

Wood County Renewable and Sustainable Committee

Date: Monday, October 7, 2019

Time: 1:00 pm

Location: Room 115, Wood County Courthouse

- 1) Call to order
- 2) Public comments
- 3) Review/approve previous meeting minutes
- 4) Update on recommendations made to Executive Committee
- 5) Review/edit draft of County goals
- 6) Future agenda items
- 7) Next meeting date and time
- 8) Adjourn

RENEWABLE & SUSTAINABLE COMMITTEE MEETING

DATE: Thursday, September 26, 2019
TIME: 10:00 AM
LOCATION: Wood County Courthouse – Room 115, Wisconsin Rapids, WI

Present: Reuben Van Tassel, Nancy Turyk, Sue Knuferman, Jake Hahn, Bill Leichtnam, Nicole Gessert

Others

Present: Bill Clendenning, Doug Machon

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** Chair, Reuben Van Tassel called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.
2. **Public Comments:**
Supervisor Bill Clendenning shared a publication, "Sustainable Times".
3. **Review/approve previous meeting minutes:**
Minutes from the July 12, 2019 R&S Committee meeting and Minutes from the August 20, 2019 R&S Committee meeting.

Motion: (Kunferman/Turyk) to approve the prior meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

4. **Update on SolSmart and other Community solar initiatives:**
Nancy Turyk reported there are two items left for SolSmart gold designation. Permitting and inspector training sessions, which Jason Grueneberg from Planning and Zoning is working on; and the goals of this committee which will be discussed later in the meeting as an agenda item.

Turyk reported she had been contacted by The Solar Foundation to see if the County would be interested in being part of the 300th SolSmart designation. Van Tassel indicated this would be a good recommendation to pass along to the Executive Committee.

Van Tassel passed around a copy of a recent article in the Hub City Times featuring the solar projects the County is working on.

Van Tassel passed around a hand-out from the recent Saratoga Solar project meeting. Discussion ensued.
5. **Update on recommendations made to Executive Committee:**
Van Tassel reported that both recommendation that the R&S Committee made were forwarded to the Executive Committee. The Nepco Solar project was then forwarded to HIRC. HIRC approved the project. The Courthouse solar car charging station was approved by the Executive Committee.

Hahn questioned if the recommendation for the energy study was approved by the Executive Committee. Van Tassel confirmed the \$2,000.00 for the energy study is approved from the Lean Process grant funds.
6. **Review grant applications and send recommendations to Executive Committee:**
Van Tassel shared the R&S and Lean Process grant applications received. Van Tassel indicated that prior to this committee being formed the Executive Committee had approved an application from the Maintenance Department for LED lighting in the Jail for \$2,950.00 which would leave the funds available for the R&S grant at around \$22,000.00. The Committee reviewed the remaining three R&S grant applications. Discussion ensued.

Motion: (Kunferman/Hahn) to forward a recommendation to the Executive Committee to use the Renewable and Sustainable grant funds for a net cost of \$20,103.00 for the Nepco Lake solar project.

Motion: (Kunferman/Leichtnam) to amend the motion to ask that there be a requirement to the system installed so that there is future capability of adding power storage and the inverter used in the initial system is capable of providing power during a utility outage. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion: (Kunferman/Hahn) to forward a recommendation to the Executive Committee to use the Renewable and Sustainable grant funds for a net cost of \$20,103.00 for the Nepco Lake solar project with a requirement to the system installed so that there is future capability of adding power storage and the inverter used in the initial system is capable of providing power during a utility outage. Motion passed unanimously.

Turyk stated that she would like to see a recommendation to Edgewater for resubmittal of their grant application in the future so it could be reviewed again next year because she feels it is a good project. The group consensus agreed with Turyk.

The Committee reviewed the two Lean Process grant applications. Discussion ensued.

Motion: (Hahn/Turyk) to forward a recommendation to the Executive Committee to approve both Lean Process grants for a total amount of \$26,500.00 with the additional cost coming from the amount left in the R&S grant funds. Motion passed unanimously.

7. **Review draft of County goals and consider forwarding to Executive Committee:**

Van Tassel handed out an update to the Wood County Energy Goals and Plan with some minor edits that he had made. Turyk updated the group on some edits she made after having a representative from SolSmart review the draft. Discussion ensued.

Motion: (Hahn/Leichtnam) to send the Wood County Energy Goals and Plan draft with the discussed edits to Executive Committee for approval. Motion passed unanimously.

