

AGENDA

Orange County Commission for the Environment September 14, 2020

7:30 p.m.

Virtual Meeting: Contact byoung@orangecountync.gov for link

- | <u>Time</u> | <u>Item</u> | <u>Title</u> |
|-------------|-------------|---|
| 7:30 | I. | Call to Order and Introduction of New Members |
| 7:45 | II. | Additions or Changes to Agenda |
| 7:47 | III. | Approval of Draft Minutes – February 10th, 2020 & March 9th, 2020
The CFE will consider approval of minutes from the last meeting. <u>Action needed</u> (Attachment 1 & 2) |
| 7:50 | IV. | CFE Activities - 2020
The CFE will discuss current activities. |
| 8:00 | V. | Lands Legacy Action Plan 2021-2023
Chris Hirni has provided a memo outlining previous CFE recommendation and potential subject matters for consideration. CFE to discuss and make recommendations for next 3 years focus points for inclusion. Action needed (Attachment 3) |
| 8:25 | VI. | Climate Action Tax & Climate Action Fund
Brennan Bouma will provide an update to the CFE on the current status of approving the Climate Action Tax/Fund projects. |
| 8:50 | VII. | Updates and Information Items
Staff and/or CFE members will provide updates on the following items: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Research Triangle Logistics• Rogers Road Methane Flaring• Future of meetings and Committee breakouts Any other new information from CFE members and staff |
| 9:00 | VIII. | Adjournment <ul style="list-style-type: none">• * Next Meeting Date: October 12th, 2020; if requested by CFE (Virtual) |

CFE Activities – 2020

Item	Committee/Person(s) Responsible	Next Steps
Fast Facts for a Greener Orange	B. Bouma	Bouma presented first four tips structured from SOE report. Working with an intern to create a full list from the 2019 SOE. Will be posted to CFE Facebook page and Twitter forums.
Rights-of-Way Subcommittee	B. Saul	Subcommittee formation approved by CfE at January meeting.
Review and update of Forest Management Policy	Land Resources	Ongoing review by committee and staff.
Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory	B. Ward B. Bouma	Complete! Posted to Orange County Sustainability Website.
Climate Action Plan	B. Ward B. Bouma	Initial work has begun to lay out scope and format. With GHG Inventory completion and successful application for LEED for Cities and Communities Grant, planning can begin in earnest. Seeing CFE assistance in climate action generation and community engagement.
Carbon Fee & Dividend / Fossil Fuel Divestment resolution(s)	B. Ward A. Parry	Review again in Fall 2020.
Landscape corridor planning	Land resources	Presentation tonight!
Idling Campaign	B. Bouma	
Right of Nature	K. Piracci	Group of CfE members to meet and discuss.
Coordination with Planning Dept		

Recent Achievements

- The State of the Environment is complete!
- We helped to host the 2019 Environmental Summit.
- Hosted ecostudio UNC student Kerina Patel researching the successes of the rural buffer
- BOCC unanimously passed our “Best Practices on Roadsides and Rights-of-Way” resolution

- CFE mentioned by County leaders several times during recent Our Climate Resolutions event in Chapel Hill

CFE Meeting Ground Rules (Adopted 9/12/11)

1. Keep to agenda topic under discussion
2. Share relevant information
3. One person speaks at a time after recognition by the Chair
4. Everyone is invited to participate in discussions - no one person should dominate discussions
5. Strive to reach consensus first before voting

Orange County Commission for the Environment

DRAFT Meeting Summary

February 10, 2020; 7:30 pm

West Campus Office Building, Room 302, 131 West Margaret Lane, Hillsborough

Present: Bradley Saul (Chair), Bill Ward, James Eichel, Jody Eimers, Laura Doherty, Kim Piracci, Alan Parry, Jeremy Marzuola, Carrie Fletcher

Absent: Lynne Gronback

Staff: Brennan Bouma, Chris Hirni, Wesley Poole

I. Call to Order

Saul called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

II. Additions or Changes to Agenda

Saul requested to insert Piracci's presentation of draft proposed ordinance concerning rights of nature as **Item VII**.

III. Approval of Draft Minutes from January 13th, 2020

Motion by Ward; seconded by Fletcher; none opposed; motion passed.

IV. CFE Activities – 2020

CFE discussed current activities with a brief status update for each item.

V. Presentation – Environmental Justice

Bouma presented on topic by sharing slides from Orange County Employee Training along with TED talk video about the danger of a single story. Group activity highlighted how people benefit from a clean, green environment. Closed with note that the CHJI plans to do an environmental justice timeline and asked how CFE might contribute.

VI. Greene Tract - Update

Hirni provided an update on the Greene Tract and discussed the 2020 Greene Tract Resolution & Environmental Assessment Interlocal Agreement. Explained that DEAPR had not been that involved to date, but will be so in the future due to the proposed 60 acres Headwaters Preserve within the tract.

VII. Draft Proposed Ordinance – Rights of Nature

Piracci presented a draft proposed ordinance concerning rights of nature that environmental attorney, Linda Wendling, had put together. Saul asked Piracci to keep researching the topic and report back to the CFE.

Orange County Commission for the Environment

DRAFT Meeting Summary

February 10, 2020; 7:30 pm

West Campus Office Building, Room 302, 131 West Margaret Lane, Hillsborough

VIII. Committee Meetings

CFE Committees met to discuss initiatives / projects.

IX. Updates and Information Items

Saul notified CFE that Parry, Fletcher and Ward had been recommended for reappointment and four of the remaining five CFE vacancies had been recommended for appointment. Recommendations were as follows: Francis Binkowski to position #2 (Air Quality), Kim Livingston to position #3 (At-Large, formerly Land Resources), Elizabeth McWhorter to position #5 (Water Resources) and Jaya Nair to position #7 (At-Large). One vacancy will remain for an At-Large position. Saul reminded CFE members of attendance requirements moving forward. CFE briefly discussed Earth Evening involvement coming up on Friday, April 24 from 6-8pm.

