



## **ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY BOARD**

### **Regular Meeting**

**October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

The Waynesville Environmental Sustainability Board held a regular meeting on Friday, October 13, 2023, at 3:30 pm. in the Municipal Building Conference Room located at 16 South Main Street Waynesville, NC.

#### **Members present:**

Chuck Dickson  
Kay Kirkman  
Reid Conway  
Keith Ray  
Michael Boss  
Mary Kayler  
Paul Carlson  
David Henderson  
Buffy Queen  
Case Brown  
Betsy Wall  
Aparna Keshaviah

#### **Members absent:**

William Hite

#### **Staff members present:**

Jesse Fowler, Assistant Town Manager

### **A. INTRODUCTIONS**

The members of the Environmental Sustainability Board (ESB) introduced themselves after the swearing in ceremony.

### **B. EXPLANATION OF SCOPE AND PURPOSE**

Board Member Dickson explained the purpose of the Board. He said that this is a meeting open to the public and they may decide to add a public comment section. Board Member Ray asked what the procedure would be if there was overlap between other Town boards and commissions and Board Member Dickson responded that the ESB would work with them. Assistant Town Manager Fowler added that it's not uncommon for other advisory boards to work with the

Planning Board. He then explained that members cannot vote virtually but can watch and participate in discussion during the meeting.

### **C. IDENTIFYING PRIORITIES**

Assistant Town Manager Fowler suggested that the Board members go around the room and name some things they would like the ESB to prioritize.

Board Member Kirkman said she would like to prioritize tree canopy monitoring and pervious parking areas.

Board Member Ray said he'd like to examine disruptive technologies and electrify everything the Town can and de-carbonize the grid.

Board Member Boss said he would like to prioritize improving the town's grid resiliency by introducing more solar energy opportunities. He added that he'd like to take advantage of the USDA rural energy program.

Board Member Queen agreed with Board Member Boss.

Board Member Henderson said he would like to prioritize decreasing light pollution and make the town safer for pedestrian and bike travel.

Board Member Carlson said he'd like the ESB to focus on educating the public on energy savings. He also suggested that the Town look at capabilities and baselines.

Board Member Kayler said she would like to see more electric vehicle charging stations.

Board Member Wall said she would like to the overall reduce carbon impact on the planet and agreed with Paul about establishing a baseline. She said she'd also like to see an increase in renewable energies and grid resiliency.

Board Member Conway agreed that we need to establish a baseline and said the Town needs to "clean our own house".

Board Member Brown suggested doing an energy audit of the Town.

Board Member Keshaviah also agreed that the Town needs to establish baseline measurement.

Assistant Town Manager Fowler suggested developing a strategic energy plan with the Town and he agreed with the Board that baseline measuring and education should be priorities. He said the beginning of measurements have started and the energy consumption of all town facilities is being surveyed by Waste Reduction Partners. Mr. Fowler said he will update the ESB when he gets the results. The results should provide preliminary energy consumption and square footage of town buildings.

### **D. OTHER BUSINESS**

Board Member Conway said that WCU considered hiring company to do a sustainability plan on campus and they were quoted \$200,000. Mr. Fowler said there is no budget at this time for the ESB, but he will do some research on energy audits and bring some information to the next

meeting. Board Member Queen suggested utilizing grants that are specifically for rural areas. She added that the Department of Energy has a Communities Lead Program and Waynesville is the only eligible tract in the area. She recommended that some Board Members attend an informational webinar on Thursday.

Mr. Fowler said the Town can get an energy profile from Santee Cooper, the electricity provider for the Town.

Mr. Fowler recapped what was discussed in the meeting and said the action items are as follows: The ESB should set aside 15 minutes at the beginning of each meeting to work on its mission and vision, and he will gather information for that to have at the next meeting. He said he will gather information on energy audits, the ESB's potential budget, and grants the Town may qualify for.

The Board discussed the meeting schedule and decided that the first and third Thursdays of the month, at 4:30pm, would be their regular meeting time. They agreed that during the holiday season, they should only meet the first Thursday in December.

Board Member Dickson said they should discuss at the next meeting scheduling tours of town facilities and electing a Board Chair.

***A motion was made by Board Member Buffy Queen, seconded by Board Member David Henderson, to adjourn the meeting at 5:35pm. The motion passed unanimously.***

ATTEST:

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Board Chair

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Candace Poolton, Town Clerk