

## **Commission for Energy Use and Climate Change**

### **Meeting Minutes**

December 6, 2017

Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue., Somerville, MA

#### **Attendees:**

Ramon Bueno – Commissioner

Joshua Hodge – Commissioner

Eliza Johnston – Commissioner

Michelle Melton – Commissioner

Stephen Moore – Commissioner

Juliette Rooney-Varga – Commissioner

Oliver Sellers-Garcia – (member ex-officio) Director of Office of Sustainability and Environment

Lindsay Lucke

Jocelyn Newhouse

Eric Weisman

Mary Mangan

Noah Slovin

Saritha Ramakrishna

#### Review and adopt the minutes from the November 8, 2017 meeting

- Clarify point about climate change impacts outreach being related to non-climate issues
- Approved

#### Internal carbon pricing

- Update: Saritha will continue this work through January. Plan to provide a memorandum at the end of the semester to wrap up the preliminary work. That will include a discussion of the two schemes mentioned at the last meeting (internal shadow price and internal revenue fund, as well as revenue neutral schemes). Will include a discussion of the state bills (Barrett bill and Benson bill and thinking about that relative to the municipal context). They are unclear on how the bill will affect municipalities. Any carbon tax may be comprehensive to the emissions in the state, including municipalities. They don't appear clear on how that would work. Regarding the price, last time we discussed thinking about abatement cost and using that as a proxy. Since there isn't a clear pathway for how the city and its operations will get to zero emissions, it's difficult to model with any accuracy. So the memo will include how we will get to that. Lastly, we discussed the possible City operations that a carbon price could be integrated into. There might be a case study of this, based on the shadow price, on either a past capital project and doing an analysis on something that isn't attached to a capital project. The memo will include preliminary recommendations, but it makes sense to pursue a shadow price option and then think about how to derive a price and attach it operationally.

#### HeatSmart/CoolSmart

- Two main announcements: program has been extended to February 15. Added two months. And we now have 29 contracts signed total.

### Somerville Climate Forward

- Since the last meeting, the second round of the working groups has started. We are half way through those. The meetings are going well. After the last CEUCC meeting, Hannah sent Commissioners a copy of what is going to the working groups. The table with some of the top priorities that the consultants sorted, as well as a survey. The meetings have been going well and people have been doing the homework and the meetings have been productive. We are definitely making the transition from talking about ‘this is an interesting idea’ to ‘what would it mean to do this in Somerville and would it work or not.’
- The consulting team is basically on hold because they did all the work in the summer, and we are conserving their budget. In January, after the working groups meeting, there will be a Somerville Climate Forward-focused CEUCC meeting and a City staff meeting. The crux of these meetings: “These are the ideas that came to the top, what makes sense and what doesn’t?”
- At the January meeting: it seems like there are two big things that city needs input on from CEUCC: a) go over the list of priorities that have been sent to the working groups and have CEUCC provide global feedback. Does this all fit right together, is this what we were thinking of in terms of overall strategy, is anything missing, is the mix of things right, are we covering all the right things; b) a variation of what we are asking the working groups; we can’t cover everything but if you could build your own dream list of favorite solutions, put a little more thinking into them before the meeting and we can talk about how this would work in Somerville with an eye towards how it gets into the plan.
- It will probably not be necessary for a CEUCC member to attend the City meeting, but Oliver will confirm.
- Oliver will be meeting with new alderman in a few weeks, and will talk about Somerville Climate Forward.
- Oliver will put forward his ideas at the January meeting as well, including timeframes and relative size of impact of the recommendations. Consultant may focus on static wedge approach but a dynamic reinforcing approach may be better in the longterm. Moving towards long-lived stocks that we want and away from those that we don’t is important in this impacts conversation. Reinforcing feedback with social systems is important too.
- Don’t get on the bioenergy bandwagon because emissions reductions are questionable.

### Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

- We had four municipal charging stations and we’ve added three more (each has two ports). They are located in Teele Square, Magoun Square, and East Somerville. The Teele station is the first on-street station in Somerville, located on Newbury street near the fire station. Interested to see how easy that is to be maintained. One is in East Somerville on Broadway across from Mt Vernon restaurant. And a third in Magoun Square. These are all level two charging stations. Payment: they are all on ChargePoint system and they are free to use. The normal parking rules apply. If it’s a meter you have to pay the meter.
- All of these charging stations are funded through a state grant (green communities). But state funding may go away in the future.

