

**MINUTES  
ENVIRONMENTAL BOARD  
September 19, 2022**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Hannah-Hunt Moeller called the in-person/virtual Environmental Board meeting to order at 6:01 pm on September 19, 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  
Michael Port, Member  
Nicole Rebeck-Stout, Member  
Pat Hunter, Alternate

Town Staff Present: Mark O'Meara, Staff Liaison  
Chris Hassig, Board of Trustees Liaison  
Kae McDonald, Boards and Commissions Clerk

Guests: Zuleika Pevec, CLEER Representative  
Nancy Peterson, CAFCI, 905 Melissa Lane  
Judie Blanchard, CAFCI, 905 Melissa Lane  
Frank Sgambati, CAFCI, 1210 Ivy Lane  
Ron Kokish, CAFCI, 1056 Village Road  
Niki Delson, CAFCI, 1056 Village Road  
Bill Jochems, 717 Lincoln Avenue

**CONSENT AGENDA**

***Motion Passed:*** Fred ***moved*** to approve Environmental Board meeting minutes from the August 15, 2022, meeting. Jane ***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.

**CLEER UPDATES**

For the benefit of the audience, Zuleika introduced herself and briefly described what CLEER was and their role with the Town of Carbondale. She explained that a matrix describing four beneficial electrification programs was included in the meeting packet and asked if the Environmental Board was interested in pursuing one of these programs. She added that if the Board was interested it could be written into CLEER's contract for an upcoming budget.

Hannah-Hunt pointed out that the matrix describes four distinct programs and asked for feedback from the group.

Michael asked which of the four was the lowest cost option.

Zuleika replied that given the population of Carbondale the Thermalize program would realistically be the best program for the money. She added that the other programs are really good ideas but would require another level of organization and staff oversight. She noted that the discussion is timely because the Inflation Reduction Act will offer rebates of up to \$8,000.00 – although the Colorado Energy Office estimates that those rebates won't be ready until mid-to-late 2024 – and tax incentives for heat pumps will be available beginning in 2023.

Quinn commented that electrifying homes will only benefit these types of programs in the future.

Zuleika pointed out that the Beneficial Electrification Program would most likely target those with low to moderate incomes.

Hannah-Hunt asked who would make the heat pump bulk purchase and how would the program be rolled out.

Zuleika replied that it would most likely be modeled after the Solarize program in that the bulk purchase would be written into the Request for Proposals.

Quinn asked if the Town's electric grid could handle the demand of that many heat pumps coming online.

Zuleika wasn't sure, but as far as she was aware she thought it could.

Hannah-Hunt agreed that the Thermalize program made the most sense and it leads the way for other programs.

Zuleika replied that if there is consensus, CLEER will present it to the Board of Trustees. She asked whether implementation should be planned for 2023 or 2024.

Frank commented that with the new housing construction being undertaken the incentive is to start soon.

Zuleika noted that they are working to incorporate the Green Code into the Building Code and there may be some incentives for residential electrification.

Michael commented that the Thermalize program could be phased in and now would be a good time to start planning.

Zuleika acknowledged that those contractors with expertise in heat pumps are maxed out right now and there are also supply chain issues. She agreed that it would be helpful to take advantage of the time right now so when the program is ready to come online, there are more contractors available for installation.

Hannah-Hunt noted that there seemed to be support for the programming and suggested working out the details at next month's meeting.

Zuleika pointed out that CLEER will be meeting with the Board of Trustees next week and they will include this in their discussion. She added that it eventually might be a county-wide program but for now Carbondale will be taking the lead.

Hannah-Hunt referred to the document Alice Laird emailed to the group and asked Zuleika to summarize it.

Zuleika replied that the document lists the baseline and goals of energy sectors in Garfield County undertaken for the Garfield County Energy In Action Plan; the group's last meeting is this Wednesday (September 21<sup>st</sup>). She encouraged the board members to encourage the Board of Trustees to adopt those goals.

### **BOARD OF TRUSTEE UPDATE**

Chris planned to meet with the Town Manager regarding the Town Center process and balancing climate issues against affordability. He noted that developing a Transportation Master Plan will be a priority for the Board of Trustees for 2024 and acknowledged that the Bike, Pedestrian and Trails Commission along with Carbondale Age Friendly Community Initiative are laying the groundwork for that process. He added that updating the building codes is important, but with Carbondale's Building Official leaving to take a job with Garfield County, there will be challenges with that process in the short-term.

Michael asked if there were any updates on the building code.

Pat replied that the updated codes have been delivered to the Town's attorney to format into a legal document.

Chris noted that at the last Board of Trustee's meeting, he asked the Parks and Recreation Director to consider incorporating solar panels into the upcoming bathroom renovations. He added that he also suggested reducing the scope of the Highway 133 Irrigation RFP to conserve water usage as well as making a recommendation to consider solar installations on available Town property.

Hannah-Hunt commented that it would be helpful to have updates on the status of the Town lots and how the Environmental Board can promote environmental goals.

