

MINUTES
ST. ALBANS CLIMATE & ENERGY COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
ST. ALBANS CITY HALL, 100 NORTH MAIN STREET
4 PM MONDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2023

Committee members present: Jim Stiles, Chair; Mary Harbaugh; Laura Isham; Michael Saunders; Rachel Ledoux, Student Liaison

Committee members absent: Zach Scheffler, Susan Knightes (Alternate)

Northwest Regional Planning Commission: Marlena Valenta

City Staff present: Paul Clapps, Minute Taker

Members of the public present: None

1. Call to Order: J. Stiles called the meeting to order.at 4:08 pm.

2. Brief public comment on non-agenda items:

- M. Valenta reminded the committee of the October 10 Zoom listening session, in which state officials will ask for feedback on state energy policies.’

3. Report on Communications and Activities

- J. Stiles described a meeting with developer Jim Cameron, who is familiar with many City buildings, about the energy efficiency of various City buildings.
- M. Harbaugh provided additional information about a First Street/Risk Factor city flood-risk map she had previously sent the committee. J. Stiles described one method of flood mitigation, including a substantial trench near the firehouse, which the City has already completed to address flooding.
- J. Stiles noted for the record that the committee’s MERP (Municipal Energy Resilience Program) Assessment Grant application was successful. Two City buildings, the firehouse and the Barlow Street Community Center, were awarded free energy assessments as a prerequisite to applying for the MERP Implementation Grant. He congratulated and thanked members. M. Valenta offered more details on the assessment process.
- M. Harbaugh reminded the committee about the opportunity for a MERP Mini-Grant to support events.

4. Updates on the Button-Up Campaign

- The posters were inadvertently printed in black and white. M. Valenta mentioned that these could function as hand-outs in various places around town. M. Harbaugh will arrange for color printing for posters meant to be posted in shop windows and other locations.

- M. Harbaugh noted that the Button-Up Campaign is an annual campaign, so committee members might keep in mind ideas for future years. As the committee was established so recently, it did not have time to develop projects this year, beyond the poster.

5. Public Events for Late Winter/Spring:

- M. Harbaugh noted interest within the committee to participate in event planning and recommended a special meeting.
- M. Valenta mentioned that the Swanton Energy Committee is hosting an energy fair soon. She recommended attending this fair for ideas.
- The committee discussed holding a special meeting for event planning. **L. Isham motioned to have a special meeting at 4 pm next Monday, October 9. Seconded by M. Saunders. The motion passed with all in favor.**

6. Climate/Energy Plan Update:

- J. Stiles brought up his list of possible focus areas and projects. He encouraged committee members to comment and propose additional projects, and noted that the project list could be updated over time as projects are completed and priorities of the committee shift.
- M. Harbaugh noted that the committee's charter can serve as a "short-term" framework for developing project ideas while work proceeds on the longer-term Climate & Energy Plan. She proposed a special meeting to discuss the plan. She also asked whether individual committee members would like to help develop the plan in detail or review and comment on progress. The committee discussed options.
- **M. Harbaugh motioned to hold a special meeting at 3 pm on October 14. Seconded by L. Isham. The motion passed with all in favor.**
- M. Harbaugh encouraged committee members to be alert for or research three or four good ideas taken from energy and climate plans created in other municipalities around the state that could be considered for the St. Albans City plan.

7. Programs and Projects:

- No discussion.

8. Calendar and Schedules:

- The committee discussed ways to share information without holding meetings and discussed the requirements of the Open Meeting Law.

9. Reminders and Conclusion:

- M. Harbaugh offered to contact absent members with information about the special meetings.
- R. Ledoux described a proposed high school tree-planting effort on Collins-Perley grounds.

10. Approval of minutes:

- **L. Isham motioned to approve the edited minutes, adopting the minutes as amended. Seconded by M. Saunders. The motion passed with all in favor. No discussion.**

11. Adjourn:

- **M. Harbaugh motioned to adjourn the meeting at 5:03 pm. Seconded by M. Saunders. The motion passed with all in favor. No discussion.**