X. Adjournment

Fletcher motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:07 pm; seconded by Parry; none opposed; motion passed.

Orange County Commission for the Environment

DRAFT Meeting Summary

March 9th, 2020; 7:30 pm

Southern Human Services Center, 2501 Homestead Road, Chapel Hill

Present: Bradley Saul (Chair), Bill Ward, Laura Doherty, Alan Parry, Jeremy Marzuola

Absent: Lynne Gronback, James Eichel, Jody Eimers, Carrie Fletcher, Kim Piracci

Staff: Brennan Bouma, Chris Hirni, Wesley Poole

I. Call to Order

Saul called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm. Recognition of lack of quorum; no voting will take place.

II. Additions or Changes to Agenda

Saul recommended pushing all voting measures to next meeting

III. CFE Activities – 2020

CFE discussed current activities with a brief status update for each item.

IV. Eno-New Hope Landscape Conservation Plan

Dr. John Randall presented the specifics for the plan and the deciding factors for formulating the corridors used for wildlife driven ecosystem protection needs. Saul commented on desire the CfE recommends the incorporation of the document into the next Lands Legacy Action Plan Update (2021-2024). Saul also recommends presenting to the Planning Board and BOCC.

V. Climate Action Tax - Update

Bouma updated the CfE on the expectations of the commission for future rating/scoring of projects and brainstorming new projects. The CfE discussed future parameters and equity considerations as well as potential avenues for distributing finances.

VI. Upper Neuse River Basin Association (UNRBA) Falls Lake Regulatory Forum

Poole provided an update to the CFE on UNRBA's recent Falls Lake Regulatory Forum that was held in Durham on February 12, 2020. He updated the commission on County efforts to reduce pollutants and meet the requirements set forth by the Forum.

VII. Updates and Information Items

CFE discussed Earth Evening involvement coming up on Friday, April 24 from 6-8pm.

VIII. Adjournment

Saul concluded the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

**ORANGE COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, AGRICULTURE,
PARKS AND RECREATION**

MEMORANDUM

To: Commission for the Environment
From: Christian Hirni, Land Conservation Manager
Date: July 7, 2020
Subject: Lands Legacy Action Plan for FY 2021-23

Every three years DEAPR develops a new "Action Plan" to guide the County's protection of land through the Lands Legacy Program. The next plan will be for Fiscal Years 2021-2023.

DEAPR staff works with advisory boards to identify project areas to include in the plan, such as the Commission for the Environment (CfE) for environment and natural resources. Input from the CfE can be in the form of specific projects, general guidance or both.

In 2017, the CfE recommended the following for the 2018-20 Action Plan:

- Lands Legacy Action Plan should recognize, protect, and interpret sites representative of the rich geological history of Orange County. Also, wildlife corridors, stream and creek health, erosion and stormwater runoff should be major considerations in the future land parcels purchased by the county.
- Also, we encourage the county to complete the priority List for July 2014-June 2017 as well as move forward with the considerations laid out for 2017-2020, especially with regard to protecting wildlife habitats, ensuring water safety, preventing erosion and establishing natural heritage protection areas for the land near local waterways like Jordan Lake, all local streams and creeks (Seven Mile, New Hope, Bolin, etc.) as well as for the Eno River. For example, the connector between Morgan Creek and the upper areas of Jordan Lake we hope to see completed in the near future under the new Lands Legacy Action Plan.
- The CFE encourages the county to consider farmland easements to tell the geologic history of Orange County. We also encourage that the county work with farmers to encourage sustainable and greenhouse gas conserving policies in negotiating farmland easements.
- Also, we hope the county will continue to develop and maintain parks and recreation facilities, including the planned Mountains-to-Sea Trail, in ways that avoid sensitive natural areas and use environmentally friendly and sustainable methods."

Initial considerations for FY 2021-23:

- To date, Lands Legacy has helped landowners protect 2,741 acres on 41 projects with conservation easements on both farms and natural areas. Lands Legacy has purchased outright 1,125 acres on 23 projects for parks and preserves.
- In FY 15-16 the County allocated \$125,000 to purchase conservation easements with an expectation of leveraging at least \$125,000 in additional funding from outside sources. In FY 16-17 the County allocated \$250,000 to purchase conservation easements with an expectation of leveraging at least \$250,000 in additional funding from outside sources. In FY 17-18 the County allocated \$0. In FY 18-19 the County allocated \$500,000 to purchase conservation easements with an expectation of leveraging at least \$500,000 in additional funding from outside sources. In FY 20-21 the County will allocate \$250,000 to purchase conservation easements with an expectation of leveraging at least \$250,000 in additional funding from outside sources. In FY 21-22 the County will allocate \$1,000,000 to purchase conservation easements with an expectation of leveraging at least \$500,000 in additional funding from outside sources.
- The County intends to apply for state and federal matching funds to complete additional conservation easements and fee-simple acquisitions between 2020-2023.
- There is a new collaborative focused on the creation of landscape corridors that connect a network of critical wildlife habitats within Jordan Lake watershed and across the "land bridge" between New Hope Creek (Cape Fear River Basin) and the Eno River (Neuse River Basin). A large portion of this area falls within Orange County.
- The County intends to pursue trail easements and land acquisitions for the Orange County section of the NC Mountains-to-Sea Trail.
- The County intends to pursue land acquisitions and conservation easements in the Upper Eno Preserve (Sevenmile Creek), the Jordan Lake Headwaters Preserve, and other environmentally significant areas within the County.
- The County intends on joining a regional initiative to update the Natural Heritage Area inventory.