

## **Pinelands Climate Committee Meeting**

This meeting was conducted remotely.  
All participants were present via Zoom conference.

YouTube link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kNEIJJ3Xgs>

### **Minutes September 15, 2021**

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Chairman Mark Lohbauer, Commissioner Jerome Irick, Commissioner Edward Lloyd, Commission Chairman Richard Prickett

**STAFF PRESENT:** Acting Executive Director Susan R. Grogan, Ernest Deman, Stacey Roth, Ed Wengrowski, Jessica Lynch, John Bunnell and Paul Leakan

**Governor's Authority Unit:** Rudy Rodas

- 1. Call to Order at 9:33 a.m.**
- 2. Adoption of the July 14, 2021 Committee meeting minutes**  
Commissioner Lloyd moved the adoption of the minutes from the July 14, 2021 meeting. Commissioner Irick seconded the motion. The minutes were adopted with all voting in favor.
- 3. Update on the Commission's application for a Local Government Energy Audit and operational improvements at the Commission's offices**

Jessica Lynch, Business Services Manager, made a presentation about the Local Government Energy Audit (LGEA), previously discussed at the Personnel & Budget Meeting as well as at the Commission meeting. The presentation provided detail about the audit process. The audit is the first step in the Energy Savings Improvement Program (ESIP). Ms. Lynch described what information will be needed from the Commission for the audit.

Chairman Prickett said he found it interesting that a virtual tour of the buildings could be done for the audit, adding that it might be good to have a record of it on video. Ms. Lynch said she is waiting for a response from a contact at the Clean Energy Program regarding an in-person or virtual tour of buildings.

Commissioner Lloyd asked if all state departments are eligible. AED Grogan said yes, and noted the long list of participants on the Board of Public Utilities (BPU) website. The audit reports provided to the agencies are also posted. She said the Commission is very hopeful to be selected, adding that she is not sure how competitive the program is or how many are chosen each year. Ms. Lynch said she will get that information.

AED Grogan questioned whether the Commission applies for the audit for all of the buildings onsite, or whether we want to focus on the RJS building or include our older historic structures as well. Chairman Lohbauer said he would favor looking at all the buildings if the BPU would be willing. He said if that's not practical for this audit he would ask that the Committee become informed about the energy use for all buildings combined. AED Grogan said she agrees with Chairman Lohbauer in having all buildings audited, if possible. Hopefully this would open the door for Grants and Capital Funding that is desperately needed to do some important improvements to the buildings. Once recommendations are given as to what should be changed or improved, then implementation decisions will have to be made by the Commission. If the Commission has a comprehensive report, the agency may be able to gain financial support from Treasury, the owner of the buildings.

Chairman Prickett asked if staff could provide the amount of energy each building is using. He asked if each building has its own meters for gas and electric. If each building has its own meter, he would like to know the heat and electricity costs for each building on a yearly basis. That information could help determine which building uses the most energy. Ms. Lynch responded that all buildings have their own meters. Once the information is compiled and the application is completed, that information will be shared.

Commissioner Irick asked if the Commission knows the percentage of the budget that is expended on energy costs. Ms. Lynch said she will get that information, noting that she estimates it to be 5%.

Chairman Lohbauer asked about the timeline for determining of the award. Ms. Lynch said she will get that information. Chairman Lohbauer said that if the determination will not be made until next summer, he would like the Committee to look at this information and not wait for the audit to determine the Commission's carbon footprint.

Commissioner Lloyd said he agrees the audit should be conducted on all four buildings. He asked if any of the facilities on the list of previously audited facilities are historic. He said we need to walk a fine line between the historic sites and energy efficiency.

Chairman Lohbauer thanked Ms. Lynch for presentation and wished her good luck with preparing the application.

Ms. Lynch provided information on the Commission vehicles, including miles driven, fuel consumption, fuel cost and staff mileage reimbursement for FY19 – FY21.

Commissioner Lloyd said the two newest vehicles seem to be the largest consumers; this might be a place to gain some energy efficiency.

Chairman Lohbauer asked about getting the miles per gallon that the vehicles average.

John Bunnell, the Commission's Chief Scientist, added that the two newer vehicles are used more because they can traverse the sand roads for a lot of the research that the Science Office conducts.

