

Orange County Climate Council Meeting Summary

March 18, 2021
3:00pm - 4:30pm

Online Meeting

Members and Alternates in Attendance:

Melissa McCullough (Chair), Sammy Slade (Vice-Chair), Brennan Bouma (staff), Mark Marcoplos, Ray DuBose, Robb English, Kathy Kaufman, Donna Rubinoff, Mary Tiger, Stephanie Trueblood, Cathy Cole, Jonas Monast, John Richardson, Haven Biddix, Wendy Kuhn, Marc Miller, Sammy Slade, Sarah Smylie, JD Hester, Ameena Hester, Tina Moon, Bill Ward

Other Attendees:

- Chloe Allen
- Rose Leek
- Gabriela Valdivia
- Helena Shaw
- Randee Haven-O'Donnell

Public comments received by advertised deadline: None

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- I. Call to Order, Land Acknowledgement, Changes to the Agenda** - McCullough called the meeting to order at 3:03pm.

McCullough gave a native lands acknowledgement for Orange County, recognizing that Orange County sits on the historic lands of the Occoneechi, Saponi, and Tutelo people, and historically the land where Orange County is now was also the land of the Tuscarora, Sissipahaw, Eno, Shakori, Saura, and Catawba people.

No additions or changes to the agenda were suggested.

- II. Approval of Meeting Minutes from January 21 and February 18, 2021**

There was no quorum at the January or February meetings, so it was determined that there was no need to approve meeting notes.

- III. Introductions of new members and membership updates**

New members introduced themselves. This was the first meeting for Sarah Smylie, J.D. Hester, and Haven Biddix, Marc Miller, Wendy Kuhn, and Ameena Hester.

- IV. Update from Policy Committee**

Richardson updated the Council on the meeting of the Policy committee since the previous meeting. They found areas of overlap in climate action among the governments in Orange County and began creating a prioritization matrix to guide

future actions. The link was provided to the Council. These joint action ideas might assist with future applications for grant funds. The prioritization matrix will be developed further at their Committee meeting in April.

V. Update from Climate Action Reporting Committee

Tiger updated the Council that the CARC met and that the Committee acknowledged that the main goal in creating the Climate Action Reporting Database (CARD) had been met. Tiger pointed out that the CARD should be updated, but that there did not appear to be a need for a standing Committee to do this maintenance. CARD information was proposed to be maintained by individual representatives. Members of this committee then proposed that they shift to create a “Big Hairy Ideas Committee” (BHIC) to help coordinate large interjurisdictional climate action projects. By a show of hands, the Council agreed unanimously that the CARD was complete and that there was no further need for a committee to maintain it. They also unanimously agreed that the creation of the BHIC was a good idea, and volunteers offered their names to be added to the new committee.

Slade asked for a clarification on how this new committee would complement the Policy committee and not overlap.

VI. Update on Bylaws

McCullough updated the Council on the recent progress in drafting bylaws as they relate to the membership and terms of office.

VII. Update on Southeast Sustainability Directors Network (SSDN) news

Trueblood described the basic membership and function of the SSDN and updated the Council on their lobbying and policy work at the state level in NC. She briefly described the ongoing work to recommend improvements to the Green Source Advantage solar energy program, as well as to expand clean transportation opportunities.

Bouma added that there are SSDN work groups that are created each year at the SSDN annual meeting based on member interest. If the Council has questions, staff can ask the SSDN network to provide more information.

VIII. Report from the Communications Committee

Rubinoff presented to the Council on the Communications Committee’s outreach efforts on climate justice and transformative communication. They’ve been working in partnership with interns from the UNC department of Geography. They completed a review of the literature on these topics and were making plans for next steps in reaching out to the community. They are pulling heavily from the Yale Climate Opinion survey and mapping.

IX. Decarbonization report release – Jonas Monast

Monast presented on the work he’s been contributing to on the state level to analyze the 4 implementation scenarios of the NC Clean Energy Plan’s Recommendation A1. Their task was not to make specific recommendations, but to assess and report on the various impacts of each scenario.

X. Announcements and housekeeping

McCullough announced that the 4 member jurisdictions will be giving more in-depth climate action updates starting in April. She also asked the Council if there was a need to change the time of the regular meetings to the evening in order to reach more members and make it easier to get to quorum.

Trueblood offered that moving away from working hours creates an additional burden on staff, and should be done only if needed.

McCullough said that we would ask all members to make sure all voices were heard.

XI. Adjournment

McCullough asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting and this was provided by Bouma and seconded by Trueblood. The Council voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 4:31pm.