



ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY BOARD

Regular Meeting- February 6th, 2025

The Waynesville Environmental Sustainability Board held a special meeting on Thursday, February 6th, 2024, at 4:30 pm. in the Public Services Training Room located at 129 Legion Drive Waynesville, NC.

Members present:

William Hite (Chair)
Case Brown (alternate)
Paul Carlson
Besty Wall
Aparna Keshaviah
Price Berryhill
Kay Kirkman
Buffy Queen
Kipp Sutton
Reid Conway (Vice Chair)

Members Absent:

Chuck Dickson
David Henderson
Mary Kayler

Staff Members Present:

Rob Hites, Town Manager
Julie Grasty, Asset Services Manager

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman William Hite called the meeting to order at 4:34pm.

B. APPROVAL OF 1/9/2025 MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Board Member Carlson, seconded by Vice Chair Conway, to approve the minutes from the January 9th, 2025 meeting as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

C. STRATEGY FOR APPROACHING FEDERAL FUNDING IN 2025

Chairman Hite reported that the ESB should consider a strategy for approaching federal funding. Board Member Wall said it may be too soon to make any decisions. Chairman Hite said it may still be worth pursuing the school grant. Board Member Keshaviah suggested they focus on state and foundational/private funding opportunities.

D. C-LEAP-TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SOW FINALIZATION, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT W/ HALEY, and TOW SUSTAINABILITY/ENERGY WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

Board Member Keshaviah reported that they met with NREL and the money has been received from them. She said that two of the five tasks have been approved to move forward (peak shaving and smart meters at the Recreation Center). She said tasks are informed by data, and they are meeting tomorrow to get the list of requests together for the ESB.

Chairman Hite reported that the community engagement session is on hold for now.

Board Member Wall reported that she met with Candace to discuss integrating a sustainability web site with the Town's website. Chairman Hite asked Board Member Keshaviah what the timeline was on getting the information for the website from NREL. She said there is no certain date yet.

E. DOE OFFICE OF CLEAN ENERGY DEMONSTRATIONS (OCED) LARGE REGIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Board Member Brown reported no updates.

F. URBAN ECOLOGY UPDATES

Board Member Kirkman reported that the NC Forestry Service opportunity was withdrawn but will possibly be reinstated in July. She said that Jesse and Luke were interested in GIS training for the tree inventory. Board Member Kirkman said there is a student at WCU that is working with Sarah Parsons on doing a project that would look at tree canopy changes over time. Board Member Carlson added that he received an email from Highlands Conservancy stating that the EPA grant is on hold for now. Chairman Hite asked if there any plans about asking the town to spend some resources on tree planting and maintenance. Board Member Wall suggested dipping into funds that residents receive to help reduce energy burden.

G. 2025 STATE ENERGY CONFERENCE OF NC—RALEIGH, APRIL 29-30

Chairman Hite said the state energy conference is April 29th and 30th this year. Vice Chair Conway said that Mr. Hites and Board Member Dickson will be speaking at the conference about Hurricane Helene, which will grant them free access to the conference. Chairman Hite said that he and Board Member Wall will also be attending.

H. OTHER BUSINESS

Board Member Wall reported that the NCDEQ launched energysavernc.com to distribute \$208 million dollars to residents based on income. She said they have a meeting with Mountain Projects next week to see how they are utilizing those funds. There was discussion on who the program benefits and ways they can utilize the funds.

Vice Chair Conway suggested that the ESB revisits creating their mission and vision statements and create a strategic plan. Several Board Members volunteered to work on the strategic plan and mission statements.

I. GROUP BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Board Members broke out into subgroups- Electric Transportation, Urban Ecology, and Energy.

J. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 6pm.

ATTEST:

William Hite, Board Chair

Candace Poolton, Town Clerk