Chris replied that they will be all electric and that net zero can be defined in different ways.

Fred asked about the timeline for the Town Center lots. He wondered whether all-electric housing would be more affordable.

Chris replied that the Town Center development is in the early stages and a Request for Qualifications will be released soon; ideally several different developers will partner on the project. He noted that one qualification they will be looking for is experience in energy efficiency.

Pat asked if the Board of Trustees has decided to put housing on the Town Center lot.

Chris replied in the affirmative, noting that there will be commercial space on the ground floor and housing on the upper levels per the requirements of the Historic Commercial Core zoning district.

### **CARBONDALE AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY INITIATIVE (CAFCI) UPDATE**

Judie Blanchard introduced herself as a Co-Chair of CAFCI and explained that the group would like to open the dialogue with the Environmental Board on where they can intersect with the Environmental Board. She gave a brief history of CAFCI's formation, noting that their focus is on ageing in place "all ages, all abilities, all included." She explained that as a member of the national age-friendly communities their work is centered on eight different domains that affect everyone from birth to end of life including:

- Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
- Transportation
- Communication and Information
- Civic Participation and Employment
- Respect and Social Inclusion
- Health Services and Community Support
- Social Participation
- Housing

Niki Delson introduced herself as the other Co-Chair of CAFCI and she noted that she wanted to explain what it means for Carbondale to be under the umbrella of age-friendly community. She explained that the World Health Organization undertook research 30 years ago regarding what makes a community livable – what promotes physical and mental health in the lived-in environment, and they concluded that world-wide that makes people feel healthy and vibrant. She added that in 2012, AARP became an independent affiliate of the WHO and looked at how they could bring that research to local communities in the United States. Niki pointed out that Colorado was the third state to join AARP's Age-Friendly Community Network and Carbondale was the 13<sup>th</sup> community to register. She also pointed out that CAFCI is just the voice, and it wasn't formed to accomplish specific projects but to create a way to influence policy. She noted that CAFCI is required to submit a strategic plan with 2023 being their fourth year and one item in that plan will be a Transportation Master Plan. She commented that many of the multi-modal goals and strategies detailed in the 2013 Comprehensive Plan have not been achieved.

Nancy Peterson noted that she moved to Carbondale from New York, and she loves being outdoors. She explained that as a birder she visits the Nature Park often, adding that it is a unique location that could be so much more than a dog park. She added that she met with the Parks & Recreation Director and the Parks & Recreation Commission Chair in May of 2021 and addressed the Environmental Board in March of this year to ask that the Nature Park be reimaged as a place for all ages and abilities to enjoy. She also noted that through the efforts of Roaring Fork Audubon a portion of the park was supposed to be set aside for birders but is overrun by dogs. She highlighted the fact that a previous Master Plan for the Parks Department may have been too ambitious. Nancy stated that CAFCI believes the park is a community resource and they would like to work with the Town's boards and commissions to see it protected.

Ron Kokish encouraged the Environmental Board to consider shaking things up and doing things differently than the other boards and commissions because there should be a sense of urgency with many of the topics under consideration.

Hannah-Hunt assured Ron that the group takes the issues they are confronting very seriously and noted that they are tasked with moving a variety of tasks forward. She thought there were many ways the Environmental Board and CAFCI could connect including the Transportation Master Plan, the Nature Park, and the xeriscape garden.

Fred suggested that one area the Environmental Board and CAFCI could work together would be expanding the Circulator Route.

Chris commented that the Board of Trustees is considering something more along the lines of the Basalt Downtowner because it would be half the cost of expanding the circulator route; the Board of Trustees is watching Basalt as they roll their program out because it is such a big expense. He added that they are all concerned about the status of climate issues on a macro scale, but when it gets to the micro scale the reality of getting the theoretical to the practical is the fundamental challenge of government.

### **SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**

Hannah-Hunt explained that the subcommittees have been tasked to bring forward specific action plans for each topic – an effort that has evolved over the last four months to define priorities that the Town has set through various documents and given the time constraints of a voluntary board. She explained that she will be meeting with the Town Manager, Chris, and herself and facilitated by Colin Quinn to engage in a preliminary discussion regarding budget priorities later this week.

Pat questioned what information the group would be using for the meeting.

Hannah-Hunt replied that they would be using budget estimates that will be a part of the Subcommittee updates along with all the documents that they have been putting together on the different focus areas.

### **Climate Action Plan**

Michael explained that the existing Climate action Plan was written five years ago and identifies a long list of priorities, so the subcommittee tried to whittle that down based on what the group could undertake; no budget items have been designated for this topic yet.

Michael identified other topics that the subcommittee plans to work on:

- Support CLEER with the Beneficial Residential Electrification proposal; budget to be determined.
- Support code adoption that restricts the use of natural gas; no budget required.
- Adopt an EV program modeled on the “GoEV City” program and create a plan for long-term vehicle electrification. Promote the Board of Trustees to lead by example by converting the Town’s fleet to all-electric vehicles; budget to be determined.
- Work with CAFCI on the Transportation Master Plan and Circulator Expansion; budget to be determined.
- Advocate for any new development to be net zero; no budget required.

