

WORKGROUP FOR INNOVATIVE SOLAR ENERGY RESOURCES (WISER) MINUTES

January 6, 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 5:00 via Zoom by Nick Sanzone, Chair

Determination of Quorum

Quorum was determined.

Approval of November 13, 2020 Minutes

Motion by John Constantinide, seconded by Bill DeBusk to approve the November 13, 2020 minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

The Board of County Commissioners approved up to 12 more flexible meeting hours if needed. The next meeting must be two hours. The time after is flexible.

The determination of how the hours will be used will be at the next meeting. Nick Sanzone suggested a three-hour meeting in March. Amanda will invite Jim Fenton from the Florida Solar Energy Center to the April meeting. The draft plan will be sent to him prior.

Motion by John Constantinide, seconded by Bill Young to have the next WISER Board meeting on Wednesday, February 3, 2021 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

(The Transition to Clean Energy Plan document is attached.) The draft of the document from Nick Sanzone was sent to all WISER Board members, shared on screen and read through by Nick Sanzone and John Constantinide. Edits were discussed and made by each member while working through the document.

Kimberly Newton asked if the 14 County facilities and 17 libraries listed were up to date as far as weatherization. Nick Sanzone said no, this was done in 2013. The proposed Energy Manager will help bring this data up to date, as they are here only to create the plan. Kimberly Newton agreed, the document should highlight the need for the Energy Manager position. Amanda Elmore will confirm the date of the resolution that first tasked the WISER Board to create this plan.

Kim Newton asked if their work will overlap or support the County Resiliency Plan. John Constantinide replied that Resilience Brevard is an initiative the County is doing to solicit feedback from residents in conjunction with the East Central Florida Regional Resiliency Collaborative in order to create a plan. They are in the feedback collection stages now. Amanda Elmore said that it has more to do with Peril of Flood than with an energy plan and does not think there is overlap.

Regarding the first Assumption, Nick Sanzone said that most of the buildings generate much more power than can be produced with rooftop and parking lot solar. Regarding the third Assumption, he said he did the calculations from data provided by Public Works. John Constantinide clarified that kWh is energy and kW is power. kWh is power over time which is energy. Looking at Solar, peak and storage for evening use as in a battery backup are significant. He recommended giving a statistic that states how a certain amount of energy can power a certain asset, as well as a statistic for peak power

related to powering a certain number of homes. Bruce Lindsey shared that a single-family home will be sized for a backup generator at 22kW.

Bill DeBusk, Bill Young and Lisa Ruckman joined the meeting.

Kimberly Newton asked if the locations listed were chosen because they were looked at in the past, suggesting that most of the locations did not look like good candidates for adding solar. They are not multipurpose and could not hold energy storage, where it would be used for more than just reducing energy cost. Nick Sanzone said that the facilities would be ranked, which has not been done yet.

Bruce Lindsey suggested consolidating the various charts into one to help with prioritization. He would like to see a kWh per square foot number. Amanda Elmore said Mark from Public Works could look through a consolidated chart to help point out old data. Nick Sanzone said that data more current than 2013 usage data would be needed.

Bill DeBusk said that the energy costs in Assumption three are off. John Constantinide said they can get estimated figures from FPL. It is hard to find an exact rate structure per square foot. Facilities rather than traffic or other infrastructures are being looked at. Kim Newton asked if they should discuss which buildings and facilities they would like to propose before investing in getting the numbers as she does not see libraries as a priority. Nick Sanzone said the reason he put the libraries in is because they had the list from 2013 and they fit well with the goal two regarding public access. John Constantinide said he sees resiliency opportunities with libraries and asked why libraries might be a low priority for the Commission. Kimberly Newton replied that it's not the greatest return on investment. She said that the initial solar additions to a building should include a solar storage, resiliency type hub, a building that is solar and has renewable storage where people can get ice and charge their cell phones during a disaster. John Constantinide said he is seeing resiliency plans positioning schools and libraries as shelters nationwide. He said we need to strategically identify solar and battery backup opportunities for disaster purposes. Kimberly Newton said they should present buildings that have a multipurpose use and not just reduce an energy bill. John Constantinide cautions the idea of a Resiliency Hub in Brevard County because the County is long and skinny. If beachside evacuates inland, a distributive approach would be best; to centers in Titusville, Viera, Melbourne and Palm Bay for example. The resiliency folks need to identify those locations. He said they can provide the insight as to how to empower them more. Government centers should be high on the list because that is where critical services will be.

Regarding the Statement of Purpose, Kim Newton asked if equity included social fairness. Nick said no because they may not be the ones to have that conversation. Equity touches on things that aren't directly energy related. Kim Newton agreed with the current language under Social fairness. John Constantinide suggested replacing Social fairness with accessibility. Amanda Elmore said accessibility was one of the goals identified by the Board for this group.

Nick Sanzone suggested they recommend that the WISER Board become permanent in order to advise the Energy Manager. Kim Newton thinks it's a necessity as the Energy Manager would need an advisory committee in order to implement the plan. Bill DeBusk agreed. Nick Sanzone suggested Office of Financial Optimization as the Department name. Kimberly Newton suggested that they not use the word sustainability in the department name. Amanda Elmore will obtain an organization chart from Public Works. Facilities falls under the Public Works Department. The Director Mark is in the

process of refining it. She suggested putting a pin in this discussion and cautions against using the word department but rather an office.

