

WORKGROUP FOR INNOVATIVE SOLAR ENERGY RESOURCES (WISER) MINUTES

February 3, 2021

Present

Kimberly Newton, Bill Young, Bill DeBusk, Nick Sanzone, John Constantinide, Bruce Lindsay, Lisa Ruckman (Public Participant) and Amanda Elmore (Planning & Development)

Call to Order

Called to order 5:01 p.m. via Zoom by Nick Sanzone, Chair

Determination of Quorum

Quorum was determined.

Approval of January 6, 2021 Minutes

Bruce Lindsay amended the January 6, 2021 minutes to reflect his statement to say that the problem with “wind power” is that it’s not windy, rather than the problem with “solar”.

Motion by John Constantinide, seconded by Bill DeBusk to approve the January 6, 2021 minutes with the correction made. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

Amanda Elmore said there’s not currently a sunset date, she will consult the code to confirm. This is the sixth of the original six meetings, with up to twelve hours more. She sent the WISER Board members the Public Works organizational chart, which will aid in revealing how an Energy Manager and support staff could fit. She researched the Comprehensive Plan and will send the applicable policies, which are not on the website as they are not ADA compliant. There are no County policies that are barriers to anything proposed to date. Bill DeBusk said it’s important to tell them they need an Energy Manager, but they may not be the ones to tell the County how to organize. Nick Sanzone said it should be up to Mark, the Public Works Director. Kimberly Newton said they should recommend a department or organizational structure, where the support staff is already in place.

John Constantinide said there’s an Engineering Manager or section in the Public Works Department, an engineering functional group and a facilities functional group. Energy may not be limited to facilities. There may be infrastructure to address with utility companies including electric, water, waste water and natural gas. It may go beyond buildings, as in the operability of infrastructures, traffic lighting and roadway. Engineering works well because they can identify projects and work with engineering to implement design through construction, but still need to work with operations. This person may need to interact with more than one functional group because there’s going to be financial elements associated and other department’s facility’s; Parks and Recreation or the Sherriff’s Office for example. Bill DeBusk suggested providing examples. Nick Sanzone said, they should recommend this position be implemented with the discretion of the Public Works Director as to the location and be equivalent to the other functional groups. He wouldn’t put them in a pre-existing group and would suggest the position be in a separate group or department so they are on equal with other departments, underneath the direction of the Public Works Director.

Kimberly Newton asked about a phased plan, allowing for creation of a network and skeleton of what that department will look like as the cost benefit analysis proves true, meeting benchmarks. She is not opposed to asking, but it’s a large ask. If they ask for too much at once and there’s opposition, they may walk away with nothing as opposed to presenting a position that will need support from a department in the future. The County would work to provide and share resources without being the head of a department. Nick Sanzone said his concern was if they don’t ask for it, they will never get it. They could recommend this, but defer to the discretion and direction of the Public Works Director to make the final decision.

Bruce Lindsay said it should be a watch dog position and as such should not be involved in Facilities or Public Works, but in the Building and Accounting Departments because it's a lot of money. Often, the Maintenance Department has different priorities than saving energy, and stuff doesn't get done. John Constantinide said rather than create a department, they could create an office or functional group that is at the same level. Instead of Energy Manager, it can be called an Energy Auditor or Resource Auditor. Rather than managing resources, they audit resources and make sure the County is an appropriate steward of money spent, electricity, water and waste water. That may address the technical issues and have the watchdog status. Operations, Engineering and other groups do a level of energy management. They should not duplicate that effort but have an expert who can empower people in the County to manage the County's energy and resources better and who can speak to multiple groups.

Kimberly Newton asked if there's a list yet of what the Energy Management position would fulfill to include priorities and goals not already being met by another department. Amanda Elmore sent Bill DeBusk's comments and additions to their working document and a cost analysis tool for electric vehicles to the WISER Board members. Bill DeBusk said the information sent includes a State of Michigan posting for an Energy Manager position that listed expected tasks. John Constantinide said he provided those duties as well and Nick incorporated it. They need to look at that list with Bill's input. An Energy Manager is very different than an Energy Auditor. A watch dog is not going to manage, but check, evaluate, make recommendations and collaborate.

