to City Manager Mishoe. Patti seconded. Passed unanimously.

Patti asked for recommendations to fill the Green Team vacancy created by the resignation of Rod Watkins. Quenton recommended Dennis Strawn, Jennifer recommended Robin Sylvester, and Councilmember Solomon recommended Lateshia Lloyd. Bios will be shared with everyone so a decision can be made at the May meeting.

Unfinished business/Updates:

Bicycle friendly designation recommendation and other potential designation opportunities will be added to the Green Team plan.

Tour of DC America is April 28 at 1:00 PM. Jennifer, Quenton, Linda, Ted, and Stephanie plan to attend. Quenton will share address and time with everyone. Public notice not needed.

Patti, Quenton, and Jennifer are working on the Green Team priorities plan.

Mayor Goodwin has asked for more information on the federal \$77,000 Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant. Patti asked if anything beyond this grant has been applied for and Councilmember Pepper said it has not.

Communications: No updates. Regular postings on Facebook.

No update on the Sports complex.

The Chair of the Municipal Beautification Commission indicated to Patti that the Mayor supports the Beautification Commission rolling out the Tree City USA designation.

A field trip to the Glass Smash Sand site is still under consideration.

The What to do with Stuff committee is preparing a spreadsheet of resources. Patti, Quenton, Jennifer, and Stephanie are on the committee.

Director Webster said that the City clean-up on April 15 collected 11.5 tons of trash. The next one is April 29. The City is down to 500 recycling bins and is still delivering 8 – 10 a week. The next clean up is Saturday, April 29. There is a document shredding event that day as well.

The next meeting is May 17, 2023 from noon – 1:30PM, City Hall, 3rd Floor. Quenton to chair. Send in nominations for Green Team vacancy by next meeting.

Quenton moved to adjourn. Planning subcommittee will meet. Meeting adjourned at 1:36PM.