

**Orange County
Commission for the Environment**

DRAFT Meeting Summary

March 11, 2013

Environment and Agricultural Center, Hillsborough

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Lucy Adams, David Welch, Sam Yellen

STAFF: Rich Shaw, Tom Davis

GUESTS: Wayne Fenton, Kellem Agnew Emanuele

- I. **Call to Order** – Neal called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.
- II. **Additions or Changes to Agenda** – Sassaman asked to add an Update item concerning potential changes to the County's recycling program. Neal agreed.
- III. **Approval of Minutes** – Sassaman motioned to approve the February 11 meeting summary with one correction; seconded by Kaiser. Motion approved unanimously.
- IV. **Energy and Fuel Use at Orange County Facilities** – Wayne Fenton (Assistant Director, Orange Co. Asset Mgmt. Services) provided an overview of the energy, water, and fuel use at Orange County buildings and facilities from 2010 to 2012. He showed a presentation given to the board of commissioners in late 2012.

Fenton showed the County's short-term goals for reducing energy, water and fuel consumption, and "scorecards" developed to gauge how well the County is meeting its goals and objectives. He noted the goals were in line with State conservation objectives.

Fenton listed energy reduction goals for the Town of Chapel Hill, Town of Carrboro, and Durham City/County. Fenton said the County established an energy bank (internal loan program) with \$50,000 set aside to pay for energy-saving retrofits on County buildings.

Fenton said new County buildings are constructed using high performance guidelines developed by Triangle J Council of Governments. He said the guidelines are effective and are modeled on LEED standards, but don't require the cost of LEED certification.

Fenton mentioned some of the current and planned initiatives, including the next phase of a community geothermal system (Old Courthouse, Jail, other buildings), digital control improvements at four buildings, and solar film evaluations. Other current initiatives include vending miser additions, lighting improvements, roof insulation, and the removal of some older buildings from County ownership. Future initiatives include geothermal at the Southern Campus, roof insulation upgrades, and potential solar technology.

Fenton answered questions from CFE members on various subjects, including lighting fixtures and improvements, collaboration with the school systems, air temperature in county buildings, his department's involvement in the planning and design of new buildings, and the estimated payback from various energy-saving measures.

Some ideas that were discussed for CFE consideration included adding an energy conservation page to the Orange County website, holding an energy fair (similar to one held in Hillsborough for county employees), and possibly recommending more aggressive goals and objectives for public buildings/facilities.

- V. **RENEW Group Proposal** – Neal recommended that further discussion of this proposal be tabled until the Air and Energy Resources Committee had discussed in committee.
- VI. **Committee Meetings** – The CFE broke out into its standing committees (*Air & Energy Resources* and *Water & Biological Resources*) to discuss ongoing business. Shaw noted he had prepared a new list of tasks and priorities for the reformulated committees.

- VII. **Updates and Information Items** –
Sassaman reported that the County is considering eliminating its curbside recycling program for residents in certain unincorporated sections of the county. He said somebody had threatened to sue the County because it does not authority to charge a fee to rural residents that are eligible to participate in this program. A new proposal would privatize rural curbside collections through a franchise contract, leaving towns to pick up urban recycling. Sassaman said he provided oral comments on this subject at the March 7 board of commissioners meeting.

Neal asked whether CFE members wished to consider this topic and possibly submit comments to the BOCC. Members agreed to place this matter on the April agenda. Neal asked Sassaman to prepare a draft memo for CFE consideration.

There was no discussion of the other update items listed on the agenda. Staff had provided information on the following issues: a) CFE recruitment efforts, b) NC fracking legislation update, c) OWASA newsletter, d) UNC Sustainability newsletter, e) Pete Street Home Energy-Savings Program, f) Hillsborough stormwater capture/reuse project, and a new photographic exhibit at the NC Botanical Garden.

- VIII. **Adjournment** – Neal adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:40 pm.

Summary by Rich Shaw, DEAPR Staff