

Borough of Doylestown

Environmental Advisory Council

Minutes of the meeting held Tuesday, August 18, 2020

Attendance: Joe Wallace, David Kapturowski, Victoria Holderer, George Mullikin, Karyn Hyland, Mayor Ron Strouse

Notes taken by Kristin Winters from Zoom meeting recording

1) Call to Order: Joe W. called the meeting to order at 7:31 pm.

2) Approval of Minutes: David K. commented re: Ready for 100 that their target goal is 2050 not 2030. This will be corrected on the minutes. David K. made a motion to approve the minutes, George M. seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved as written with the changes noted.

3) Ready for 100

- Joe W. noted there was a Ready for 100 meeting at the beginning of August; he had sent us follow-up info. There were representatives from 4-5 different municipalities at the event.
- They discussed the program and what municipalities were doing to reach 100% renewable energy by 2050. Every municipality is at a different stage in the process.
- Several EACs are engaging their own planning commissions to work on a resolution together. Joe W. noted that we can draft a resolution; it would be a goal, not a legally binding pact, and it could define with some of our objectives. Joe W. asked if the group feels we're ready to draft a resolution.
- Karyn H. pulled up the Doylestown Township resolution (this may still be draft).
- David K. noted that we need to keep in mind what is unique about Doylestown Borough as we do this. He worked previously in MA on a renewable energy project, which gave him perspective on the relationship between the space available and energy needs that can be filled. As we do this we will probably have different capabilities than other municipalities with our higher population density. Ready for 100 might not be realistic.
- Mayor Strouse said, as he previously noted, he'd like us to get input from an interest group we work with, Penn Environment. We would want to acknowledge in our resolution what we've already done (e.g. electric charging stations and other projects). Mayor Strouse said he would want to get as much support as possible from Council, so we would want to keep that in mind as we craft the resolution. He also noted there are some PA-specific initiatives we could look into as we do this. From his perspective, we could use the Township document as a reference but should start from scratch.
- Joe W. observed that this would be an important statement for the Borough to make, whether it is under this framework or a different one. Having a framework with a national presence has value as a principle. Within the framework we could come up with numbers, target dates, etc. that work better for the Borough.
- George M. echoed that the national branding is appealing and would give us something to show the community. He mentioned the EPA Sustainable program and Sustainable PA programs that could give us the broad framework and branding and would allow us to fit the resolution to the Borough's accomplishments and needs.

- Joe W. agreed that the heart of the matter is to say what we've done and chart a path forward. He asked if maybe we should start with just listing what we've done.
- Mayor Strouse said the Sustainable PA program gives us a good framework to measure what we have and haven't done. This might be a good place to start, since it would help us understand systematically what the resolution should say.
- George M. had previously done research on the Sustainable PA program and we had put together a recommendation letter. Karyn H. said the next step was a fairly hefty application; everything had been set aside due to COVID. George M. noted we could look at this again and perhaps get it restarted. Joe W. agreed we could use this as a model. George M. brought up the documents we had worked on and said he will reshare the info he has with the group.
- Joe W. asked the group to look at the info George M. sends and review info about the Sustainable PA program before the next meeting so we can discuss this.
- Mayor Strouse said he will send along info about the Sustainability Conference scheduled for October.