Amanda Elmore said there's not an auditing functional group in the County; there's a budget group. County Finance is under the Clerk of Courts; they act as a check and balance for the County Commissioners. That's not the appropriate place. Bruce Lindsay said, David with the City of Orlando said the reason why he got so much done, is because he reports to the Finance Department, the CFO. If it is buried in Facilities or Public Works, other agendas will have higher priority. John Constantinide said, the County Manager may be the appropriate person, because they are more of the CEO of the County. The Budget Director is the CFO. Amanda Elmore said if there was a CFO, she would be it. The top of the structure is very vertical, Frank and two Assistant County Managers. Suggesting someone else as a third equal with Assistant County Managers does not fit into the structure. She liked the suggestion of someone equivalent to a program manager under the Public Works Director; authority would not be diminished. Having a department can be suggested but will likely not happen the way the County is structured.

Nick Sanzone said, David Dunn suggesting it be put in Finance, is a recommendation they can't take lightly. Amanda Elmore said there's not a Finance Department, but a Budget Department and the CFO would be the Budget Director. Bruce agreed that would be the equivalent. He said every year he drafts up targets for every school and tracks it. Investigations are done on ones that are out of line. When the problem is reported, as well as a fix, he is told it's not a priority. Kimberly Newton said, a goal of the Energy Manager would be to cultivate a relationship with the Finance Officer, a skill set they should recommend the Energy Manager have.

Bill DeBusk said the most significant barrier they have is they don't have an Energy Manager. They have to have metrics to measure how energy is being used. Building codes are a significant barrier for County buildings and citizens. Codes can be enacted so people will build homes that are more energy efficient and able to support solar. John Constantinide said, the barriers are not present policies, but the lack of resources. Bill DeBusk said it could be looked at as policy in the way they

operate. He said an Energy Manager is a little outside of what they asked for; he wanted to reframe it to what was asked for, as a significant barrier. John Constantinide said, if framed in that respect, a barrier would be a need to form relationships with other organizations. We are not partnering with local citizen groups, FSEC, etc. so the County is not able to get that expertise, which is a barrier to advancements in solar renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Bruce Lindsay said the County Commissioners like to show what is being achieved under their leadership. We have no way of communicating what we are doing about energy. If put in the right framework, the County Commissioners will think its good and want to put someone out in the public who can show the metrics and accomplishments and build momentum.

Kimberly Newton said the Audubon Study for greenhouse emissions are doing a regional scale inventory for greenhouse gasses. Brevard County is signed on, so that lends a lot of data for looks at weatherization, energy consumption and where to best use solar and storage. The Planning Council has resources already funded and are willing to create a survey in whatever capacity the WISER Board, Commission and Energy Manager needs, to put out to the community. Topics included accessibility and not necessarily policy barriers for the County, but the residential level. The first step is to get the County going, to be an example; another role the Energy Manager needs to fulfill.

Amanda Elmore said she had yet to extend the Emergency Management invitation. John was just appointed the Director and is in a vaccination roll out and is not sure when he or a staff member would be available. She will invite him as he is the one who is overseeing the new command center being built. Nick Sanzone asked about a speaker from the Budget Department as the position may be there instead of Public Works. Amanda Elmore shared her screen of the County Manager's Organizational Chart and said the Support Services group reports directly to Frank Abbate, County Manager. She will ask Jill or her Deputy from the Budget Office to speak to them at the next meeting. Under Jill could be a good place for the position.

Bill Young said, Florida funded 10 million dollars to solar power one hundred shelters and schools. Brevard County has four schools, where the shelter part has solar power. Florida Solar Energy Center designed a system for that. There are EOC and Red Cross Offices in the country that are solar powered, as are 5% of emergency management facilities. They are fixing the shelters because the shelter part of the school is powered by solar. We would be prestigious to have a solar powered EOC like two others in Florida. There are many examples of the program and he could provide the designs that have been done already.

