

Joint Environmental Taskforce

MEETING SUMMARY

12/4/19

Committee Members in Attendance: Pat Hynes, Dalia Palchik, Dan Storck, Wendy Gao, Karen Campblin, Susan Stillman, Richard Aiken, Meg Mall, Greg Ulses, Ire Kim, Richard Clayton, Smita Chandra Thomas

WELCOME/UPDATES

- Community-Wide Energy and Climate Action Plan for county is waiting for consultant contract to start meeting.
- County received commitment from environment office that in six months they would be bringing to Board of Supervisors a framework for moving forward with resiliency planning, which is of special interest in Mount Vernon and other areas near waterways.
- Dalia and Pat leading effort to reduce use of plastic water bottles at meetings.
- School Board is requesting school system staff to bring report to School Board about climate change curriculum in FCPS K-12.
- This is Dalia and Pat's last meeting since they are both leaving the School Board. New School Board members who will serve on JET TBD.
- Karen Campblin: was in Virginia Beach a month ago and toured Old Dominion Elementary School, which was built around environment and climate resiliency with strong environmental curriculum.

SUBCOMMITTEE BUCKETS

- Buckets are Energy, Transportation, Workforce Development, Recycling/Waste Reduction
- Adaptation and Resiliency will be incorporated into the buckets. Equity will also be considered under each bucket.
- Will come up with questions for staff in subcommittee work session and move forward with work in February meeting.
- Wendy recommended including inmate reentry programs with Sheriff's office into workforce development program

SUBCOMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND EXPECTATIONS

- Meetings will alternate monthly between full JET and subcommittee meetings.
- Subcommittees will bring recommendations/goal statements back to full JET to then make recommendations to both Boards. Will report out briefly at each full JET meeting.
- There will be one elected member assigned to each subcommittee.
- Subcommittees could request presentation from staff
- Need way to pass JET recommendations to BOS Environment Committee and School Board
- Subcommittees would still need to follow procedures of elected group per sunshine law

- Subcommittees need to designate person as chair or co-chair to report out and take minutes (summary of what was discussed in meeting)
- Waiting to establish standard subcommittee meeting time until new School Board members are on JET – Doodle Poll will be sent to determine
- Waste Reduction subcommittee will need to meet at separate time since two of its members are on multiple subcommittees

SUBCOMMITTEE WORK SESSION

Subcommittees had first work session to develop list of questions/information needed from county and school staff to begin work on creating recommendations.

OTHER NOTES

- Subcommittees will send minutes to Camela

Following the JET Committee meeting, members broke out into subcommittees to discuss relevant topics and generate questions for government and school staff. Notes from each subcommittee are provided below.

Subcommittee Meeting Notes

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Subcommittee members in attendance: Ire Kim, Greg Ulses, Pat Hynes

Discussion: After introductions, the subcommittee dug into the question of how it can best support the work of the JET in promoting career preparation for the “green” (environment/climate/energy) and “blue” (oceans/shorelines/off-shore energy) job markets. The subcommittee agreed:

1. Workforce development should address the career needs of both K-12 students and adults in the community.
2. The subcommittee should hear from county and school staff, and other public and private subject matter experts, to build policy recommendations that reflect best practices and build on existing programs.
3. Workforce development provides opportunities to pursue the JET’s overarching goals of equity and resiliency planning.
4. There is a significant unmet need to communicate career-oriented training opportunities to current FCPS students.

Questions for staff:

1. For FCPS staff: a background report on current career and tech education opportunities and needs; and connections to industry and public sector leaders to present to the subcommittee.
2. For county staff: background reports on the inmate re-entry program and any other adult workforce development programs and opportunities provided by the county and the state.

The subcommittee also committed to doing some individual homework, including reaching out to our networks for additional sources of information.

