



City of Ann Arbor

301 E. Huron St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
<http://a2gov.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

Action Minutes

Energy Commission

Tuesday, February 11, 2020

6:00 PM

Larcom City Hall, 301 E Huron St,
Second floor, City Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

The chair called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

ROLL CALL

Present: 9 - Charles Hookham, Mike Shriberg, Shoshannah Lenski, John Mirsky, Carlene Colvin-Garcia, Jack Eaton, Jay Zocher, Teresa Hatcher, and Ember McCoy

Absent: 4 - Brigit Macomber, Mark Clevey, Noah Levin, and Jeff Hayner

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Zocher, seconded by Mirsky, that the Agenda be Approved. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Mirsky, seconded by Shriberg, that the Minutes be Approved. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

PUBLIC INPUT

No public input.

ENERGY REPORT - NEWS FROM THE ENERGY OFFICE AND COMMISSIONERS

Staff MacDonald discussed Bylaws to be reviewed by City Council, which include adding two youth commissioners. Chair Lenski discussed the application process for the seats. The Commission discussed methods for publicizing the seats, including sharing information with the University of Michigan Student Relations liaison, assigning to the Community Engagement subcommittee to share with local schools and organizations, as well as speaking with Commissioner Colvin-Garcia. Chair Lenski and Vice Chair Mirsky tasked the Office of Sustainability and Innovation to draft language regarding the position. Councilmember Eaton informed the Commission that the age range for the seats is 16-25, and that Councilmembers share information about open seats in their public engagement, and discussed posting information through social media platforms. Councilmember Eaton informed the commission that the bylaws have not yet been approved by City Council, while a Resolution changing the statement of purpose and membership of the Commission has. Vice Chair Mirsky discussed recommending sharing information with past Office of Sustainability and Innovation interns and the Students for Clean Energy.

Staff MacDonald informed the Commission that the Energy Technical Advisory Committee supporting the A2Zero initiative has finished reviewing proposed ideas and ranking them. He informed the Commission that contracted consultants are now quantifying the greenhouse gas impacts of the actions and their financial costs. Chair Lenski inquired who the consultants were. Staff MacDonald responded that the consultants were Elevate Energy.

Staff MacDonald informed the Commission that a second A2Zero Town Hall will take place on February 22nd at Pioneer High School from 12 - 5 PM. He discussed the format of the event, including sharing the calculated greenhouse gas impacts and costs of each idea, and providing brief descriptions of each idea to the public for their feedback. The final of three surveys will launch. Vice Chair Mirsky inquired about any youth involvement at the event, which Staff MacDonald would need to confirm.

Staff MacDonald informed the Commission of a Sustainability Forum taking place on Thursday, February 13th at 7 PM at the Downtown Library, which will be tied to the Mobility sector of A2Zero.

Battery Storage

Commissioner Hookham presented to the Commission on distributed energy resources, and challenges associated with non-dispatchable and intermittent energy sources. He discussed that batteries and microgrids can enable greater use of renewable energy, and provided an update on what is going on in the energy storage industry. He presented on the complexity of delivering electricity, electric energy storage, Michigan pumped hydroelectric storage, energy storage use cases and drivers, both national and state energy storage environments, energy storage cost impacts, the Consumers Energy Innovation Center microgrid, and ongoing solar and storage additions at Northwest Ohio wind projects.

Commissioner Shriberg inquired on the potential of pumped hydroelectric storage. Commissioner Hookham responded that projects in other states have evaluated other kinds of sites, like caverns, for similar technology. He discussed that today a project like the existing Michigan pumped hydroelectric storage project would take fifteen years to complete due to permitting, which is difficult to pursue in the current market. Commissioner Shriberg inquired on the efficiency of the technology. Commissioner Hookham responded that the Michigan project fits demand well, is environmentally sensitive, and uses highly efficient turbines.

Commissioners Hatcher and Hookham discussed flow batteries.

Commissioner Zoicher inquired on small scale and use of electric vehicle batteries. Commissioner Hookham responded discussing a project in Washtenaw County using solar and storage for a resilience hub, a facility in Alabama using a microgrid with solar and storage, and other projects planned in Arizona and Oregon.

Commissioner Colvin-Garcia inquired why the MISO area is not purchasing battery power. Commissioner Hookham responded discussing the goals of the MISO market, which is largely regulated, compared to the goals of PJM, which has more unregulated markets. He discussed difficulties in MISO to get traction for new technologies, which have high costs for early adopters, in contrast to trying to keep energy rates low. He discussed multiple test cases for battery storage occurring in Michigan.

