

MEETING SUMMARY



Climate Protection Action Committee
Monthly Appointee Meeting
Friday, August 4, 2023
9:00 a.m.
Hybrid meeting: In-person & Zoom



ATTENDEES: Robert Anderson, Mary Pat Baldauf, Brenda Krebs, Gretchen Lambert, Bob Petrulis, Shelley Sasser, Dennis Wiehl, David Voyles, Samantha Yager.

Bob called the meeting to order with a quorum at 9:05 a.m.

Minutes from July 2023 were submitted for information.

Bob welcomed the three new members attending: Shelley Sasser, David Voyles and Dennis Wiehl. The group did introductions, starting with current members, then new members and finally staff.

Bob explained the format of the meeting as follows:

1. Review of priority projects
2. Updates from city staff
3. Announcement of new businesses and/or consideration of old business

First was an explanation of "Resolution 2.0", which City Council passed their July 18 meeting. Resolution 2.0 is the revised version of a Ready for 100% Renewable Energy pledge made in 2017. The resolution was for the entire community and was somewhat vague, so CPAC rewrote it to narrow it down to city government only. They also added other specifics including incorporation of various deadlines and a public facing dashboard. Mary Pat will send new members a copy of the original and revised resolution.

Mary Pat then updated the members on the EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) that provides grants to states and local governments to develop and implement plans for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other harmful air pollution. The Midlands qualified for a one million dollar grant based on Columbia's notice of intent to participate, but the Central Midlands Council of Governments is taking the lead as they represent a majority of the governments in the metropolitan statistical area (MSA). Mary Pat reported that we're waiting

on the grant notification letter, at which time the core group will meet again to discuss the steps to get the planning process underway.

Mary Pat then updated the group on CPAC's monthly e-newsletter, Speaking Sustainability. Our goal is to increase readership organically and use it to promote environmental sustainability via articles, links and calendar listings. The open rates for the June and July newsletter were both 47%, exceeding the Constant Contact industry average of 34%. Click rates for the issues exceeded the industry average of 2%, with 6% in June and 4% in July.

Another of CPAC'S major projects is Communities Local Energy Action Program, C-LEAP, a technical assistance project from the Department of Energy (DOE) and National Renewable Energy Lab (NREL). C-LEP seeks to offer benefits of renewable energy to low- to moderate-income (LMI) residents, many of whom are renters. NREL is drafting a plan and will soon be visiting the Midlands to get input on it.

The City of Columbia just received recognition as a LEED for Cities and Communities at the gold level. This third party certification indicates the strength of our sustainability program, and along with other programs, should play a role in acquisition of new grants and other benefits. Columbia is the first City in SC to receive this award.

Secretary Gretchen Lambert then reviewed the proposed by-law revisions, which brings the by-laws in alignment with new standards set forth by the City, primarily the total number of board members and requirement that appointees live in the city limits. Mary Pat will send a copy of the by-laws to new members.

In staff updates, Samantha briefed the group on recycling markets and how they impact the City's recycling program. We pay to recycle, but rebates from strong markets offset the cost somewhat; when the markets fall, we end up paying more.

Bob announced that the next working meeting would be held on August 18 and that the group would do a deep dive into the C-LEAP material.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m.