AED Grogan asked Ms. Lynch about the timing for the Commission to replace the old vehicles and whether there is a cycle or schedule for vehicle replacement. Ms. Lynch replied

she is hoping next year's budget will include new vehicle funding. She would like to see the Science Office factor this in when it applies for grants, as it did with the 2017 Jeep. She said replacing a vehicle is dependent on when it is no longer cost effective to pay for repairs and the vehicle's useful life is over.

Chairman Lohbauer asked if the current fleet meets the Commission's needs. Previously, the Commission had seven vehicles in its fleet, including two sedans were removed years ago. Ms. Lynch said the Commission does need a couple more field vehicles that are fuel efficient yet small enough to get where Science staff must go. She is looking at the State Contract to identify vehicles that the Commission could utilize. In the meantime, the Regulatory Programs staff will be asked to use the Prius, rather than one of the four wheel drive vehicles, when conducting site visits and remaining on paved roads.

Chairman Lohbauer asked for information about the daily usage of a vehicle in the Commission's fleet. Ms. Lynch said a Commission vehicle could be driven 100 or more miles in a day.

Chairman Lohbauer said that the specs needed for a new vehicle are known by staff. Ms. Lynch agreed and mentioned some requirements.

Mr. Bunnell said he has been using his personal vehicle for 3-4 years, as there are not enough Commission vehicles. The Science Office has scaled its research back because there are not enough vehicles for field use. The two small Jeeps work well for their needs. They could use more useful vehicles; the Prius is not useful for the Science Office's field work.

Chairman Lohbauer asked Mr. Bunnell what the optimal number of vehicles would be and to weigh that against what is practical. He also asked for information about the optimal type of vehicle and what characteristics of the Jeep make it a better vehicle. Chairman Lohbauer said he would be interested to see if there are electric vehicles that match the uses and needs of both the Science Office and Regulatory Programs Office. He said the purpose of this Climate Committee is to reduce our carbon footprint. He said if the Commission can replace combustion engines with fully electric vehicles, then we can make great strides in reducing our impact. However, he noted that we need to be sure the vehicle matches the Commission's needs.

Mr. Bunnell said if the Commission had two additional vehicles with clearance to go through puddles and deep sand with the capability of receiving an off-road tread tire, he doesn't think it matters if it is a Jeep or a Subaru or electric or gas. It just needs to be small and maneuverable.

Chairman Lohbauer asked about the daily mileage usage and Mr. Bunnell stated that it varies with the studies that are being done.

Mr. Ernie Deman, Supervising Environmental Specialist, said the Commission needs to consider that Regulatory Programs staff could exceed 200 miles in a day, if they need to go to a site at the furthest part of the Pinelands.

AED Grogan said that identifying appropriate and useful electric vehicles for our fleet is a great idea that she fully supports. She said there are some monies in the budget and the

Commission can look for some grants to install an electric vehicle charging station which would be necessary if the Commission were to acquire electric vehicles. She said the Commission would need to do some mapping to locate charging stations within the Pinelands, so that we are not buying a vehicle with limited use. Additional analysis is needed. She was glad Mr. Bunnell spoke of the needs of the Science Office staff and Mr. Deman of the needs of the Regulatory Programs staff. Once the Commission is back up and running on a full-time in office basis, staff will be out doing more site visits and inspections and cannot all share the Prius. As more site visits and site meetings are being done, there just are not enough vehicles available. She said it is not appropriate to have staff use their personal vehicle on a regular basis, and it is a bigger issue than just relating to climate change and acquiring electric vehicles. She said it is a question of not having enough vehicles for the work being done. Many staff use their own vehicles and have not requested mileage reimbursement, so that's not represented in cost analysis.

Chairman Lohbauer said emissions from vehicles in New Jersey are the single largest source of CO2 emitted, and the Commission should be focused on doing what it can to address that situation. He said it starts with what our vehicle requirements and what is needed to make the transition practical and economically feasible. He thinks it is going to be clear to the full Commission that making the transition is critical if we are to do the work set out by this Committee to mitigate climate disruption. He would like to hear more about the needs of the Regulatory Programs Office and what type of vehicle they would require.

