

Sustainability Commission Joint Meeting  
With the Ad Hoc Committee  
March 29, 2021

Meeting called to order at 5:32 pm by Renee Ruchotzke

Roll Call: Wilder Hritz, Andrew Scholl, Rick Hawksley, Renee Ruchotzke, and Maryjayne Stone

ABSENT: none

Staff: Bridget Susel, Community Development Director;

**AD HOC AND ACTION PLAN UPDATE PRESENTATION**

The presentation may be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPUonHHHiqY&t=987s>.

Bridget introduced Andrews Boateng as a doctoral candidate who is the lead on the geospatial analyst with Dave Tree Resource Group in Kent. He manages Davey Tree's Climate Change Services and Corporate Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory System. Mr. Boateng coordinates Davey's efforts in climate change adaptation and mitigation through a geospatial analysis, predictive modeling and other tools. He is also responsible for customizing Davey's analysis tools to better manage urban forestry management strategies. Prior to working with Davey Tree, he spent time at the Environmental Protection Agency in Ghana. He is a national representative to United Nations Environmental Framework for climate change. His doctoral focus is on urban climate change mitigation. He has developed climate adaptation resilient plans, inventory of GHG emission and climate change policies. He has played a lead role on the Ad Hoc Committee work done so far to prepare for the City's Climate Action Plan.

Mr. Boateng began his presentation by defining climate change as well as the 6-step process of a Climate Action Plan: Step 1 Inventory GHG Emissions; Step 2 Adopt a Target; Step 3 Develop a Climate Action Plan; Step 4 Implement Policies; Step 5 Monitor and Track Progress; Step 6 Recognize Achievement. He went on to explain the details of the Paris Climate Accord, a legally binding international treaty on climate change. The goal of which is to limit global warming to reach global peaking of greenhouse gas emissions to achieve a climate neutral world by mid-century. Mr. Boateng reviewed the Long-term temperature goals of the Agreement, as well as mitigation plans, sinks and reservoirs, adaptation, loss and damage and he also provided a review

of the Paris Agreement's transparency, implementation and compliance measures. He then went on to explain the importance of localizing a global agreement and how changes in Kent can have a global impact.

Inventory of GHG emissions is more than a report and should be viewed as a broad analytical program. It gives us an overview of the emissions, sources and sinks so that we can mitigate the GHG from targeted sources. Emissions are a product of Activity Data and Emission Factor (carbon in fuel, fraction of carbon oxidized, conversion of carbon to carbon dioxide). The data is gathered and analyzed then a comprehensive inventory report is created for sharing results. From that point an improvement strategy can be written and presented to City Council. The software used is ICLEI ClearPath Pro, using the standard protocol for cities. The protocol helps cities develop the inventory in order to appropriately plan a strategy for improvement.

Temporal and geographical boundaries were set and in 2016 baseline measures were established for residential combustion and grid electricity CO<sub>2</sub> emissions as well as Agriculture, Forestry, and Other Land Use (AFOLU) related CO<sub>2</sub>. Commercial measures for grid electricity and public transit and rail transportation sources were also obtained. There will be a report which will contain the following: description of emission sources, list of specific exclusion and inclusion of sources, comparative information from previous years, reporting period, trends found, progress towards reduction targets, a discussion of uncertainties, and a description of events and changes that have had an impact on the data. After the report is written, we can adopt the reduction targets, taking time and percentage into consideration. Policy can then be written to guide residents to the target. Mr. Boateng expressed the challenges of what the University brings to the planning. He then went on to discuss the steps necessary to develop a climate adaptation and resilience plan, including establishing a team, investigating regional climate, understanding exposure to climate hazards, assessment of vulnerability and risks (assets/losses), investigation of options to include strategies and potential solutions, prioritizing and planning.

## Q&A

Q: Mr. Hawksley stated this was a sophisticated presentation and process which creates the question as to what can the Sustainability Commission do as Mr. Boateng finalizes the report and how can we present it in a way that help the public realize that individuals can have impact. With the residential sector being the largest sector in the City, possibly reviewing with peers, utilizing

the University for help and comparing other plans from cities similar to our City could be helpful. He also asked for clarification on rail transportation, and whether it was the trains that pass through Kent that was the subject of the data.

A: Mr. Boateng explained that he used thick data taking into account the length of the rail line through Kent. The other sources of commuting emissions are estimated for now until data is received from AMATS. The Sustainability Commission can help by designing a plan that the community will buy into and know what role each person can play. There will need to be specific things that people can do.

Q: William Wilen mentioned that Cleveland's reduction rate plan is the same as Biden's plan for the country. He then asked Mr. Boateng if he had researched how they arrived at that goal or if he research Cincinnati's plan and how they plan to achieve that?

A: Cleveland has begun bike share programs, as did Kent. They are harvesting rain water to wash their city busses, they have some electric fleets and have infrastructure in place for the transit center. Their 2030 goal is realistic, as the changes they've made are yielding results. Kent needs to do the similar things and also continue to increase the tree canopy.

Mr. Wilen commented that Cleveland seems to be using wind sources and Cincinnati is using more solar.

Mr. Boateng suggested that as we are getting back into the Paris Accord, we will see more cities getting the resources and support to embark on these climate action plans.

Q: MaryJayne Stone asked if there are other businesses in Kent that have added the reduction of GHG emissions to their company policy.

A: Mr. Boateng stated that Partha has implemented many changes to reduce emissions and Davey Tree has as well. He is unsure of other companies policies. He then added the importance of letting businesses know the economic benefits of reducing emissions and that it is not only a benefit to the climate.

Q: Mrs. Stone asked if off road items such as lawn mowers were included in the data.

A: Mr. Boateng stated they were.

Bridget Susel agreed with Mr. Hawksley's assessment of the density of data and because it's such a large amount, the results will be reported as more of a summary that points out some of the key

points that were identified. Proposed suggestions for addressing initiatives will also be included. That is when and where the Sustainability Commission, the Ad Hoc Committee and any other community member will be needed to help get those suggestions done. The entire report will be posted on the Community Development website as well as the summarized, condensed version.

Q: Mr. Wilen asked about replacing fleets with electric models and Ms. Susel stated that it would be up to Council's approval. He then asked about the school bus fleet changing to electrical busses. Ms. Susel stated that's a School District decision

Q: Ms. Stone asked about a contact at the school district. Ms. Susel said she has been involved with the district and they are currently trying to become operational again but the study will be shared with them.

Q: Lorrain McMarty expressed her gratitude for Mr. Boateng steering the group and handling the data. The Ad Hoc Committee looked at a lot of other cities and participated in the ICLEI training. The committee also was involved with other communities and perhaps the Sustainability Commission would benefit from that as well.

Mr. Wilen suggested the group explore solarizing the Water Reclamation Plant and the New City Hall. He also suggested adding an incentive to adding solar to residential homes. Ms. Rochotzke stated we are not at that point yet and need to wait until the plan is ready. Ms. Susel shared that solar panels were considered for the City Hall but cost wise it wouldn't make a big difference however Kathy Petsko landed a grant for charging stations at the new City Hall. The City is interested in sustainability yet still need to operate in the confines of what we can afford.

The discussion closed with Mr. Boateng thanking Davey Tree for the support of the work being done on the project.

### **GOOD of the ORDER**

Nothing to report

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Stone made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Scholl, with no discussion. All in favor, passed 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 pm.