Lisa Ruckman said, saving tax dollars is an important factor, so the Budget Office is a good idea. The WISER Board agreed to invite Jill Hayes from the Budget Office. Amanda Elmore will send the invite. Nick Sanzone said, they may propose to house the position in the Budget Office. Amanda Elmore said they will know if that's a good idea after speaking to Jill.

Bill DeBusk said the County will be forced into accepting clean energy products. Within fifteen years, they will have to buy electric vehicles because that's all there will be and solar power will be the cheapest power available. Finances will be the persuader. They are helping the County by giving them a how-to playbook.

Kimberly Newton asked if the Resiliency Action Plan that the Regional Planning Council created for the County could be an outline for what Bill referred to. An action plan not just for fiscal sustainability

and stability, but for benchmarks and requirements. Nick Sanzone said they and the Energy Manager should defer to it along with many others. Bill DeBusk said the plan is good to look at for structure. Kimberly Newton said it includes a comprehensive plan and had the Peril of Flood survey to identify community issues. Amanda Elmore will send a link to the Plan; she does not think there's much that's applicable. Lisa Ruckman thinks there's confusion between the County's Perils of Flood with Natural Resources and the East Central Florida Plan, that started years ago.

Regarding the remaining meeting format, Nick Sanzone said they have twelve hours. Amanda Elmore said it can be in any format and does not think they have a sunset date. Bill Young asked about extending their two-hour meetings by thirty minutes when needed. Amanda said they would need to advertise a meeting with a beginning time only and suggested they set up a tentative schedule. Kimberly Newton suggested five two-hour meetings, the remaining two hours used where needed.

Bill DeBusk and Kim Newton asked what happens after their presentation to the Commissioners. Amanda Elmore replied that the Commission could do nothing, implement every bit of it, or something in between. Nick Sanzone suggested having public support for their presentation. Amanda Elmore said the public is always welcome; but constant direct communication is not favorable. Their report will go on the agenda, be reviewed by County management and given a date. It would be noted that the WISER Board can prepare a presentation and the Board would determine if they will allow it. John Constantinide said if they present anything, it must be the relevant highpoints and take-home message of what they would save, how they would do it, and an action plan. It should include an explanation of payback on investment. Bill DeBusk said, after a peer review there would be a meeting to go over changes and another to go over the presentation, so there's more than just developing the document in the next twelve hours. Amanda Elmore said a peer review would cost a lot of time, presentation time is not part of their time and they would each get three minutes as members of the public, speaking to an agenda item. John Constantinide said the Commission will want the highpoints rather than details. Amanda Elmore said the chairwoman is an accountant and will want to hear about the money; all of the Commissioners are extremely bright and fiscally focused.

Nick suggested the remaining five meetings be on Wednesday nights at five with no end time, with the additional two hours used where needed. The WISER Board members will make edits, track changes and send them to Amanda by February 24th. The next meeting will be used to polish the document. Amanda Elmore listed the remaining meeting dates as March 3rd, April 7th, May 5th, June 2nd and July 7th. Documents given to Amanda will have a due date of the Wednesday before each meeting. Nick Sanzone said they will create a final document on April 7th. Nick Sanzone asked if they could give Dr. Fenton the document draft so he could comment at the meeting.

John Constantinide said they do not need to establish a review committee, but can point people to the website containing it. Kimberly Newton said it lends credibility when they give a presentation that has been peer reviewed. John Constantine asked if individuals who respond to the document can be recorded and listed. Amanda said yes, she can synthesize their critique and give it to the WISER Board. John Constantinide said there are various organizations that would be interested in this for both critiquing and support purposes; the list could be shared with the Commission. Nick Sanzone asked the WISER Board members to bring ideas to the April meeting of groups this could be shared with. He suggested sharing the document in April, adjusting in May with the feedback and have a final version in June. He suggested he and John Constantinide work on the presentation and would like to include information about the progress of technology, automation, inevitable advancements

and policy barriers. It should be no more than twelve slides and not take more than ten minutes. The other Board members can use their time to comment as to why it's important and achieves the goals of providing residents with the needed resources and example. John Constantinide said he can delivery the financial aspect and associated analysis. Nick Sanzone said they outline the buildings and how to do the energy surveys, and asked about providing an overview in the report. John Constantinide said he has a spreadsheet on EUIs (Energy Use Intensities) that could be referenced.