Commissioner Mirsky inquired if utilities in Michigan are also exploring generating hydrogen, which has a higher energy density than gasoline. Commissioner Hookham responded that many actors are exploring hydrogen, but the technology is evolving. He discussed that energy costs for hydrogen are still high. He discussed safety concerns with using flammable and compressed hydrogen.

Chair Lenski inquired about the end of life of batteries, which are typically talked about as a panacea to solve intermittency problems. Commissioner Hookham responded discussing the Californian natural gas crisis, which spurred hundreds of megawatts of batteries to be deployed in California, which can provide information on the lifetime of

batteries in that application. He discussed being mindful of the safety aspects of batteries. He discussed studies that have shown cost saving of batteries, repurposing batteries from transportation that still have capacity, and moving to flow batteries that do not have the same concerns and lithium ion batteries.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Housing/Built Environment/Energy Efficiency

No update.

Transportation

Commissioners Colvin-Garcia and Hookham informed the Commission that the draft ordinance may need additional provisions to address a code issue. Commissioner Hookham suggested addressing the code issue as a new business item and continue with the scope of the first ordinance. Vice Chair Mirsky agreed with moving the draft ordinance forward, and discussed Wayne Appleyard's advice of keeping the scope of the draft ordinance within the building code. He discussed perhaps creating a second document for technical guidance, frequently asked questions, or directing questions to the appropriate bodies may be more appropriate than changing the scope of the ordinance. He discussed that a previously concern about not requiring solar panel systems for electric vehicle chargers could also be addressed separately. Commissioner Colvin-Garcia informed the Commission that the subcommittee will re-constrain the draft ordinance boundary and is presenting it to the Planning Commission in April. She informed the Commission that the subcommittee will bring forward a resolution in support of the ordinance in March.

Vice Chair Mirsky informed the Commission that the subcommittee prefers to be called "Transportation Electrification", so as not to confuse its scope and effort with that of the Transportation Commission. He informed the Commission that the subcommittee would like to focus on electric vehicles, whether personal, buses, or chargers.

Energy Production

Commissioner Hookham informed the Commission of Commissioner Clevey's progress in the working group. He discussed a work plan prepared by Commissioner Clevey, and a Production Meeting of February 14th at 1 PM to distill the workplan into 2020 goals. He informed the Commission that the working group will likely present the materials to the Commission in March. Vice Chair Mirsky inquired whether the working group has looked at what the A2Zero Energy Technical Advisory Committee has produced. Commissioner Hookham responded that the working group has not yet, but would like to collaborate. He discussed that not all actions will end up in the budget cycle, and that the City needs more people working on projects.

Community Engagement

Commissioner McCoy informed the Commission that the working group has been brainstorming ideas, including outreach to car dealerships, creating one pagers on the Commissions's working groups and subcommittees, and more volunteers and support on projects. Chair Lenski inquired whether the working group is coordinating with the Office of Sustainability and Innovations to help plan community events. Staff MacDonald responded that the working group discussed what the City is currently working on, and how to mobilize ideas coming out of the Office. Chair Lenski discussed staying aligned with and providing support to the Office.

PUBLIC INPUT

No public input.

ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Vice Chair Mirsky recommended looking back on last year and preparing an accomplishment report to evaluate progress on goals as a learning experience. He discussed information he prepared for the Environmental Commission. Vice Chair Mirsky will prepare a draft for the Energy Commission.

Action Items and Next Month:
Staff draft communication around youth commissioners
Follow up on bylaws and their status
EV Readiness Resolution
Update from the Energy Production Subcommittee
Energy Commission 2019 Accomplishment Report

ADJOURNMENT

The chair adjourned the meeting at 7:21 PM.

All persons are encouraged to participate in public meetings. Citizens requiring translation or sign language services or other reasonable accommodations may contact the City Clerk's office at 734.794.6140; via e-mail to: cityclerk@a2gov.org; or by written request addressed and mailed or delivered to:

City Clerk's Office
301 E. Huron St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Requests made with less than two business days' notice may not be able to be accommodated.

Visit www.a2energy.org for community energy information in Ann Arbor,
or
www.a2gov.org/energy to learn more about the City's Energy Programs

Regular meetings shown Live and replayed on CTN Channel 16 and at
www.a2gov.org/ctn

Live Web Streaming: <https://a2gov.org/watchctn>
Video on Demand: <https://a2ctn.viebit.com>