

## **Climate Action Plan Committee – February 7, 2017 Minutes**

*Approved by the committee on February 28, 2017*

Committee Members and City Staff Attending: Jeff Arcel, Richard Hildner, Karin Hilding (city engineer), Ruthanne Coffey, Ryan Richardson, Robin Kelson, Nancy Woodruff, Rachel Sussman (city sustainability coordinator), Mike Koopal, Sierra McCartney

Members of Public Attending: Ryder Delaloye (liaison with school district), Kate McMahon (land use planner), Steve Thompson (presenter, chair of Climate Smart Glacier Country)

1. Introductions – Committee members introduced themselves.
2. Review Resolution – The committee reviewed the resolution to create this committee and the scope of tasks set for the committee by the Whitefish City Council.
3. The committee voted to make the following appointments:
  - Chair – Richard Hildner
  - Vice-Chair – Sierra McCartney
  - Secretary – Nancy Woodruff; Robin Kelson as backup

Ryder will serve as liaison with the school district, but will not be able to attend all the meetings. In order to keep in touch with what is happening, he requested detailed minutes of the meetings and proposed videotaping the meetings. The group felt it might be awkward to try to videotape everyone in the room, and decided to make audio recordings of the meetings. Steve Thompson will take pictures of the meetings. The minutes will be posted on the city's web site.

4. Energy and Emission Inventory Presentation – Rachel Sussman told the group about the greenhouse gas emissions inventory she has been working on (see accompanying slides).

The committee talked about the employee commute survey. Only about one-third of employees filled out the survey. Richard and/or Karin will talk to Chuck Stearns about distributing the survey to employees again and trying to increase the response rate.

The ice rink, a large emitter of greenhouse gases, was discussed. The city no longer operates the ice rink. The possibility of making recommendations or including energy performance specifications in future leases was discussed.

The golf course may be a similar situation, where it is owned by the city but operated privately. Ryan, who helped develop a climate action plan for his university, pointed out that at his university fertilizer use on the golf course accounted for 25 percent of the university's greenhouse gas emissions.

Rachel talked about the need to collect emissions-related data in a standard manner across all city departments and all buildings going forward. This will make the tracking of greenhouse gas emissions easier and more reliable.

Karin pointed out that ICLEI would provide training for the committee as part of the city's membership. ICLEI is a non-profit organization that helps communities develop climate plans, among other projects.

5. Overview of Projected Climate Change Impacts in the Region – Steve Thompson, chair of Climate Smart Glacier Country and owner of Climate Realty LLC, gave a presentation on the expected impacts of climate change in our area (see accompanying slides).

The major impacts will be:

- More intense downpours, primarily in winter
  - More precipitation in winter/spring
  - More rain, less snowpack, earlier snow melt
  - Hotter, drier summers
  - By the 2080s, the annual area burned in the Northwest expected to quadruple
  - Number of smoky days expected to double by 2050
  - Annual average temperatures projected to increase 7 degrees F by 2071-2099 relative to 1970-1999
6. Outline of Whitefish Climate Action Plan – The group discussed a proposed table of contents for the climate action plan developed by Karin (see accompanying document).

The scope of the plan was discussed. The emissions inventory and climate action plan will address city operations, but the plan can also make recommendations and discuss issues of interest in the community.

The importance of having a transparent process that engages participation from the public was discussed.

Committee members talked about including past successful projects in the plan and telling stories about people in the community as a way to make the document more accessible and meaningful.

The idea of creating a brand for Whitefish as a green tourism destination was discussed. It could be presented as a place that people can visit without leaving a large carbon footprint. Tourists can arrive on the train, get around by bike and bus, shop at the farmer's market, etc.

7. Public Comment – None.
8. Next Steps – Richard asked committee members to review the proposed outline and bring suggested changes or different approaches to the next meeting.

Ruthanne would like to see the water usage data used for the emissions inventory. Rachel will send a spreadsheet to committee members.

Mike suggested have a presentation at each committee meeting about a city facility so the committee can be better informed. For example, perhaps Jeff could do a presentation about the city hydro plant.

The next meeting of the committee is Feb. 28 from 5-6:30 at the city hall conference room.