

**MINUTES
ENVIRONMENTAL BOARD
November 22, 2022**

CALL TO ORDER

Hannah-Hunt Moeller called the in-person/virtual Environmental Board meeting to order at 6:05 pm on November 21, 2022.

ROLL CALL

The following members were present for roll call:

- E-Board Members: Hannah-Hunt Moeller, Chair
Fred Malo, Member
Jane Hendricks, Member
Quinn Donnelly, Member
Tessa Schreiner, Member
Michael Port, Member
Frosty Merriott, Member
Pat Hunter, Alternate
- Town Staff Present: Chris Hassig, Board of Trustees Liaison
- Guests: Zuleika Pevec, CLEER Representative
Alyssa Reindel, Evergreen Zero Waste

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion Passed: Tessa ***moved*** to approve Environmental Board meeting minutes from the October 17, 2022, meeting. Quinn ***seconded*** the motion, and the minutes were ***unanimously approved***.

PERSONS PRESENT NOT ON THE AGENDA

There was no one present, not on the agenda, to address the board.

BOARD MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Hannah-Hunt related that Nicole is resigning from the Environmental Board, effective this month, because she needs to attend to other obligations. Hannah-Hunt is reaching out to potential members, and she encouraged others to do the same.

Hannah-Hunt asked Frosty if he was planning to re-apply when his term expires in December.

Frosty answered in the affirmative.

BOARD OF TRUSTEE UPDATE

Chris noted that the Board of Trustees approved the green building code. He added that the BOT also discussed the Pathway to Net Zero at the same meeting. He thought that the Environmental Board's check-in with the Trustees was also productive, with board members encouraging the BOT to act more aggressively on a climate agenda. He related

that while the BOT is resistant to adding a sustainability coordinator to Town staff, but Chris thought that there might be some softening on that issue. He also thought that there might be consideration for banning the use of natural gas in new construction.

Quinn asked what the BOT's biggest reservation was regarding a sustainability staff member.

Chris replied that the concern was centered not only on budget outlay for the position, but also how effective a sustainability staff person might be. Chris thought the best way to achieve effectiveness would be to have that staff person be part of the Building Department.

Frosty related that he had lunch with Marty Silverstein to gauge how the BOT feels about these issues. He noted that one issue he had as a businessperson was that the absence of a sustainability staff member was the potential conflict of interest because members of CLEER's staff are related to a Trustee. He thought it would be best to hire a staff member with grant writing ability because there is money available for climate action initiatives and it would more than pay for the position if they were able to access those funding pipelines. It was Frosty's opinion that the BOT's reticence about hiring sustainability staff was less about the money and more about the BOT not seeing it as a priority.

Fred asked whether there was any consideration for obtaining a grant to hire a grant writer. He noted that there are grants available for that and cited the example that the salary for 350.org's director was paid for through a grant from the SkiCo.

Chris thought that was a good point and while he was warming to the idea, he wasn't sure how the other Trustees felt. He thought a good course of action would be to develop a clear job description and tie that to specific benchmarks and goals that need to be accomplished would be a good way to demonstrate how such a staff person was needed. He pointed out that the de facto environmental person on Town staff was the Building Official and since they haven't been able to hire anyone yet, environmental action is stagnating.

Fred related that CORE is hiring a grant writer and that grant writer is anxious to move down valley, so he thought that might be a good interim option.

Quinn agreed and noted that having a grant writer might also benefit other Town departments, as well.

Chris noted that there will be a discussion at the Tuesday, November 22nd, BOT meeting with the prospective consultant for Town Center and the consultant was very open to environmental aspects of the development. He added that he thought that a grant writing position does have some traction with Trustees, although he wasn't sure it was a majority yet. He thought it might be possible for someone to start out writing more grants and then segway into more of a project management role.

Quinn asked if someone with a sustainability background would also have grant writing expertise.

