

**Orange County
Commission for the Environment**

DRAFT Meeting Summary

December 10, 2012

Environment and Agricultural Center, Hillsborough

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jan Sassaman (Vice Chair), Lucy Adams, May Becker, Terri Buckner, Peter Cada, Loren Hintz, Bill Kaiser, Tom O'Dwyer, David Welch

MEMBERS ABSENT: David Neal, Michele Drostin, Gary Saunders, Sam Yellen

STAFF PRESENT: Rich Shaw, Tom Davis

- I. **Call to Order**: Sassaman called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm. He said Neal, Drostin, and Saunders had notified staff they would not be able to attend this meeting.
- II. **Additions or Changes to Agenda** – There were none. Sassaman reported that the BOCC Clerk notified staff that O'Dwyer and Kaiser were eligible to continue serving on the CFE for up to one year beyond the end of their term (12/31/12) or until their slots were filled. He said both have indicated they would be willing to serve until that time.
- III. **Welcome New Members** – Sassaman welcomed Buckner to the Commission and pointed out that Yellen was absent. CFE members introduced themselves. Buckner summarized her interests and experience with environmental matters.
- IV. **Approval of Minutes** – Kaiser identified a typo on Page 2 of the meeting summary. Kaiser motioned to approve the November 12 meeting summary as corrected; seconded by O'Dwyer. The motion was approved unanimously.
- V. **Recruitment of New CFE Applicants** – Sassaman noted there is a current need to fill three vacancies on the CFE due to the previous and forthcoming departures of Hughes, Price and Drostin. He added there will be a need to fill two additional slots once Kaiser and O'Dwyer vacate their positions in 2013. Sassaman said he and Neal reviewed the list of current applicants and that Neal will contact one of those people to confirm his or her availability. Sassaman circulated the list of applicants and asked if members wished to comment. Welch endorsed one of the applicants. Sassaman asked CFE members to consider people they know who might be good candidates and ask them to apply.

It was suggested that staff prepare a flyer to help CFE members recruit applicants from acquaintances and for sending to civic groups, environmental organizations, universities and churches. Staff was also directed to advertise on the DEAPR website.

- VI. **ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability** – Shaw reported that the BOCC has asked the CFE for a recommendation on whether the County should continue its membership with ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability. He said the annual membership is due to expire and dues are \$1,750. Shaw said ICLEI resources were used for developing the Orange County greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory, but the County had not been able to utilize its services over the past two years. Adams and Buckner commented on ICLEI's active involvement in the 2006-06 inventory project. Buckner opined that the resulting model, data, and recommendations were incomplete.

Hintz said he favors support of organizations that promote energy conservation. Kaiser said he found the GHG recommendations useful. Other members agreed that continuing the ICLEI membership would be beneficial if the County and CFE took advantage of its resources. Sassaman suggested tabling discussion of the County's ICLEI membership until after the committee reports. CFE members agreed.

- VII. **Committee Meetings** – Sassaman reported that he and Neal had met to discuss the current committee structure and have some changes for CFE consideration. He proposed reformulating into three committees: **Air and Water Resources, Biological Resources, Energy and Sustainability**. Members discussed pros and cons of that proposal. Hintz reminded members of the former Environmental Education committee, which was converted to the current Energy Resources Committee. Adams suggested it may be difficult for one committee to address both air and water issues properly.

Other ideas and combinations that were discussed for committee restructuring were **Air and Energy, Biological and Water Resources, and Sustainability and Education**. Sassaman asked that the CFE table this issue and continue the discussion at the next meeting when Neal and Saunders would be able to participate.

CFE members met in their respective committees to discuss ongoing and future tasks.

- VIII. **Committee Reports** – The CFE reconvened for committee reports. Kaiser reported that the Air Resources Committee wants to urge the County to update the Greenhouse Gas Inventory and to use the findings to improve County Government's energy consumption and sustainability. Cada reported that the Water Resources Committee would like to recruit graduate students to assist the CFE and DEAPR with priority tasks, such as the development of a surface water monitoring plan. Hintz reported that the Biological Resources Committee awaits further assistance from Johnny Randall (NC Botanical Garden) to begin the roadside habitat project that was authorized by the BOCC. He asked staff to find out whether County tax bills could be used to educate public about protecting Orange County's biodiversity. Welch reported on the committee's continued interest in developing a comprehensive conservation plan for achieving a network of protected open space through the county. Sassaman and O'Dwyer reported that the Energy Resources Committee continued its discussion of convening a work group of CFE and Planning Board members and others that would glean information from different experts on specific topics. O'Dwyer asked if the County's ICLEI membership would provide access to resources pertinent to the committee's interests. O'Dwyer said he would contact Stancil to find out how he (O'Dwyer) could access the ICLEI website so that he could evaluate its value and assess whether it would be worthwhile to renew the County's membership for another year. He said he would report his findings to the CFE.

- IX. **Updates and Information Items** – Staff provided information on the following issues: a) CFE Annual Report and Work Plan, b) proposed new site plan requirements for stormwater plan, c) 2012 State of the County Health Report, d) UNC Bingham Facility update, e) the value of forests for storing carbon, f) and a news article about "fracking" for natural gas extraction in Pennsylvania. Shaw reported that the BOCC directed Planning staff to seek CFE comments on the proposed new requirements for upfront stormwater plans. He said Michael Harvey (Planning staff) has asked that this item be placed on the CFE's January meeting in order to respond to that request.

- X. **Adjournment** – Sassaman adjourned the meeting at 9:45 pm.