

Minutes of the Somerset County Energy Council Meeting

Tuesday, January 18, 2022

Call to Order

Chairman William Amann called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM

Pledge of Allegiance

Oath of Office

Jeanne Perantoni was sworn in as a member of the Energy Council by Chairman William Amann.

Roll call

The following members were present:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Present (Yes/No)</i>
William Amann, PE, LEED Fellow, DCEP - Chair	Yes
Jeanne Perantoni, AIA, LEED AP - Vice Chair	Yes
Wayne DeFeo, LEED AP - Secretary	Yes
Axel Breidenbruch	Yes
William Dondiego	Yes
Dr. Vaseem Firdaus	No
William T. Knox, JD, CFA	No
Walter Lane, PP, AICP	Yes
Monica Lazer	Yes
Jim Price	No
<i>Paul Drake, Commissioner Liaison</i>	Yes
<i>Melonie Marano, Commissioner Alternate</i>	No
Adam Bradford, AICP - Staff Liaison	Yes

2022 Energy Council Introductions

Adam Bradford, Staff Liaison introduced himself to the Council and each Energy Council Member introduced themselves to Mr. Bradford.

November 16, 2021 Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the November 16, 2021, meeting minutes was submitted by Vice Chair Perantoni and seconded by Secretary DeFeo. All approved the motion.

Chairman's Comments

Chairman Amann mentioned the pending Build Back Better legislation and moving forward with projects that have gained support through the recent adoption of the Somerset County Climate Change resolution.

New Business

Chairman Amann reappointed Ms. Perantoni as Vice Chair and Mr. DeFeo as Secretary for 2022. Council members endorsed both appointments.

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Drake spoke to building upon the Council's successes from 2021.

2022 Meeting Dates

Chairman Amann asked members for approval of the 2022 Energy Council meeting dates to be held bi-monthly on the third Tuesday of the month at 6:00pm. The 2022 meeting dates are scheduled for:

- January 18th
- March 15th
- May 16th
- July 12th
- September 13th
- November 8th

Mr. Lane mentioned that the Energy Council dates are scheduled to be held virtually via Zoom with a possibility to conduct the meeting(s) in person.

Energy Council Subcommittees

Chairman Amann discussed the list of subcommittees and council member chair assignments. Chairman Amann serves as the de facto member and Mr. Bradford as staff liaison to each subcommittee.

Energy Efficiency

Mr. Dondiego asked to step down as chair but remain as a member of the subcommittee and sponsored Mr. Price to chair the subcommittee. Both appointments were approved by the Council.

Energy Education & Awareness

Ms. Lazar asked to join the committee and was welcomed as a new member; Mr. Breidenbruch and Mr. Lane will continue as members; Ms. Perantoni will continue to chair the subcommittee.

Policy & Legislation

Mr. Lane will continue as a member and Secretary DeFeo will remain as chair of the subcommittee.

Renewable Energy & Technology

Ms. Lazer and Ms. Perantoni noted electric vehicle charging station locator criteria

Greening Economy Taskforce

Mr. Lane advised Chairman Amann to continue this subcommittee as it will play a key role in the update of the County's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy update. Mr. Knox will remain as chair.

Natural Working Lands and Scoping Document

Chairman Amann asked about the Scoping document. Commissioner Drake spoke about the initial phase of County restoration projects regarding agriculture, forest, and ecology including carbon sequestration for forests and available funding from NJDEP. He mentioned that the County's recently adopted Climate Change Policy is aligned with similar climate change strategies within the DEP Scoping document.

Vice-Chair Perantoni talked about the Delaware & Raritan Greenway carbon sequestration project in Mercer County.

Mr. Lane added that the Somerset County Planning Board submitted a letter to the NJDEP regarding the Natural Working Lands and Scoping document. The letter recognizes a wide range of climate change and resiliency language within the document which aligns with the County's current farmland, open space and historic preservation planning documents and (soon to be adopted) Preservation Plan. The Planning Board letter asks for Somerset County to be considered as a candidate for pilot programs, outlines a role that county planning departments can play to shepherd the NJDEP document through its implementation and requests that the final technical section of the Scoping document provide funding and technical assistance programs to municipalities, counties and non-profit groups.

Secretary DeFeo said that the Planning Board letter and language therein is consistent with the Energy Council's planning policy and volunteered to draft a letter to the NJDEP and Agriculture Commissioner.

Old Business

Energy Planning Report

State Climate Resilience Strategy - Ms. Lazar updated the Council regarding the State Climate Resilience Strategy which will be summarized into a report and presented to the County Commissioners.

Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy Legislation (C-PACE) - Chairman Amann updated members on C-PACE progress, EDA rules are still pending. The Chairman also spoke about coordinating an EDA presentation for the upcoming March 15 meeting.

Chairman Amann discussed the County Climate Policy statement and drafting a project list. The current list requires amending old and adding new projects. Once updated, the project list would be given to the County Commissioners for implementation.

Public Policy Report

A5160 (aka Appliance Bill) - new energy law establishing energy and efficiency standards for products sold or leased in the State of NJ. The commissioner of consumer affairs may include additional standards if current energy efficiency regulations are determined to be insufficient.

S3285 - new EV charger station law which prohibits utility companies from pricing commercial EV charging rates in residential, planned communities, multifamily units and affordable housing properties. On the other hand, charging costs/kW for EV stations located on public property remain market driven. (not to be confused with residential or business/commercial electricity rates per kWh)

S2515 - Post Consumer Content Law which requires a minimum of 50% post-consumer content in many new plastic products including plastic bottles.

Energy Efficiency Report

Mr. Dondiego spoke about a major change spearheaded by PSEG to switch from a clean energy program and transition to a utility energy program, guidelines remain pending. The subcommittee did not have a policy statement to present to the Council but is confident to produce a draft document and County-owned asset and property list at the upcoming March 15 and meetings to follow.

County Energy Audits Report

Mr. Lane said that the energy audits and applications for some of those audits are still pending.

Energy Education and Awareness Report

Vice-Chair Perantoni suggested working with the Energy Efficiency subcommittee to draft a matrix summary which categorizes grant program information from PSEG, JCPL and other utility companies. The Vice-Chair also mentioned developing a matrix chart indicating program titles, webpage links, etc. that individuals can use to determine where their projects fall within various utility grant programs.

Public Comment

None

Upcoming Meetings & Announcements

None

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn, submitted by Chairman Amann, seconded by everyone present.
Meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.

Next Energy Council Meeting
Tuesday, March 15, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.