Chairman Prickett asked how many vehicles can be charged from a single charging station and if there are fleet management software programs. He will research more into the software for the Committee.

Chairman Lohbauer said if there was a fleet of seven, one or two charging stations at most would suffice for the fleet. It would depend on the vehicle and size of the charger. He does not think the number of chargers would be a significant issue.

Commissioner Irick said the Commission would need to check with the utility company to see if they have service capable of providing our needs for the charging station, as some of the rural areas do not have high capacity.

Commissioner Lloyd said this is an important and constructive conversation, and the Committee should clearly define the needs of the staff and then the most energy efficient way to meet those needs.

Chairman Lohbauer said this was a good beginning dialogue and hopefully we can do more research, get more specific information and address actual staff needs as well as climate mitigation obligations and make some solid recommendations to the full Commission.

#### **4. Update on the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's PACT (Protecting Against Climate Threats) and REAL (Resilient Environments and Landscapes) rulemaking initiatives**

AED Grogan said staff reached out to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), as per Chairman Lohbauer's request to provide regular updates to Committee. DEP was not available to deliver updates themselves. An email was received with a general update as the DEP is deep into its stakeholder process and is working on a wide variety of rulemaking efforts. AED Grogan read the following from the email:

- Stakeholders meetings on the various components of the PACT initiatives have largely concluded;
- The Department is working on various rule reforms. The DEP is currently reviewing public comments that were submitted on its proposed Advanced Clean Truck Rule and amendments to the Greenhouse Gas Monitoring and Reporting Rules;
- The DEP is committed to formally proposing and accepting public comments on additional rules this fall to deal with greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants, and the Department expects to propose comprehensive reforms to the Coastal Zone Management Rules, Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act Rules and Flood Hazard Area Control Act Rules toward the end of this calendar year; and
- The DEP will propose to further amend its new Stormwater Management Rules in early 2022.

AED Grogan said the DEP did not have any draft rules to share at this point. The Commission will stay in close coordination with DEP in order to see things as they are proposed and how they relate to the Pinelands.

Chairman Lohbauer thanked the AED for the update and would like to see this on the agenda until the PACT initiative rules are adopted. He said when Assistant Commissioner Vincent Mazzei, Watershed and Land Management Assistant Commissioner, spoke to the Committee about PACT, he emphasized that he would coordinate as much as possible with the Pinelands Commission and staff to make sure the Commission was comfortable with the rulemaking and the impact on our jurisdiction. He said hopefully the Commission will be invited to work with DEP on the Greenhouse Gas Rules this fall.

## **5. Introduction and initial discussion of:**

- The Sixth Assessment Report recently issued by the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC): <https://www.ipcc.ch/assessment-report/ar6/>
- ReThinkX's August 2021 report entitled Rethinking Climate Change: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/585c3439be65942f022bbf9b/t/6107fd0ed121a02875c1a99f/1627913876225/Rethinking+Implications.pdf>.

Chairman Lohbauer said he asked for this information to be shared with the Committee. The first report was issued by the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change, which is the U.N. body formed to conduct scientific analysis of the impacts that human activities have on climate. This is the latest from the International Science Committee on what we know about what is happening with climate change globally. He suggested all Committee members do their best to become informed about this document and hopefully at some point the Science staff could do its own review of the document and report back to the Committee with any items in there that they find we as policymakers for the Pinelands should be aware of and should be considering as the Commission talks about making amendments to the Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP). He gave a brief summary of the issues addressed in the document. He said the DEP may already have staff reviewing this document, while looking for implications for the State of New Jersey that the Committee should be aware of, and maybe even the Highlands staff. The Commission could think about combining forces by reaching out to DEP, the Highlands Council and perhaps to the state climatologist, Dave Robinson, to ask what we are seeing in this latest iteration of the IPCC Report to the UN that we should be mindful of as we look to revising our CMP. He said if the members don't have time to read the document, there are several video presentations out there on YouTube, search for IPCC AR6.