Tessa replied that it was possible – both grant writing and sustainability can be learned, so hiring someone with expertise in one area doesn't preclude them from being able to take

on the other role. Tessa supports pursuing CLEER to take on the grant writing and program development and then at the point when there is sufficient funding and/or more programming that CLEER can take on, that is the point to consider hiring a staff person; alternatively, if it is obvious that the Town isn't reaching its climate goals through CLEER's support, that would also be the time to consider a staff person.

Hannah-Hunt thought that a good next step would be to put together a job description and as a group identify what should be undertaken by the Building Official, what could be undertaken by CLEER and what should be undertaken specifically by a sustainability staff person.

Chris suggested finding dedicated funding sources for the position, possibly through a tax initiative like the one proposed in 2016, or by making the use of natural gas prohibitively expensive and using any money generated to pay for a sustainability position.

Tessa pointed out that that is what Aspen is essentially doing, as well as upgrading to be electric-ready.

Pat suggested adding an excise tax to all the storage units, including rental exceeding 30 days. He pointed out that the 2016 tax initiative failed because there weren't specific details about how the money was going to be spent.

Hannah-Hunt asked which board members would like to work on the job description and which members would like to work on the funding piece for the next meeting.

Tessa and Michael committed to work on the job description.

Pat asked if the BOT had produced a memo identifying those tasks that they would like to see the Environmental Board to be working on.

Chris replied no – but noted that that was more the Environmental Board reporting to the BOT rather than the other way around. He noted that Hannah-Hunt had provided a list of items to work on in the upcoming year and the BOT accepted that list and has not identified anything beyond that list. Chris noted that the only other item was that at the November 22 BOT meeting there will be a discussion about the Wild and Scenic designation for the Crystal River.

STAFF UPDATE

Mark was absent from the meeting and will address the Board at next month's meeting.

CLEER UPDATE: DISCUSSION OF PATHWAY TO NET ZERO FOR EXISTING BUILDINGS

Hannah-Hunt asked Zuleika to lead the discussion regarding the Pathway to Net Zero as well as the benchmarking of existing buildings in the Town of Carbondale.

Zuleika noted that REG was in Carbondale last Monday and walked through Town Hall, the Rec Center, and the Public Works building. She explained that the unofficial feedback was that none of the systems were so complicated that electrification would be too onerous to undertake. She thought they would have a detailed report from REG by the end of the year.

Pat asked who is paying REG and how much is being paid.

Zuleika explained that the Town paid CLEER, and in turn, CLEER is paying REG. She noted that the project is capped at \$12,000.00.

Chris added that he thought there was \$50,000.00 allocated in the 2023 budget for the actual work.

Hannah-Hunt asked what the next steps would be for this project.

Zuleika replied that it depends upon what the report says and if it is possible to move forward. She added that if it is possible to move forward, CLEER would digest REG's report and take the recommendations to the BOT for project completion in 2023 – if that is what is recommended. She noted that if there is success with the three buildings selected, they may be able to move forward with other buildings the Town owns.

Michael asked if the retrofits were a guaranteed part of that plan. He explained that in the Pathway to Net Zero the ending recommendation is to continue to monitor and evaluate all buildings.

Zuleika wasn't sure. She pointed out that the energy use of all the municipal buildings is being recorded through EnergyCap.

Zuleika explained that the challenge with the Path to Net Zero and existing buildings is that because they are already occupied and in use, it is hard to force them to do something different with their property. She pointed out that the matrix included in the meeting packet are some of the ways CLEER has come up with to encourage property owners to convert to electrification. She noted that the timeline is extended beyond that for new buildings because they anticipate the process to be more difficult.

Quinn asked if each of the initiatives must be approved separately by the BOT or if they can be packaged together. He noted that one advantage to approving them separately is the evolution of technologies over the 27-year lifespan of the matrix.

Zuleika replied that they anticipate them being packaged together. She explained that there currently isn't a mechanism to make property owners modify their buildings unless they apply for a building permit, get an appraisal or refinance.

Fred suggested focusing on communication to approach the issue – there is likely to be reluctance to change unless property owners can be informed that state and federal grants will defray the costs and they may save money in the long term with reductions in their utility bills.