4) Single Use Plastics Public Education and Participation; Composting

- Joe W. recapped from last meeting that we had discussed possibly resuming our presence at the farmers' market. Victoria H. and George M. said they would be comfortable talking to the public at the market. George M. also noted that we had a list of contact people from previous discussions who might be able to help. We could perhaps just have one of us there with a volunteer. Joe W. also said he'd be comfortable out there with the public.
- Joe W. asked what kinds of materials we'd want to have out there to support our message. We would probably need to change our messaging on disposables. He said he reached out to Liz McGill from Lambertville but hadn't been able to speak to her yet to see how they have modified their program and what they have been doing with composting.
- George M. asked if reusable bags are something we could still offer to the public. Karyn H. said she thought this would be fine, and they are being used at the market. David K. said he thinks the leftover bags are in the shed, and there may be a couple dozen of them.
- Victoria H. asked about branded masks, and if we were still thinking about doing this. Joe W. said we do have a budget. He noted that we have to keep in mind people's comfort level with items that would be handed out. Victoria H. pointed out that the bags are washable and could be washed when they get home. The group discussed that either having handouts or having props that are not touched (if people will be more comfortable with this) could be valuable as conversation starters.
- David K. had looked into getting our own bags branded. With our budget we may be able to get some more bags. The group agreed that we wouldn't get new bags now but could start with what we have and see how it goes.
- Mayor Strouse said he could let us temporarily use a new composting bin he will be purchasing as a demonstration at the market. Victoria H. said that sharing info about how residents could make their own composting bin would also be a good idea.
- George M. asked about the logistics of weighing the plastic bags we've already collected. He noted the Trex people have said we can start participating in the program whenever we're ready; they're being flexible due to COVID. George M. received some bins from Trex that we can use for collections.
- George M. asked if we can use the same space at the market we used before. Karyn H. said she will check this; she thinks it should be fine.

- Joe W. said maybe we could use this as an opportunity to recognize the different role disposables play in our life with COVID, but we can still discuss the ways we can reduce their use in this new reality.
- Mayor Strouse said there are vendors that sell masks at the market. David K. wondered if masks would be our role, since so many other groups are doing it. Karyn H. pointed out that a lot of other groups also hand out bags, although it's different when the masks are being sold not handed out. Victoria H. pointed out that they would be a different type of mask than some that are being sold that are very nice looking, for example. George M. said we could have a small supply with the EAC seal that are just for official use (e.g. those of us who are speaking at the market). George M. will discuss with one of the vendors at the market if they could do a special run for us; Mayor Strouse said there are perhaps three different vendors, and he will send George the info for the market contact.
- David K. and Victoria H. noted that having Purell on the table will help draw people in, and the group agreed.
- Victoria H. said it would be a good idea to have a sample at the market of before and after for compost. Joe W. agreed and said perhaps we could figure out a way to do this. Joe W. will reach out to his composter to see if he can get samples.
- Victoria H. will get some information about composting to share at the market.
- Joe W. said that maybe we could start our presence at the market in October. George M. noted we could start even sooner with just the table, reusable bags, and the plastic bag collection.
- George M. asked if we want to get volunteers on board. Joe W. said maybe for now, since there would be some training involved, we would just stick with our own members and could consider volunteers for the spring. Victoria H. said we could just send a message to volunteers right now to keep them in the loop. Joe W. asked about logistics for this; Karyn H. said she'd like to see the message before we send it, but we could do this. Joe W. will draft an email and send it to the group and Karyn H. Karyn H. noted that there was a list of potential volunteers from the market but also the movie; George M. has both lists and will forward it.

Old/New Business:

5) Charging Stations

- David K. said there is a 5-year (started in 2018) grant program in PA that has \$77 million available for sustainable vehicle programs. He wondered if there is interest in the Council for additional level-2 electric vehicle charging stations. It is a 90% grant so we would need to raise the additional 10%. He noted that people coming into town will be looking for places to plug in.
- Mayor Strouse noted that this program also covers projects like natural gas buses. He said the charging stations already in place were a partnership between the local business Zygmunt Motors and Public Works. He said Zygmunt Motors has a continuing interest in seeing more of these around town. Mayor Strouse said there has been talk about installing charging stations at the new Borough Hall, which could potentially be powered by a solar roof. Currently the only place these exist in PA is in Pittsburgh; this could be a good demonstration for us if we were looking into the grant. Contracts were awarded for the Borough Hall this week, and construction will be starting hopefully in September. There would be no conflict if we decided to apply for this grant for additional charging stations. Karyn H. said there will be more privately owned charging stations in the Borough at the Wawa (Tesla charging station), a new apartment building, and a new development along Broad Street.

- David K. will look into the grant program some more and get some specifics. He noted the grant gives the highest amount (90%) for stations installed on government property. David K. noted one application deadline is in January 2021 and the money would be disbursed as a reimbursement.

6) Adjournment: David K. moved to adjourn the meeting, and the meeting was adjourned by common consent at 8:35 pm.

7) Next Meeting: The next EAC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 15, 2020 at 7:30 pm via Zoom.