

The Watertown Environment and Energy Efficiency Committee met remotely via Zoom at 7:00 PM on Monday, June 27, 2022.

The following members and staff were present: Ed Lewis (Energy Manager), Laurel Schwab (Sr Environmental Planner), Jeanne Trubek (Co-Chair), Ellen Menounos (Co-Chair), Pat Rathbone, Brian Hebeisen, Meredith Fields.

The following members and staff were absent: Lauri Murphy

Others present: City Councilor Nicole Gardner, Silas Fyler, Libby Shaw, Ernesta Krackiewicz, Steve Steadman, Susan LaDue, Jolly Tager

The meeting started with a quorum at 7:03 with Ellen Menounos presiding.

1) Announcements

The next WE3C meeting is July 18.

- 2)** The minutes from the May 16 meeting were approved.
Motion—Ed, Second—Jeanne, Approved unanimously.

3) Energy Manager Report (Ed Lewis)

Watertown Electricity Choice (WEC). Eversource has just come out with its summer rates over \$0.17/kWh, which are higher than the WEC 100% green rate. The other private suppliers' rates will also be higher than the WEC rates. Expect social media postings about this to be out next week. Brian proposed that the working group make a push for more people to opt up to 100% green.

Schools. Ed was approached by a middle-school teacher of civics. All 8th graders must take civics, and she asked ~~what changes Ed would like to see in the curriculum~~ if students could contact him regarding Civics reports about sustainability. Two groups contacted Ed, one group assembled a very good review of renewable energy. He proposed that next school year WE3C be more involved with the civics curriculum.

4) Environmental Planner Report (Laurel Schwab)

Municipal Vulnerability Program update. The MVP grant is being wrapped up. We are waiting to see if we are funded in the next round. The Comprehensive plan includes more staffing for the Energy Manager's office and for the Environmental Planner's office.

5) Climate Plan Report (Laurel Schwab)

Climate Plan has been presented to City Council and referred to the new Climate and Energy Subcommittee (Palomba, Bays, Airasian.) There will be public meetings on July 7, 14, and 19th in the council chambers and on zoom for the public to hear from the Climate and Energy subcommittee. They are planning on reviewing two sections of the Climate and Energy Action Plan (CAP) per meeting. They are targeting to bring the CAP to the entire City Council on August 9th.

Laurel and Ed will staff a table at the Farmers' Market on August 17th.

6) Tree Ordinance final draft: Discussion and Vote.

There is a regional group of tree committees that meet regularly. We have a new tree warden, who will start soon. The tree ordinance working group contacted the DPW several times to meet but got no response. The DPW did get a Department of Recreation and Conservation grant to do another (the 4th) tree inventory. This ordinance does not require permits to remove trees on private property for established residents. Significant discussion on restrictions on what people can do on their own property to protect the public good.

Decision—we voted unanimously to approve the tree ordinance as written and send it to city council.

7) Q&A with Councilor Nicole Gardner, our guest

Nicole, who is new to the city council, introduced herself, gave her education and work background prior to moving to Watertown six years ago, talked about her experiences and activities in Watertown and how she became interested in participating in local government and asked how she could help WE3C achieve its goals. Attendees at the meeting discussed the Climate Action Plan and asked her to support it as a city councilor, asked her to approve the resources and ordinances that are necessary to make the CAP succeed, and asked why the online city meetings are in Webinar format, rather than participatory meeting format.

8) Decision—to adjourn at 9:00.

Respectfully submitted by Jeanne Trubek