ENERGY

Questions for staff:

1. How much will the solar RFP reduce county emissions?
 - a) Also, what is the timeline for the solar RFP? i.e. when will awards be given, solar installed, schedule for implementation, etc.
2. Ask county to benchmark all utilities (electricity, gas, water, fossil fuels).
3. How many facilities have been benchmarked for energy?
4. When will all buildings be benchmarked/when will this information be available for the public?
5. How many school/government buildings are in the RFP?
6. We understand that we have to get to net-zero carbon; we have to --> there is no other option
 - a) What is the county's plan/timeframe for net-zero carbon?
7. Where is the county right now in carbon emissions?
 - a) Must know where we are before we can set goals/means to achieve goals
 - b) Prioritize benchmarking
8. The county is using a state-of-the-art financing mechanism for the solar RFP (Power Purchase Agreement). Has the county considered similar unique financing systems for other aspects of energy efficiency?
9. What has the county done for energy efficiency so far? (specifics on air tightness, insulation, energy audits, LED lights, etc.)

RECYCLING/WASTE REDUCTION

In attendance was Ali Culhane, FCPS Get2Green Program Specialist, Environmental Stewardship.

Discussion: The subcommittee discussed barriers to waste reduction at schools and more generally. Barriers included communications (broadly), the state of recycling, education of stakeholders including custodians and lack of accountability at schools. As per Zero Waste Hierarchy, the focus should be on waste avoidance first (rethink/redesign, reduce, and reuse in the hierarchy) and THEN recycling and composting, etc. Get2Green has supported schools that have done waste stream audits. Via Get2Green's website, the dashboard has detailed data by school on recycling rates, total volume of trash and more. <http://get2green.fcps.edu/recycle.html> --- Note, even the Get2Green website has a tab for "Recycling" not "Waste."

The subcommittee then discussed setting a Zero Waste goal for county and schools. They discussed potential solutions that relate to waste avoidance, such as the elimination of single use plastics. This would be done through purchasing but also through policies (e.g. policy for school/county events). Also needed is enhanced education/communication about the lifecycle of "stuff" – e.g. where does your trash go? Education/communication should not just be about recycling (which is also needed as there is still significant confusion about what can or cannot be recycled).

Finally, the subcommittee discussed composting across all of FCPS. Members wanted to know if there are there vendors that can handle the volume.

Questions for staff:

1. Who within FCPS is the best point person for waste?
2. Who is the person responsible for waste at Fairfax County facilities/operations?
3. Status of the focus groups/survey related to communicating about recycling in the county?
4. Status of the 5-year review of waste management for the county? Are there any projects geared specifically toward reducing waste generated by the county facilities and operations/schools?
5. What are the primary goals related to waste management in the county/FCPS? Are there any related to waste reduction?
6. What programs are planned/in progress related to waste reduction? Composting? Others?
7. What is the current recycling policy in the schools and at county?

TRANSPORTATION

Subcommittee Members in Attendance: Karen Camplin, Richard Clayton, Susan Stillman, Dan Storck

Questions for Staff:

1. Could county staff provide carbon footprint data from the MWCOG report for:
 - a. FCPS buses
 - b. FCPS staff and other vehicles
 - c. Fairfax Connector buses
 - d. Fairfax staff and other vehicles
2. What is the current plan to acquire cleaner FCPS school buses?
3. What is the current plan to acquire cleaner FCPS staff and other vehicles?
4. What is the current plan to acquire cleaner FFX Connector buses?
5. What is the current plan to acquire cleaner FFX county staff and other vehicles?
6. For all of the above, what is the mix of fuels being considered?
7. What is the current plan for providing alternative fuel infrastructure for these cleaner vehicles?
8. Could you please provide the ages of both FCPS and FFX County vehicles?
9. What are the replacement schedules for both FCPS and FFX County vehicles?
10. Could FCDOT and the FCPS transportation staff provide an overview of existing transportation inventory and conditions and what are their plans (if any) to reduce/eliminate GHG emission levels? What are the barriers and/or constraints that limit the scope of these plans?