Zuleika agreed that an outreach campaign will be essential for all the programs. And CLEER endeavors to do that with all their programming.

Hannah-Hunt asked how the Eco-Block and/or bulk buy of heat pumps might fit into the matrix. She also asked how the Environmental Board could partner with CLEER to help communicate the messaging.

Zuleika replied that programming such as thermalize isn't part of the matrix because while programming such as thermalize will benefit property owners in achieving a better energy score, the "pushes" that will promote those larger conversions require a separate conversation. Zuleika noted that the matrix is largely theoretical at this point, and she thought that the BOT will engage in significant conversation about each sector because it is asking a lot to ask property owners to comply and there may be pushback before it is adopted. She acknowledged that the EBoard would be instrumental in communicating this program if some version does get adopted and noted that it will be important to maintain consistent messaging across every organization to achieve success.

Michael asked if it was easier to pass a Net Zero Matrix for new buildings because they were considering an update to the green building code. He wondered if that endeavor could help inform this new undertaking.

Zuleika replied that her understanding was that the Town has a lot more control over new construction because of code requirements.

Tessa agreed that it is very challenging and noted that while not prescriptive, Aspen will be instituting performance requirements for existing buildings in the next few months. She noted that there won't be any specific requirements how it is achieved, but each building will be required to achieve science-based targets.

Pat asked who will be doing the benchmarking required to establish the information used in the matrix. He asked who would be involved locally to manage the program.

Zuleika replied that there is a program called "Portfolio Manager" that the Department of Energy operates that will be used to gather the benchmarking data. She explained that it is built in a way that building owners/managers can enter their information into the system and the program does all the calculations. She explained that managing this program is within CLEER's purview.

Pat asked whether there was measurable information that would inform the community whether climate action goals had been achieved. He asked if there were examples of other communities undertaking similar matrix.

Zuleika suggested that Jeff and Heidi would be the best people to ask. Zuleika thought that while she didn't know of any community using a similar matrix, she thought there were communities using pieces of it.

Hannah-Hunt thought it was important to have as many metrics as possible to inform the matrix but acknowledge the challenge for existing buildings.

Quinn asked how confident is CLEER that the power to run the conversion to electrification is from a sustainable source. He also asked if the power grid is going to be capable of delivering that much more electricity.

Zuleika explained that most of Carbondale is on Excel's grid and Excel has a goal to be 100% renewable by 2050. She reminded the board members that clean electric power was one of the goals approved by Garfield Clean Energy for the county. She added that the grid capacity is a current focal point, and she wasn't sure what Carbondale's status was.

Pat commented that the utility companies will be converting to “smart” systems that will make decisions about when and how much energy is allotted to each activity all the way to balancing each community’s energy needs.

Zuleika commented that CLEER is part of “Charge Ahead Colorado” and their recharge coach is part of a group applying for a grant through the DOE to work on becoming EV ready. She also noted that once CLEER knows what their budget line item is, they will be including the Environmental Board to help develop their 2023 work plan.

EV UPDATE: GO EV CITY, CHARGER FUNDING AND NEXT STEPS

Hannah-Hunt related that Go EV was one of the items discussed with the BOT. She added that both she and Quinn spoke with Martin about the Go EV City and the EBoard is proposing that Carbondale become a Go EV City. She explained that it would require adopting an ordinance like the two examples included in the meeting packet. She noted that by passing that ordinance, it will make it easier for Carbondale to participate in various funding mechanisms.

Quinn commented that Martin shared the ordinance examples and explained that the Go EV City is a voluntary pledge. He noted that the program is funded through a grant based on “clean” transportation. Quinn pointed out that most of the towns on the Front Range and along the I-70 corridor such as Avon and Eagle are part of the network, and it opens up access to grant applications and expertise. Quinn added that the pillars of the program are municipal fleet procurement, building electrification and access to EV chargers, and equipment such as leaf blowers. Quinn explained that both Glenwood Springs and Aspen adopted their Go EV City Ordinances in 2022. He noted that there is some duplication between the two ordinances but pointed out that the Glenwood Springs Ordinance is very specific on transportation and timelines while Aspen’s is broader in scope. He preferred Glenwood’s but asked for feedback to help draft one for Carbondale.

