

Minutes of the Somerset County Energy Council Meeting Tuesday, November 15, 2022

Call to Order

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

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll call

the following members were present:

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

September 17, 2022, Meeting Minutes

- A motion to approve the September 17, 2022, meeting minutes were submitted by Vice Chair Perantoni and seconded by Secretary DeFeo. All members approved the motion.

Chairman's Comments

- Chairman Amann did not have any comments but wished the members a happy America Recycles Day! and congratulated Commissioner Marano on her reelection and congratulated Vice Chair Perantoni & SSP Architects for their Community Partner Award for the Somerset County Adult Daycare Center.
- Chairman Amann noted that this was Ms. Lazar's last Energy Council meeting; Chairman Amann thanked her for her service and contributions to the Energy Council and Somerset County. Ms. Lazar received good wishes from the Council members.
- Chairman Amann also noted that Mr. Dondiego could not attend the meeting and is retiring and not renewing his term.

- Chairman Amann mentioned that there are two council member vacancies and asked the council to recruit new members.
- Chairman Amann commented on President Biden's requirement that all Federal suppliers will be required to disclose their emissions and set targets aligned with the Paris Accord Agreement.
- Chairman Amann noted that President Biden introduced the first US Senate Climate legislation in 1986.

Commissioner Comments

- Commissioner Drake discussed the draft Facilities Policy Statement and that there were suggested substantive revisions to the document and the suggested revisions will be considered before the County Commissioners can adopt the Facilities Policy Statement.

New Business

2023 Meeting Schedule

- Chairman Amann discussed the existing Energy Council meeting scheduled for the third Tuesday of every other month. The meetings will remain virtual and possibly switch to in-person during Spring 2023. All members agreed with Chairman Amann's recommendation.

NJEDA RFA Webinar

- Chairman Amann discussed the NJEDA webinar on clean energy manufacturing. Secretary DeFeo mentioned sending a letter of support but recommended that the letter be general because of the small amount of information, even though the County has a history of clean tech and clean energy manufacturing. Chairman Amann added that the County has the technical talent and workforce to incorporate clean energy manufacturing and cited Nokia, and Bell Labs as examples. Chairman Amann encouraged members to provide comments and suggestions to add to the letter of support.

Old Business

Facilities Policy Statement

- Mr. Lane mentioned that there would be meetings with County staff regarding some of the changes made to the document and coming to a consensus on the maintenance of County facilities.
- Mr. Lane noted the need to draft something that balances the Council's recommendations with the County's recommendations. This may require additional discussions between Council and County staff.
- Commissioner Drake added that the original charge of the Council was to educate and advise the Commissioners, and ultimately, the Commissioners need to come to a consensus before adopting a resolution.
- Mr. Lane suggested meeting with a smaller group after Thanksgiving to rework the facilities policy statement and added that County Administration would be part of the conversations to ensure it meets the Energy Council's intent.
- Commissioner Drake reiterated that the intent of an Energy Council was to be the subcommittee that works on these types of green energy issues on the front lines. Commissioner Drake left the meeting (6:32 pm)

- Chairman Amman asked if the Facilities Policy Statement applied to the Improvement Authority. Mr. Lane said it did but would need to check with County Counsel and would reach out to let them know Energy Council is inquiring about a letter of support.

NJ Energy Master Plan

- Chairman Amman mentioned the Energy Master Plan Rate Payer Study and asked members to follow up with additional comments to the Chairman or Mr. Lane if necessary.

PACE Presentation Follow-up Discussion

- Chairman Amman mentioned a recent article regarding C-PACE and which reported that Somerset County is slated to have the first C-PACE project under a Natirar deal with Peapack and the Somerset County Improvement Authority (SCIA) to fund upgrades, including a hotel.

Circulation Plan Update

- Mr. Bradford reported that County and consultant staff had completed the 'Keep Somerset Moving 2045' Transportation Plan webpage, which provides background information about the plan and County-wide transportation study, including web links to the online survey and interactive map.
- Planning and consultant staff moderated six focus group meetings in November. The meetings addressed critical transportation issues to help set up priorities for transportation policies and projects that make up the study.
- Currently, planning and consultant staff are working together to host a municipal focus group discussion sometime at the end of the year or the beginning of 2023. Due to the number of municipalities in the County, the meeting would include four or more breakout rooms for municipal officials and stakeholders to voice their concerns about transportation issues at the local level.

Committee Chair Reports

Energy Efficiency

Mr. Price reported on continued work with IRA - Section 179D and possible application to the County Building Authority.

Renewable Energy

Nothing to report.

Energy Education & Awareness

Vice Chair Perantoni reported on the Rutgers Climate Change Resource Center and the NJADAPT data visualization tools and interactive mapping website, which provides fact-based climate change information to be used by planners, community green teams, businesses, residents, etc., to look at their particular areas of interest.

Chairman Amman reported that Senator Booker is sponsoring the Green Ribbon School Award bill in the US Senate to fund nontraditional places of learning such as museums, libraries, aquariums, etc. The Green Building Council is working with Senator Booker on this bill.

Mr. Dvorin reported on the lack of detail and fact-based information in the IRA. He mentioned a possible speaker from Sustainable Somerset at an upcoming Somerset Business Partnership and Sustainability Committee.

Public Policy & Legislation

Secretary DeFeo reported that bills pending are focused on recycling and clean energy. The NJ Turnpike Authority and NJDOT are at odds with Empower NJ and eight other environmental and community groups over the Turnpike Expansion project. The environmental stakeholders are demanding the adoption of a pollution reduction strategy to meet the Governor's 2030 energy policy and want a climate impact test on any highway expansion project to prove it doesn't conflict with the 2030 goals.

The NJ Department of Agriculture is opposed to additional solar panels on farmland. New Jersey farmers fear big solar arrays will cause thousands of acres of prime land to vanish however, farmers may benefit from the increased solar output if they generate higher yields and income.

Greening Economy Taskforce

Nothing to report.

Public Comment

No members of the public were in attendance.

Upcoming Meetings & Announcements

Nothing to report.

Adjournment

Chairman Amann asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Dvorin made the motion, seconded by Vice Chair Perantoni. The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Next Energy Council Meeting: Tuesday, January 17, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.