Hannah-Hunt asked if there were timelines established for these goals.

Michael replied that several of the aforementioned items were happening soon, and it was a matter of lending their voices when needed. He added that they will talk more with Town staff to the feasibility and possible costs for oversight.

Ron pointed out that if budgets could be determined, CAFCI could be helpful in finding and applying for grants to pay a consultant to help develop the GoEV City program, for example.

Fred commented that every time he hears it costs too much, applying for grants comes to mind – we just need to find someone who knows to find and apply for them.

Hannah-Hunt agreed that the funding mechanism is a piece that CAFCI could partner with the Environmental Board. She asked that the subcommittee identify which of the five goals can be addressed in the next few months so the board members could consider how to consolidate timelines and resources.

### **Preparedness**

Quinn pointed out that disaster preparedness is a broad reaching topic that addresses common things that the community may face.

- Develop a Carbondale-specific Preparedness Plan utilizing the many regional examples available. He is meeting with the Town Planner on Thursday to discuss the topic and what the Town already has in place. The goal is to work on this item through the end of 2022.
- Once the documentation is in place, put the tools in place to regularly review the plans and make updates as circumstances change in the community.
- Finalize a communication plan. Items 2 and 3 would take place in Spring of 2023.
- Explore related programs the community could participate in – for example, Fire Wise USA – as opportunities present.

Mark suggested reaching out to the Police and Fire Departments.

Quinn replied that he planned to do so after he met with the Town Planner.

### **Ecology**

Hannah-Hunt explained that this subcommittee is focusing on five items:

- Ecology and water reduction
- Completing a comprehensive water update outlining Carbondale's current water portfolio and incentivizing low water practices
- Provide more local resources and identify information gaps – for example, develop a recommended plant list like the recommended tree list
  - Community education on xeriscaping: where it is happening and how to support
  - Education on water resources: revive the ditch tour
- Promote landscape code adoption
- Promote buy-back programs for turf

Jane commented that education is a big part of this topic. She pointed out that the grassy areas around Town Hall are perfect “hell” spaces (the area between the street and the sidewalk) and there is no reason they should remain turf. She asked who might provide the labor because converting those spaces into xeriscape would require an intensive investment in time to achieve.

Nancy thought it would be fun to do a demonstration garden near the entrance to Town Hall and suggested that Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers might be able to provide some of the labor.

Chris liked that idea and encouraged volunteerism around workdays. He also encouraged CAFCI to continue to advocate for changes at the Nature Park and suggested engaging the Parks & Recreation Commission, as well as other boards and commissions, in that process. He noted, however, that the pinch point is that it all must funnel through the Board of Trustees for approval.

Nicole wondered if the turf area identified in the Parks Department Highway 133 RFP could be a demonstration area instead.

Chris commented that the Parks Department must balance weed management against maintenance time.

Nicole asked if the Town would benefit from a maintenance plan provided with the demonstration garden because there are a lot of steps involved – the first three years would have a different maintenance portfolio than once the garden has been established.

Mark commented that the staff time and resources required to maintain garden spaces isn't sustainable. He noted that there may be management techniques that the Parks Department hasn't been using but could look at.

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS GOOGLE SHEET REVIEW**

This agenda topic was deferred to a later meeting.

### **POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL BOARD FIELD TRIPS**

This agenda topic was deferred to a later meeting.

### **NEW BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Natalie Rae announced that she is moving to Portland and will no longer be able to take charge of Dandelion Days.

Hannah-Hunt asked if she could flesh out the scope of work and meet to discuss it before she leaves.

Pat suggested awarding Natalie Rae the Order of the Dandelion at next year's Dandelion Days. He also noted that he had contacted Frosty regarding meeting attendance and that Frosty had indicated that he didn't have time and isn't planning on attending any upcoming meetings.

Hannah-Hunt suggested reaching out to him to ask if he would be willing to resign so that spot could be filled with someone willing to participate.

Pat also noted that he comprises the Education and Outreach Subcommittee and recently got each bank drive through to post no idling signs. He is planning to develop a ¼ page ad to run in the Sopris Sun announcing that fact and the board members to approve the expenditure.

Hannah-Hunt asked Pat to please circulate the ad for review prior to submitting it to the Sopris Sun.

**Motion Passed:** Fred ***moved*** to approve the expenditure of one ¼ page ad in the Sopris Sun, contingent upon content approval by the board members. Michael ***seconded*** the motion, and it was ***unanimously approved***.

Pat noting that there is continued progress on getting the Carbondale building codes current. He also noted his opposition to Colin and Hannah-Hunt meeting with Town staff to discuss budget priorities because they don't know what it costs to develop a sustainability program.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The September 19, 2022, regular meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for October 17, 2022 at 6:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kae McDonald