Kimberly Newton said it would be great if the data from the Audabon funded greenhouse emissions audit was done within their timeframe. Amanda Elmore said she will be the staff liaison for it. A UCF student is working on that and they hope to have a report by the end of the semester. They have not started collecting data but it will be relevant to energy consumption.

Amanda Elmore said consensus regarding the remaining meeting times was sufficient and reiterated that March 3rd will be the next meeting. She will invite Dr. Fenton to the April 7th meeting and will send him whatever draft document is available, possibly a couple of weeks prior. Kimberly Newton asked if their goal is to have a finished product by the end of the next meeting. Nick Sanzone said Dr. Fenton could review the draft and give comments to help shape a version to be shared with other groups. A final version should be by June.

The WISER Board members agreed to have Dr. Fenton be invited to speak on April 7th. Bill Young explained there are eleven states that have a research energy center. Florida was one of the first to create the Florida Solar Energy Center for consumer protection, education and energy. Dr. Fenton is the present Director, which employs eighty people and has a ten-million-dollar budget. Their job is renewable energy, conservation, weatherization and everything related to energy. This energy center is assigned to the University of Central Florida.

Bill Young said he has sent in four Florida Solar Energy Documents and asked if links to InterRel and FSEC documents will be included. Nick Sanzone suggested he send the draft document back to Amanda with those edits. Nick Sanzone said he would make edits as to the housing of the position.

The Transition to Clean Energy Plan draft was viewed by the group's members for edits.

Bill DeBusk suggested they look at the document's structure. There may be additional input for the executive summary once the presentation is developed. He broke it up as WISER goals one, two and three. He said he explained The Brevard County Investment Grade Audit document, how they got it and what's in it. The Energy Reduction Implementation Plan that deals with ECMs was an important inclusion. For the Facility Clean Energy Transition Plan, there's room to discuss more about solar, wind, energy storage and resiliency. He started with solar basics, net metering, electric power resiliency and the process to install solar. The Electrical Vehicle Transition Plan covers several subjects including municipal fleets, public transit, EV charging access and infrastructure. He included information on how to set up the County for electric vehicles and how to transition to electric. A cost benefit analysis is needed for each plan. He could not find one for the Energy Reduction Implementation Plan and ECM, possibly because it covers a lot. He said they may have to suggest a consultant do it. John Constantinide suggested a software called Building Life Cycle Cost software, that the Department of Energy put out, he uses it for his job. If the input is known, it gives lifecycle costs of a project. Each facility would be made into a project. Once the savings are figured out, and approximate costs, that's what they would base the simple payback on.

Amanda Elmore will ask for the blended rate for the County for the cost benefit analysis.

John Constantinide said, the Energy Manager and staff should use this tool and will include it in his edits for the report. They can state that entities such as the Department of Defense and the U.S. Federal Government use it. It works well to look at savings vs. investments. Bill DeBusk said he found solar models and discussed them, and three models of electric vehicles that he will explain. Nick Sanzone asked how much they should talk about other clean energy sources and framing it explain solar energy resources and related resources. He said this is an Energy Transition Plan, solar energy being one of them. He does not want the plan to be viewed as something they did not ask for.

Bill Young said, some reports on wind describe wind coming from solar and other renewables say they come from solar. John Constantinide said solar can be associated with secondary energy products, described as a compounding effect that all starts with solar. Amanda Elmore said their first two goals talk about clean energy, the third talks about advanced energy technology. Bill DeBusk said the cost benefit analysis tool speaks to wind, solar and energy storage. Kimberly Newton said they should include as many verbiages as possible.

New Business

Lisa Ruckman said there were a few things from the solar co-ops that had gotten stuck in the document, that were not appropriate for this document. They just finished the third Brevard Solar Co-op in cooperation with the SUN Organization and there were marketing materials, sent to the WISER Board, that got into the document. Amanda said there was a link to a google drive that had their marketing material. Kimberly Newton asked it be removed as she would have sent it. Lisa Ruckman requested SUN's marketing materials be removed from the document.

