

**AVON CLEAN ENERGY COMMISSION  
AVON ROOM BLDG. #1 TOWN HALL  
MINUTES  
June 19, 2019**

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m. by Chairman Bernard Zahren in the Avon Room, Building 1, Town Hall. Members present: Chairman Bernard Zahren, Richard Kretz, Don Phelan, William Shea, and Christine Winter. Members absent: Venkata Anupoju and Jeffrey Macel. Advisory member absent: Jonathan Craig. Staff members present: Grace Tiezzi, Assistant to the Town Manager.

II. APPROVAL OF THE PRECEDING MEETING MINUTES – April 17, 2019

Mr. Phelan made a motion to approve the April 17, 2019 minutes as written. Mr. Shea seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Ms. Winter stated that she would like to see a little more detail of the discussion reflected in the minutes. The Commission determined that more summary would be provided and if a Commission member wished to ensure that something specific is included, they should state that they would like to see the item reflected in the minutes.

III. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE – None.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

Legislative Updates

Mr. Zahren reviewed two items of interest, SB 753 “An Act Concerning the State-wide Ban on Fracking Waste” and HB 5002 “An Act Concerning a Green Economy and Environmental Protection” which both passed during the session. Ms. Winter stated that she would like to add to the list of legislative successes and include the legislation that was passed to require 2,000 megawatts of offshore wind, the plastic bag ban, the state water plan, and the return of energy efficiency funding in future years. Ms. Winter suggested that the ACEC revisit its priorities for the 2020 legislative session at its October or December meeting.

100PercentCT Project of People’s Action for Clean Energy (PACE)

Ms. Tiezzi provided an update on the status of PACE’s data request to the Town Assessor. Ms. Tiezzi stated that this was a large request that requires a significant effort to fulfill due to the nature of the Town’s assessment software. The information is being compiled piecemeal. Ms. Winter stated that she would like to know how many electric and hybrid vehicles we have on the grand list. Ms. Tiezzi stated that she was unsure of the manner in which this type of data was captured and if it would be easy to isolate but she will follow up with the Assessor.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Sustainable CT

Ms. Tiezzi shared that she has invited Alyssa Norwood of Sustainable CT to attend the Commission’s October meeting to present the program.

AHS Students – Green New Deal Presentation

Four junior and senior students from Avon High School provided the Commission with a short presentation regarding their interest in the federal government’s adoption of the Green New Deal and the steps they are taking locally to combat climate change, beginning with an anti-idling campaign. The students requested that the Commission become a partner and supporter in this effort.

The Commission and the students discussed the proposal. The Commission agreed that they liked the idea of tackling one actionable item rather than taking on the entire Green New Deal. There was discussion regarding school bus idling and approaching the Board of Education's school bus provider on the issue. There was also discussion about changing behavior of parents who drive students to school resulting in empty buses driving to schools. There was discussion about the students involving environmental studies classes and younger students, creating public service announcements, establishing a citizen task force, utilizing social media, reaching out to the boy and girl scouts, organizing and sponsoring an electric car show, organizing a charrette, having student representation on the ACEC, and using the Town's newsletter to share information with residents. Mr. Zahren suggested that the group develop a press release for state and local news outlets and that the students reach out to the CT chapter of the Sierra Club for support. Mr. Shea suggested reaching out to the Rotary and the Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Kretz suggested that a future project could be to study where our recycling goes now that it's not going to China.

It was determined that the group would send Ms. Tiezzi information for inclusion in the October 2019 Town newsletter and Ms. Tiezzi would put them in touch with the bus company. The Commission agreed to make the following statement of support for the student's efforts and requested that Ms. Tiezzi and Mr. Robertson update the Council at their next meeting:

*The Avon Clean Energy Commission, at the request of the Town Council, has met with a group of students, tentatively titled the AHS Coalition for Climate Justice, dedicated to pursuing climate justice. The ACEC recommends that the group tackle specific action items that will directly impact the Avon community, with the first topic being idling. The ACEC wishes to provide support to the Coalition in their endeavors.*

Eversource Presentation – “The Electric Grid’s Role in a Clean, Resilient and Economically Sustainable Future”

Ms. Tiezzi shared that she and several members of the Commission attended this presentation. There was a short discussion amongst the members regarding the presentation.

VI. DO ANY BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THIS MEETING

Mr. Shea brought up a program that Mr. Zahren shared with him via email earlier this month titled Bedford 20/20. Mr. Zahren's daughter, Ellen Zahren Calves lives in Bedford, NY and serves as the director of Bedford 20/20, a non-profit organization that runs this program dedicated to achieving a 20% reduction in the entire community's carbon footprint by 2020. The group was so successful that they achieved a 70% reduction in carbon emissions a year earlier than their goal. Discussion was had regarding the similarities of this program to the 100PercentCT program. Mr. Shea requested that the Commission take a deeper look at this initiative and see if portions of it could be replicated here in Avon.

VII. ADJOURN

Mr. Shea made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m. Mr. Phelan seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted:  
Chairman Bernard Zahren

Attest: Grace Tiezzi, Acting Clerk