Commissioner Lloyd said he agreed it would be helpful. He said the staff might be able to do this, but it is a huge thing to bite off. He does not know if the staff would have the time to go through and analyze this for the Committee. He said this is a global strategy and a global impact; and the Committee's challenge is to see what the Commission as a local regional agency can do. He said he feels overwhelmed by trying to apply IPCC 6 to the Pinelands.

Chairman Lohbauer agreed that it is a tall order. He said that although this is a document that has global significance, the Commission needs to be able to interpret how it should inform our decision making as policymakers here locally in the Pinelands. He said in fact there is a section of the report that is a summary for policy makers, and he will send that link to AED Grogan to share with the Committee and staff.

Mr. Bunnell commented that this is a global assessment and there is nothing of detail, noting that the closest they come is the northeast United States. He said it is not just technically deep; it is more that they were still trying to prove that the climate is changing and that humans are responsible. There is no direction on either a local or even a federal government's response to it. He does not know how worthwhile it would be for his staff to delve into this to come up with policy recommendations, which Science office staff does not normally do.

Chairman Lohbauer said that was his first impression of the document as well. He said in searching through the document to find suggestions for policy makers, he did not find that information.

Commissioner Lloyd said that analysis has been done, a book has been written, he will share it with the Committee and staff. He said his recollection is there are a thousand

recommendations for local government. He said from his perspective, rather than trying to sort through the IPCC 6 Report, those recommendations are something we may be able to focus on, and there may be some useful information and guidance.

Commissioner Lloyd provided the name and author of book: *Legal Pathways to Deep Decarbonization in the United States* by Michael Gerrard and John C. Dernbach.

Chairman Lohbauer said that is what he is searching for. He does not want to waste the Science Office's time in chasing down things that maybe do not exist but thinks it might be a worthwhile exercise. He asked if it would make sense for our Science Office staff to start a dialogue with DEP, the Highlands Council and state climatologist to see what we could do to be more effective in our respective areas so that we can provide climate-orientated advice to our respective policy makers.

AED Grogan said the policy makers need the data from the scientists to make informed decisions. There is an opportunity to find out what others are doing or what needs they have identified. She said the Pinelands Commission's Science Office staff is ahead of other agencies in gathering this data, as they have been monitoring the region for decades. She said the Commission has a wealth of information and it is a matter of how we use that information to devise specific regulations or policies that we can use to review development in the Pinelands.

Chairman Lohbauer said the Science Office staff does not need to take time to review the second document, but he said the Committee should take the time to review and discuss it. This document is also available as a video. It explains the authors' belief there are technological solutions that we are on the verge of implementing.

Chairman Prickett expressed how proud he is of the people that were concerned about the Pinelands 40-50 years ago and the efforts they made to protect this part of New Jersey. He said we are doing a lot of what needs to be done right now.

Commissioner Lloyd said he agrees with Chairman Prickett on being proud of those who got us where the Commission is today.

Chairman Lohbauer thanked AED Grogan for her patience in working with him on the Committee.

## **6. Public Comment**

Rhyan Grech of the Pinelands Preservation Alliance (PPA), thanked the Committee for a great conversation. She said, based on her own experience, there are a lot more electrical vehicle charging stations out there than she was aware. She shared an app called "PlugShare" that provides the location of charging stations. She agrees that the reports shared are overwhelming but would like to remind the Committee that the PPA put together a "White Paper on Climate Change Solutions for the Pinelands of New Jersey" with some

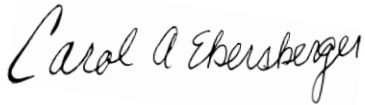
recommendations for the Commission. Some of the recommendations are low-hanging fruit as well as larger more in-depth actions that can be taken by the Commission. Ms. Grech mentioned some of the items listed in the white paper. She said she agrees with the idea of coordinating with other agencies, as mentioned earlier.

Jessica Rittler Sanchez let the Commission know that people are listening. She said this is the most important Committee of the Commission. She asked for the book title which Commissioner Lloyd provided.

The title of book and author names will be posted on web site.

Chairman Prickett moved the adjournment of the meeting. Commissioner Irick seconded the motion, and all agreed. The meeting adjourned at 11:10 p.m.

Minutes submitted as true and correct.



---

Carol A. Ebersberger  
Business Specialist

Date: November 22, 2021