

TOMPKINS COUNTY ENERGY TASK FORCE
Friday, May 17, 2019
Human Services Building, 320 W. State/MLK JR, Ithaca, NY 14850
Final Minutes

Attendance

Member		Member		Staff	
Sharon Anderson	E	Bob Howarth	P	Katie Borgella	P
Martha Armstrong	E	Tim Mount	P	Darby Kiley	P
Cliff Babson	A	Martha Robertson	P	Kristin McCarthy	P
Fernando de Aragón	P	Brice Smith	P	Megan McDonald	P
Brian Eden	P	Jennifer Tavares	P		
Todd Fox	A	Irene Weiser	A		
Nick Goldsmith	P	Gordon Woodcock	E		
Curt Gooch	A	Sarah Zemanick	E		

Guests – Sara Hess, Terry Carroll, Guillermo Metz, Anna Kelles, Deborah Dawson

Welcome – Fernando de Aragón chaired the meeting on behalf of Chair Sharon Anderson, who was absent. He called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

Comments from the Public: Round 1 – None

Agenda Review/Changes – Policy Committee did not give a report because subject was covered in Energy Strategy discussion.

Approval of April 19, 2019 minutes – Minutes were not approved due to lack of a quorum.

Energy Strategy Update– Darby Kiley

Darby reviewed the steps involved in developing the Energy Strategy, explained where department is currently in the process, and what lies ahead before it’s finalized. She emphasized that the Energy Strategy is not meant to be a “wish list”; the items included should be actionable and realistic. Moreover, the role of the County is often to act as a convener. Many actions must happen at municipal, state, and federal levels. She walked the group through one example from the list to give them a better sense of how the proposed actions were evaluated.

Staff need ETF feedback on two key areas:

1) First, what is missing from list of 25 (describe measure, county action, and partner action)?

- Hold a Sustainability Summit.
- Break carbon sequestration down into multiple actions. Include area farmers in focus groups.
- Focus more on electric grid constraints and NYSEG. Work more closely with the PSC.
- Members should circle back to original list of action items and share thoughts on any they think shouldn’t have made the cut, or vice versa.
- Prioritize items that can empower municipalities/businesses financially to take action.

- Explore creative financing mechanisms
- Leverage expertise in town, via programs like Engaged Cornell, to see who might be willing to help with efforts for free or low cost.

2) Second, what shouldn't be in the list of 25?

- Some items seem to be ranked higher because they're easier to implement and not because they would yield a substantial reduction in GHG emissions.
- Nick G. thinks criteria give too much weight to financial/economic concerns. Finding a way to fund these changes isn't a choice at this point – must be done.
- Too much like a laundry list. Break into overarching buckets: solar, transportation, etc.
- Is it feasible to create a governance structure that could expand County's ability to take action? Would it be more effective to take a regional approach to collaborating on these issues?

Darby will convert the Evaluation Criteria document to Word so members can add feedback directly.

City of Ithaca New Green Deal Update – Nick Goldsmith

Nick Goldsmith laid out the basics of the New Green Deal Resolution, which was passed unanimously by the City Administration Committee on May 15th. The resolution goes to Common Council for a vote on June 5th. Town of Ithaca is contemplating similar legislation.

Member Announcements

- HeatSmart applied for a NYSERDA grant to promote residential heat pumps in Town of Lansing. If grant is awarded, TCAD will take care of the commercial sector.
- Andres Carvallo is likely to give a presentation to the ETF in June. He was formerly with Austin Energy and now runs his own firm (<https://512cmg.com/>).
- Conversations continue over W. Dryden pipeline alternative.
- Despite media coverage suggesting otherwise, Jennifer cautioned that plans to convert the Cayuga Power Plant to a data center are not 100% certain. Visible public support is crucial.

Comments from Public Round 2

- The "Keep It Cool, Tompkins" Refrigeration Summit takes place at TCPL on May 23rd. Terry Carroll will be a panelist there. <https://www.keepitcooltompkins.org/our-story.html>
- Guillermo Metz requested the opportunity to submit written comments to Darby. She will reach out to guests present for feedback.
- In regards to the Energy Strategy discussion, Sara Hess suggested a column be added to the Evaluation Criteria grid that explains how action item has relevance for the County.

Adjournment – Fernando de Aragón adjourned meeting at 10:40am.