



MINUTES

Climate Protection Action Committee
Monthly Appointee Meeting
Friday, May 10, 2024 @ 9:00 a.m.

Appointees Present: Joyce Rose-Harris, Gretchen Lambert, Benjamin Marosites, Bob Petrulis, Julie Seel, Dennis Wiehl

Appointees with excused absences: Shelley Sasser, Dave Voyles

Others Present: Robert Anderson, Mary Pat Baldauf, Verdine Gleaton, Laura Anne Hunt, Priscilla Preston, Clint Shealy.

Bob Petrulis called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m.

Clint Shealy updated the group on Ready for 100 v. 2.0 as follows:

- An RFQ was issued for citywide energy management systems; there were 6 or 7 responses. In the next week or two, the committee is going to pick the top few then craft a request for more specific proposals,
- The request for the wastewater treatment plant biogas project is going right to proposals. This is a high priority project because there is a possibility of getting some Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) dollars for it. It would be beneficial for the environmental and provide a good return on investment.
- Jory and the Council of Governments submitted a Climate Pollution Reduction Program proposal for utility scale solar. This would help make a reality a project we've been talking about for about eight years. After wrapping up the discussion, Clint took questions and left the call for another meeting.

There were three new appointees were in attendance, so Bob did a round of introductions. After introductions, Mary Pat distributed the City Boards and Commissions Handbook, and noted that new members would need to complete and return pages 53-56. Mary Pat will email a PDF to those not attending in person.

Bob updated the group on the Bloomberg Youth Climate Action Program which was announced May 7. The \$50,000 grant will include micro grants of \$1500-\$5000 to student-led group projects in the City of

Columbia. CPAC will be involved in reviewing the proposals. Julie offered to send information to the SC Environmental Educators Association, a good source for high school educators.

Mary Pat noted that the May issue of the Speaking Sustainability newsletter went out on May 1. The open rate was 47%; the click rate was 14%. New members have been added to the distribution list.

Next up, Jory Fleming from the Central Midlands Council of Governments updated the group on the EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) and climate action planning process. There is still plenty of time to comment on the comprehensive action plan; if anyone would like to add on regional priorities, especially our new appointees, please contact Jory at jfleming@centralmidlnds.org. Bob suggested that perhaps we could do a deeper dive on the CPRG at the next working meeting.

Mary Pat then updated the group on the DOE's Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant (EECBG), which will be used to update City street lights to LED. Robert added that the Two Notch area will be used as the pilot test, and will reduce the light temperature to 3000 kelvins. Other neighborhoods will get to weigh in on the light temperature.

Mary Pat and Robert then updated the group on the USDA grant in which 300 trees a year will be planted on private property for the next five years as determined by last year's urban heat island study. Robert said that there is speculation that there may be a tree shortage based on the overall number of trees that will be planted throughout the country. The first outreach meeting will be held on July 13 at Benedict College.

Robert added that we're looking at an EPA grant for electric and/or hydrogen garbage and street sweepers that Jory brought to the table. He also added that discussions are underway to add EV charging infrastructure as part of the new penny sales tax.

We've also looked at and/or applied for two cohorts: one with EV adaptation; the other related to clean energy.

Mary Pat said that she's just returned from the Southeast Sustainability Directors Network Annual Meeting and that she's energized and ready to save the world.

Gretchen Lambert then reported on a new program that the Columbia Empowerment zone has just launched, the BRITES program. This program will help offset the costs of using Dominion's lighting upgrade program to update lighting in commercial entities. (Flier attached.)

Dennis then presented an article on Columbia being one of the most car-centric MSAs in the country. There was discussion on why and what can be done, and a reminder that transportation is an important issue both for the City and metropolitan statistical area.

The March meeting minutes were approved. Dennis Wiehl made the motion; Gretchen Lambert seconded it. The minutes unanimously passed. The meeting was adjourned about 10:30 a.m.