Sue Knuferman was excused at 12:00 p.m.

8. **Future agenda items:**

- Bill Leichtnam will reach out to Drew Gibbons from Savion
- Ground breaking solar event
- Committee Structure
- Approve Past meeting minutes

9. **Next Meeting:**

Thursday, October 24th. 10:00 a.m. @ Wood County Courthouse, Room 115

10. **Adjourn Renewable & Sustainable Committee Meeting:** Reuben Van Tassel adjourned @ 12:18 p.m.

Notes by Nicole Gessert, Maintenance Department

Wood County Energy Goals and Plan

Reducing unnecessary energy consumption and expenditures is an important issue for many individuals, businesses, organizations, and local governments. Wood County seeks to achieve a feasible level of energy independence as a way of enhancing energy security, reducing costs, attracting new residents, and positively impacting health, the environment, and local natural resources for future generations. Declining costs associated with renewable energy systems are making the local generation of energy more attainable and economically beneficial. Furthermore, leading credit rating agencies look favorably on an energy plan and goals when determining municipal credit ratings.

Setting targets, developing strategies, engaging employees, and planning for initial capital investments will pave the way for reductions in energy use and expand the amount of energy generation by Wood County, resulting in saved tax dollars, greater energy security, and positive health and environmental outcomes.

Energy is undergoing swift transitions worldwide. As a result, this plan should be reviewed and updated at least annually by the Wood County Renewable and Sustainable Committee.

Goals:

Promote energy efficiency/conservation and renewable energy for Wood County operations

Short-term target: By 2025, reduce nonrenewable energy by 15%.

Long-term target: By 2050, utilize 100% renewable energy.

Lead by example.

1. By 2025, reduce nonrenewable energy by 15%.
 - a. Conduct focus groups with Wood County employees to discuss energy use and gather input and ideas for energy efficiencies and renewables.
 - b. Develop a mechanism to regularly distribute energy-saving tips to employees. Reward positive changes.
 - c. By February 29, 2020, work with UW-Madison to complete an energy audit of Wood County facilities.
 - d. Using the energy audit results, prioritize energy efficiency and renewable energy strategies.
 - e. By July 1, 2020, establish a plan to monitor the County's consumption of electricity, natural gas, liquid propane, and vehicle fuels.
 - f. By December 31, 2020, outline the steps needed to achieve a feasible level of energy independence. Include benchmarks.
 - g. Conduct site assessments for five County properties for solar feasibility.

- h. Consider solar installation for facilities that will be re-roofed, renovated, or newly constructed.
- i. Install at least 3 photovoltaic (PV) systems on County property in differing areas of Wood County. Those already recommended by the Renewable and Sustainable Committee include a system at NEPCO park and EV charging station at the courthouse.

Adopt renewable energy policies and practices as part of a strategy to meet future energy needs.

1. Take advantage of opportunities as they arise.
 - a. By October 31, 2019, achieve SolSmart Gold level designation for Wood County.
 - i. Identify the SolSmart initiatives that should be continued or pursued by the County over the long term.
 - b. Monitor and emulate best practices as exemplified by other counties in the state and nation.
 - c. Stay informed on funding and incentive program opportunities and timelines for energy efficiencies and renewable energy.
 - i. Utilize experienced grant writers to pursue funding available from utilities, government agencies, and private foundations.
 - d. Ensure the continuation of the County's Renewable and Sustainable Committee.
 - e. Continue to invest in renewable energy for Wood County properties. If possible, identify a long-term funding stream such as a portion of funds received by renewable energy developments.
 - f. Develop and maintain local and regional partnerships
2. Identify and take steps to remove barriers to development of renewable energy.
 - a. Maintain updated permitting list for interested property owners.
 - b. Provide guidance to Wood County municipalities interested in reducing barriers to local renewable energy installations.
 - c. Assist, to the extent possible, the location of renewable energy production facilities.
 - d. Maintain County energy webpages.
<https://www.co.wood.wi.us/Departments/UWEX/Energy.aspx>
3. Utilize sustainability and local renewable energy independence as tools to enhance economic stability and quality of life in the County.
 - a. When feasible, enhance renewable energy workforce development thru partnerships with Mid-State Technical College and other renewable energy training programs and their students.
 - b. Publicize County efforts associated with energy efficiencies and renewable energy to attract new residents and businesses.
 - c. Set standards for land management practices within solar developments that are beneficial to water resources in Wood County such as pollinator habitat, perennial cover, etc.