- The City has been putting these in because we want to jump start people thinking these are a viable option.
- National Grid is doing large EV charging station installation in Rhode Island. How can Somerville benefit from utility efforts to power EVs?
- The City does not plan that in the long term municipalities will be responsible for all or most EV infrastructure. However, the City has been planning at the scale of what is available for state funding. Every time funding is available they refresh site availability/suitability analysis. Criteria is diversity of locations across the city and whether they should go in parking lots or on streets.
- Utilization data? Eric in SomerStat is looking at those numbers. Let's get that next meeting.
- EV charging is something that new development is being asked to look at. The planning board is conditioning approval on lots of things, including charging stations (sometimes). This is also one of the main things that the transportation group in Somerville Climate Forward is looking at.
- Any data on number of EVs in Somerville? It's hard data to get. We could try again, but the closest we got is that the closest we could get is EV vanity plates. Would be good to know how this is or isn't stressing the infrastructure.
- What should we be doing? Is there a way to make sure that people wanting to install the infrastructure at their homes don't have permit issues? Or leveraging new construction?
- Can we try again with RMV?
- And EVs have vanity plates because of safety reasons.

#### CEUCC Priorities for 2018

*Carbon pricing*

*Implementing Somerville Climate Forward + carbon pathway implementation*

*Somerville climate forward outreach*

*Engagement with schools and parents*

*Renter-targeted initiatives*

*Strategic electrification*

*Transportation*

- A lot of these are nested within each other. We should identify what our role is in moving everything forward. Engagement is important but as the CEUCC it is hard to think about our role without additional resources taking that on. So to facilitate this conversation would be useful to first ask if anything is missing and what needs to be done to do them and if we are the right body to be doing it.
- Can we basically turn these into subcommittees.
- Somerville Climate forward and the 2050 goal are not the same. So we may need to do other work for that
- What happens when Saritha's internship is complete—what will we do longer-term on carbon pricing?
- It would be helpful to pick a few things that aren't a part of Somerville Climate Forward so that someone is working on those things.
- Carbon pricing is going to be a priority

- On SCF—wait to see what the priorities are and choose a couple to implement/assist with. For example, point of sale and point of lease disclosures.
- CEUCC not the best fit for outreach. We are not an outreach mechanism. So we can continue to work on outreach issues and advise on them but this isn't going to be a 2018 priority.
- Ditto with engagement with schools and parents. Our priorities should drive our outreach strategies. If we are going to do schools, we need to have a very specific suggestion. If we want the schools to do something you have to have something ready for them. this is a tactic not a priority.
- Renter targeted initiatives: yes a priority, but we need a task force. It's a gap that needs to be filled. It's the existing building residential problem. there is a disconnect between the owners of multifamily units, who live elsewhere and a lot of the renters English is a second language, economic circumstances are a big deal, and it's a tough nut to crack. There will also be enthusiasm from the new alderman as well. Now the majority of aldermen are renters. We need to do research on that.
- Strategic electrification is transport and heating. Don't want to miss opportunities as we decarbonize the electric system. Even if it's not a strategic priority we could get National Grid/Eversource to present their electrification plans to the CEUCC. What opportunities are available? Advise city.
- What about sharing our successes with other places (localities, municipalities, etc). At some point we need to think about the new, standing bodies that come out with this. Maybe a Somerville focused steering committee, or a regional group. This is more of a discussion topic than a priority.
- Final priorities/topics for subcommittees and next steps:
  - Carbon pricing
    - What needs to be done when preliminary research is complete?
  - Somerville Climate Forward implementation
    - First, see what the top priorities will be. Then, pick 2-3 that the CEUCC is best equipped to help implement. CEUCC can even help develop content for plan for these items.
  - Renter-targeted initiatives
    - Subcommittee will first do research to find specific issues to focus on. Somerville Climate Forward is one source of information.

#### Tracking state legislation

- No updates

#### Any and all business before the Commission

- None