

MEETING MINUTES FOR NORTH TONAWANDA CLIMATE SMART TASK FORCE

Date: Wednesday, June 14, 2023,

Attendees, In person @ City Hall:

Members: Austin Tylec, Deb Gondek, Erin Robinson, Jack Kanack, Jim Berry, Tim Pieper

Guests: Kat Bordonaro (Cornell Climate Steward)

Brian Conley (Senior Planner, University at Buffalo Regional Institute)

Meeting called to order at 5:00 pm

AGENDA TOPICS:

1) Approval of April meeting minutes

Tim motion to accept; Austin 2nd. 5 approval 1 abstain. Carried.

Action: Emily to send monthly meeting agendas and minutes to Donna Braun to post on the City website.

2) Review of recent tours/events

- a. Tour of UB greenhouse facility- discussion followed that space was simple, amicable, and Helios researchers were open for questions. Jim commented how useful the space has been as a research opportunity to introduce testable variables due to climate change.
- b. Jim mentioned Foristar digester plan for biofuel use and asked whether this is still part of their plan, and for update on plan to run at full capacity, etc.

3) Source Water Protection

- a. Emily provided Deb with update via email after group's second meeting (week of June 5) including vision statement and goals.
- b. Vision Statement is as follows:

North Tonawanda is committed to protecting and managing its source water and improving the reliability and efficiency of its water treatment system. These actions will protect the health of our residents awhile increasing resilience to climate change and addressing emerging threats.
- c. Goals are as follows:
 - i. Increase reliability of the treatment system
 - ii. Protect public health and provide clean drinking water
 - iii. Address emerging contaminants and prevent the addition of chemicals in source water
 - iv. Avoid increased treatment costs
 - v. Increase resiliency to climate change
- d. Austin commented on master plan to loop in other municipalities in Erie and Niagara Counties and that discussions for best practices are in process.

4) Climate Adaptation Plan

- a. Brian was introduced to CSC group and discussed timeline and aspects of the planning process.
 - i. Wrap up community survey Mid-July
 - ii. Mid-September Public Meeting
 - iii. August date for Scenario Workshop (TBD)
 - iv. Plan expected to be complete in October 2023

b. Community Survey: Goal is 100-200 responses by Mid-July

Actions: Kat contact Donna Braun about City Market & let group know what dates CSC can have a table at the market; then Deb to send out spreadsheet with dates for volunteers.

Austin: need flyers, 4-6 lawn signs with QR code for placement at City Hall, City Market, Public Library, Carnegie Art Center- Garden Walk.

Deb & Emily: push survey out via CSC Facebook page and other social media.

Brian: Send graphics and survey QR code to CSC task force.

c. **Scenario Workshop** will include CSC, City leaders, and a few public members as community stakeholders. Plan for 60-90 minute workshop. Also working to identify implementation measures and funding.

d. **Public Meeting** to gather community input and comments to finalize plan for presentation.

e. DEC to assist in identifying hazards- discussion about wildfire and associated smoke as air quality concerns build. Strategies to align with NYS Environmental Bond Act. Flooding risk and management emerges as priority.

f. Mike (in his absence via email) asked about timing on NT Comprehensive Plan and connection to role of CSC. Auction responded grant-writer in line, waiting on contract to approve. Then group will determine who will serve on committee and/or as a key resource to committee.

Action: Next CSC Climate Adaptation meeting scheduled for **June 28, 6 pm @ UB Growhouse.**

5) Renewable Energy

a. Pause on Community Choice while rates settle out to be more beneficial to the City.

6) Unified Solar Permit

a. Erin and Austin to review what Jason sent on a one-pager to submit to Common Council for some unified solar practice for city guidelines.

7) Inflation Reduction Act

a. Jack circulated information on federal Inflation Reduction Act for information on benefits and tax credits for individuals- and additional NYS credits as well. See links:

https://www.nrdc.org/stories/consumer-guide-inflation-reduction-act?gclid=Cj0KCQjwnMWkBhDLARIsAHBOfto0Zg6Mz_vn88-ilqJRDr6l-kKwXRSQMxTBpoTtz2BGMZxbZHJFFjMaAjZHEALw_wcB

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/cleanenergy/inflation-reduction-act-guidebook/>

8) Noise Pollution Concerns

a. Jack discussed noise pollution issues from Washington Mills and Foristar facilities. Provided information on Remington Drive residents documenting noise observations. Concerns are that NYSDEC is not responsive. Group feels this is an EPA issue. Jack suggested that a press conference with Mayor could get media attention.

Action: Erin will look into local EPA Region 2 contact. Reported that there is a complaint form online; and NYS being in Region 2, offices and contact are in NYC. Discussion ongoing.

9) **NYS Solid Waste Plan**

- a. Comment period is currently open; deadline 6/29/2023. Waiting on NYS Expanded Bottle Bill and other manufacturer responsibility bills to be finalized at state level. In meantime, increased costs of recycling in NT continue to be a concern.
- b. See links to NYS proposed legislation:
<https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2021/A8668>
<https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2023/S4246/amendment/A>

Meeting adjourned 6:10 pm

NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday, July 12 @ 5pm City Hall