Motion by John Constantinide, seconded by Kimberly Newton to remove the SUN Organization marketing material from the Transition to Clean Energy Plan draft document. The motion passed unanimously.

Nick Sanzone asked about leaving information for the website for Solar United Neighbors. Lisa Ruckman said the website makes sense as it does have a lot of information for homeowners and getting information is part of the task. However, the creation of event, session dates, drive, and ask the County to market sections are not pertinent. Nick Sanzone said that leaves weatherization, Space Coast Solar Co-op 2020, partner organizations and a link to their website.; he will reword it. Lisa Ruckman said it's under resources, so it is appropriate.

Bruce Lindsay said the key issue is clean energy. They have to talk about a transition, he likes cleaner technologies; it doesn't have to be 100% pure. Certain fuels are dirtier than others; some have advantages that can be applied today. He believes in Natural Gas as a clean burning fuel. Natural Gas should be promoted as a transition. They have been talking about solar without having talked to the Utility yet. FPL offers 100% renewable under the Solar Together program and programs to put in LED street lights. FPL is talking about having biodiesel fuels for their fleet that could be used on County fleets. They do high visibility solar demonstration projects on buildings such as libraries. He would like FPL to come in and talk to them so it can be noted in their report that they tried to learn what they have and compared it to doing it on their own. Amanda Elmore said she reached out in the beginning and they are happy to come speak. The County is already on board with Solar Together, with the return coming in over the next ten to twelve years. She will pull that agenda item and send it to the WISER Board members.

Lisa Ruckman said regarding transitioning to clean energy sources, the switch to electric vehicles and clean energy is happening as is more efficiencies and planting trees to shade buildings. Many things can be put in the document as far as transitioning to clean energy, as the County is going to need these things to be prepared. John Constantinide said it would be useful to say, they don't have to start from zero, but continue what they are doing. This proves strategic as they do not have to convince the County to do anything different but to continue the path. Bill Young said this fit with asking people to recommend and back their plan. When these people back the plan, their system comes with it.

Amanda Elmore will invite an FPL representative to speak at the beginning of the March WISER Board meeting for twenty to thirty minutes.

Bill DeBusk said he does not care for FPL to do solar. Their infrastructure for electricity is centralized; a system that has a lot of single point faults. They have an opportunity to decentralize their electrical grid system and make the County more resilient. FPL is in business to sell power, they don't like people putting solar on their houses. When building solar farms, they cut down trees. Solar panels can go on buildings, where they are needed. Nick Sanzone said he hates to see building space go unused and would like to see green rooftops. This is a transition, FPL could be there in the beginning stages, but they should recommend going further. They need to present independent resiliency as the end goal but not leave anything out. Bruce Lindsay said a guy that works for him is an advocate for solar power and put it on his house to also power his EV. A storm with hail did not disturb the solar panels but destroyed the other house shingles. The insurance company requires the entire roof be replaced so he had to rip off the solar panels and replace the shingles. We are in a hurricane zone and have to consider they will have to repair roofs and so he does not like anything on a building. He likes floating solar in empty lots used for water retention ponds. If FPL does a Solar Together project using that kind of land management, it makes a lot of sense. It was a 3% premium to go with Solar Together. They need to request a discount from FPL to the residential 3% as a major buyer. The City of Orlando signed an agreement for 5.2 megawatts of Duke Powers program which will get them to zero-carbon effect by 2030. Kimberly Newton said, floating solar is great and partnerships with FPL should be on the table since this is a transition, but not be reliant on any one source of power. Storage is important. Bill Young said FPL is a monopoly and their mission is to make money. They are already doing solar on water. They need to find out if other Counties have negotiated other deals.

General Public Comment

No additional public comment

Final Comments

John Constantinide asked that as the group edits the document, they cite where they got their information.

Adjournment

Motion by John Constantinide, seconded by Bill Young to adjourn the meeting at 7:02 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.