



## Environmental and Energy Stewardship Subcommittee

Zoom

March 18, 2022

### Meeting Minutes

#### Subcommittee Members Present

Chairman Newman, Commissioner Wells, Commissioner Sloan, Maggie Ullman, and Meg Williams

#### Staff Members Present

Sybil Tate, Jeremiah LeRoy, Jess Laggis, Chris Link, Jessica Hughes, Michael Frue, Ariel Zijp, and Avni Naik

Commissioner Sloan called the meeting to order at 10:01am.

#### Approval of Agenda & Minutes

- *Terri Wells made a motion to approve the March 18, 2022, agenda and February 18, 2022 minutes, seconded by Meg Jamison, and the motion passed with the vote.*

#### Public Comment

- There was no public comment.

#### Overview of SAHC Community Farm

- The community farm was donated in 2017. The community farm serves a business incubator program for farmers who are starting out.
- The SAHC Community Farm offers a 2 mile hiking discovery trail, short leaf pine reforestation project, stream rehabilitation project, stream easement held by Buncombe County Soil and Water, and in the process for a conservation easement for the SAHC community farm expansion.
- SAHC works with arboretum to provide more educational programs for students.
- 7 farmers have graduated the incubator program. The program is a mix of livestock, veggies, fruit, flower, and other farm programs.
- SAHC also holds easements in WNC and works closely with Organic Growers School Farm Beginnings program. Land that has been donated to SAHC will go to expand the incubator program to allow for farmers to access land if they don't have land yet.
- A value-added kitchen is located on the farm that is open to the public for use for a small fee.
- SAHC works with NC FarmLink to match farmers who are no longer able to farm with farm seekers who can take over and farm the land under a lease.

#### Land Conservation Goals

- Buncombe County is 420,480 acres total, and 76,637 acres are currently conserved.
- The Subcommittee agreed to create a goal of 7,459 acres conserved by 2030 which would be at the 20% mark of total acres conserved.
- 20% by 2030 would be estimated at a total cost of \$33,295,750. 20% by 2032 would be estimated at a cost of
- The waitlist will continue to grow so there is a high possibility there will be more acres waiting to be conserved after the 7,459 acres is conserved.
- There is a feasibility test happening to evaluate the possibility of a bond.
- Please see presentation attached for full presentation.



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- *Terri Wells made a motion to approve increasing the goals of conserved land to 20% by 2030, seconded by Commissioner Sloan, and the motion passed on the vote.*

### Innovative Solar Projects

- Chairman Newman shared a presentation on the challenges and opportunities for rapid transition to renewable energy in Buncombe County.
- 40+ county facilities, public schools, and community colleges are receiving solar in phase 1 and phase 2.
- Solar on rooftops would not work to reach energy goals, due to the lack of available roof space. An estimated 1 and 5 homes can install rooftop solar.
- Floating solar arrays tend to generate more electricity than ground solar arrays because the temperatures are cooler. Floating solar arrays can also increase the amount of clean water supply and capacity.
- Meg Jamison stated she would be in support of these projects.
- Please see presentation attached for full presentation.

### ARPA Update

- The ARPA application is open, the deadline is April 12<sup>th</sup>. \$26,000,000 will be awarded between projects with the focus being on projects that mitigate climate change.

### FY23 Electric Vehicle Update

- There are 14 county vehicles that will be transitioning to EV in FY23 assuming the budget is passed by the Board of Commissioners.
- Please see presentation attached for full presentation.

### Review of Future Meetings

- Sybil Tate presented a review of future meetings.
- The next meeting will be in-person at Waste Pro, 138 Tavistock Road Arden, NC 28704.

### Adjourn

- *Maggie Ullman made a motion to adjourn at 12:00pm, and the motion passed with all in favor.*