Regarding the Executive Summary, Kim Newton wished to include Wind because it is emerging clean technology. It is included in Orlando's plan. John Constantidide cautions putting the County in a position to become a utility provider because the County may have agreements with FPL. He advised that they suggest wind and landfill gas be incentivized by the County. Bruce Lindsay said landfill gas is now being characterized as renewable natural gas. John Constantinide said landfill gas is controversial because there is only one landfill. Landfill gas traps the emissions from a landfill and harnesses it toward producing energy. He would call it an energy opportunity. Bruce Lindsay said landfill gas is methane, 22,000 times worse than CO₂. Trapped methane, not admitted into the atmosphere it is a clean technology. Bill Young said it has other pollutants. Some places have a scrubber that cleans the gas before they burn it.

Bruce Lindsay said that the challenge with wind is that it needs a windy place; which is not what we have here. Bill Young said there are studies that say, in Florida, unless you are within a couple hundred feet of the ocean, it's pretty poor. Nick Sanzone said the environmental impact of wind on migratory birds was a concern, which is why it's not included. Bill Young said there are noise makers and owls put on them now to keep the birds away. Bill DeBusk said they make one of the propellers black and the other two white for visibility.

Regarding Goal three, John Constantinide said this is a continual process because there is going to be federal and state policies that the County may want to take advantage of, especially related to funded policies. They should look at how the County wants to invest, and that will shape policies. The County may be interested in policies besides positioning renewable energy. Its identifying and investing appropriately; not just in the County's interest but the Community's This may subsidize or eliminate services the County needs to provide because the Community is already doing it.

Lisa Ruckman asked about policies that were in place right now that were possible barriers. Amanda Elmore said she could not think of a policy that is a barrier, but will do a search. Costs may be a barrier to some citizens. The solar installation permit fee had been removed three years ago though citizens may not realize it. Bill DeBusk said not having an energy efficient home due to building code is a barrier as well as a home not built with an infrastructure in place to accept solar. Kimberly Newton asked if there are policies in place now that don't require lead building or standards that could be increased. Amanda Elmore said when approving structures, they have to follow the Florida Building Code, so there is not an opportunity to change it. John Constantinide said that the Florida Building Code is free to the public and contains a sub code called the Florida Energy Conservation Code. It addresses existing and new construction methods and requirements for energy conservation such as weatherization, insulation of duct and plumbing and equipment energy consumption requirements. It does not give much detail about renewable energy. The Florida Solar Energy approves Solar energy products and vendors. Regulation limits the products available to people. The County does not have anything on record. Instead of regulation they provide opportunities including incentives.

Nick Sanzone left the meeting. Bruce Lindsay will step in as his proxy for District four. John Constantide picked up reading with Goal one.

Bill DeBusk asked if thoughts on prioritization were with resiliency. He doesn't think as many things will be made resilient; batteries for example are very expensive. Most of this is about saving money

by using an alternative energy source. Resilience is a hard sell unless its necessary. Kim Newton said, when asked for that cost benefit, they should have a plan. John Constantinide said they may not have the expertise to suggest facilities. Bill Young asked if the County Council should make that recommendation as its not part of their program. Amanda Elmore said the most appropriate persons to prioritize the facilities list is the new Energy Manager or Director of Public Works.

Bill Young said he is working on a project at Florida Solar Energy Center, powering schools for emergencies. They powered 118 shelters at schools throughout the state. They met with the Emergency Manager, School Board and Red Cross. Every year emergency management walks through the shelters to decide if it is valid. Every school visited was evaluated on what the critical needs are. The critical needs are what gets powered. The buildings air conditioning is not powered, but the lights, computers and medical equipment are. In terms of resiliency and the cost of batteries, a big battery is not needed when not powering everything, just the critical items. The government center being 284,000 square feet, may only need batteries for 10,000 feet, letting the other part be grid-tied solar. Resilience is that you survive whatever is wrong. John Constantinide said they should not go into detail about resiliency in terms of design. He recognizes both concerns of cost and prioritization. This group should look at the function of each building to determine if it has a need for renewable energy. Kim Newton said the discovery of the need for an Energy Manager has been this groups greatest discovery. She asked if the Emergency Management Office could speak with them on their facility priorities. Amanda Elmore said she will ask, but the Interim Director to be Director in January has his hands full with COVID vaccinations and testing, but there may be a list out there.

Amanda Elmore said a plan should not be built around the WISER Board continuing indefinitely as that has not been determined. John Constantinide asked if they should provide a backup plan. The Energy Manager position is more important to push than the continuity of the WISER Board.

Bill DeBusk said what he wrote was based on the Re-Op Model, he thinks now the InterRel model would be better to use as it is more detailed. He will make some edits.

Topics/Resources for Next Meeting

Discussed earlier

General Public Comment

No additional public comment

Final Comments

Kimberly Newton asked if they were able to get the individual documents. Amanda Elmore said that all documents that have been submitted by WISER Board members have been previously shared and are on the webpage or can be requested on the webpage.

Adjournment

Motion by Bill DeBusk, seconded by Bill Young to adjourn the meeting at 7:01 PM. The motion passed unanimously.