Michael thought that given Carbondale’s situation in terms of staff time, he thought it would be better to craft a more specific ordinance like Glenwood’s.

Hannah-Hunt thought it would feed into the mobility plan and agreed with Michael regarding a more specific ordinance.

Quinn volunteered to craft a draft example for next month’s meeting.

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

Landscape/Low Water

Jane commented that the subcommittee has mapped out a corridor and she has walked part of it. She explained that there is an overwhelming amount of sod that they want to get rid of. She added that she has also talked to Sue Gray regarding the elimination of some of the sod surrounding the Thompson House. Jane noted that Sue is willing to draw up a plan of where they would like to keep grass around the building and the rest could be eliminated.

Chris asked where the corridor is.

Jane replied that it begins at Staircase Park, goes through Crystal Village, and ends at the Thompson House Park. She added that eventually they would like to extend the corridor along Snowmass Drive to the Nature Park.

Hannah-Hunt explained that this is regarding Colorado House Bill 22 for turf replacement and there are a variety of grants available for projects. She added that they are mapping out where there are areas that would be appropriate for turf replacement and/or utilize a hybrid method of maintenance. She pointed out that they are also looking at other communities that have undertaken turf replacement because the challenge is always maintenance. She noted that they have a draft of the plant list that could be utilized for turf replacement.

Chris noted the article in the Glenwood Post that laid out an integrated watering plan for the entire Roaring Fork Valley for community members using municipal watering resources.

Fred noted that the watering plan won't apply to property owners using ditch water.

Chris acknowledged that but commented that it could still be used as a standard.

Quinn commented that in southern California the watering schedule is so extreme it doesn't support the growth of sod and consequently whole neighborhoods are removing their sod.

Hannah-Hunt related that she has also spoken to Will Hodges, the Director of 350.Org and they are very interested in this, as well. She commented that while part of the project is low-water usage, there is also an ecology and habitat aspect, which is where the plant list will be useful.

Climate Action Plan

Michael noted that the CAP subcommittee has been exploring how to support climate action. He added that they acknowledge that CLEER is the primary consultant, and they are planning a meeting with them at the beginning of 2023 to figure out how the subcommittee can best support the Path to Net Zero. Michael commented that he is volunteering himself to work with Quinn on the Go EV City resolution. He pointed out that they would also like to refocus the conversation on waste reduction, as well.

Tessa noted that the Climate Action Plan has over 100 points and the subcommittee needs to right-size the best and highest use of their time.

Fred added they are considering condensing the Climate Action Plan into some actionable bullet points.

DANDELION DAY: NEW COORDINATOR, EBOARD PROGRAMMING GOALS FOR OUTREACH

Hannah-Hunt noted that there is a new coordinator for Dandelion Day – Quinn Port. Hannah-Hunt explained that Quinn Port has a background in event planning and is a very capable organizer and leader. She added that Quinn has already met with representatives from KDNK and Carbondale Arts, as well as Hannah-Hunt, to kick-off introductions. She

pointed out that there are people that will be working with her, as well. Hannah-Hunt noted that they have clarified the role that each entity will play. She commented that as a Board they need to clarify the funding portion and noted that typically \$1,500.00 to \$2,000.00 of the Environmental Board's budget has gone to Dandelion Days to support the coordinator among other things as well as programming for the day of the event, as well.

Alyssa commented that she used to coordinate Dandelion Day and offered her help to the new coordinator. She added that the EBoard's contribution of manpower is essential for the event, as well.

Quinn Donnelly thought it would be good to connect with the LatinX community for the event.

Hannah-Hunt asked that board members think about what programming they would like to see regarding Dandelion Days.

ADJOURNMENT

The November 21, 2022, regular meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for December 19, 2022 at 6:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Kae McDonald