

LARAMIE/ALBANY COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2020 AT 6:00 PM

The Laramie/Albany County Environmental Advisory Committee meetings are currently closed to in-person attendance.

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81575519190?
pwd=dWZKdGYwbzdicDVPTVB0QmZoOSt3dz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81575519190?pwd=dWZKdGYwbzdicDVPTVB0QmZoOSt3dz09)

Meeting ID: 815 7551 9190

Passcode: 208227

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kdXsIMmErT>

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

- 2-A. Changes and Approval of Agenda**
- 2-B. Thursday, October 1, 2020 EAC Meeting Minutes**
- 2-C. Thursday, November 5, 2020 EAC Special Meeting Minutes**

Documents:

[EAC MINUTES 10-1-20.PDF](#)
[EAC MINUTES 11-5-20.PDF](#)

3. CITIZEN COMMENTS- Non-Agenda Related Topics- No Action Can Be Taken

4. DISCLOSURES

5. ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND STAFF: Reports And Comments

- 5.A. Introduction Of New EAC Member - Mary Grace Bedwell**

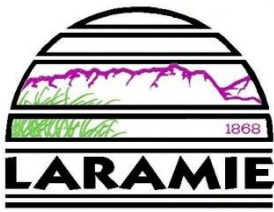
6. NEW BUSINESS

- 6.A. Election Of New EAC Chair And Vice-Chair**
- 6.B. Overview Of November 11, 2020 Joint Corporations Committee Testimony On 21LSO-0219, (Solar Net Metering Bill) And Update On Current Status And Amendments - Ellen Currano/EAC Discussion**

Documents:

[EAC - NET METERING POSITION STATEMENT 2020FINAL.PDF](#)

- 6.C. **Discuss EAC Subcommittee That Was Formed On August 6, 2020 To "Research And Present Research On Solar Installations" - Erin O'Doherty/EAC Discussion**
- 6.D. **Discuss Potential EAC Course Of Action In Addressing Landfill Emissions - Rhiannon Jakopak/EAC Discussion**
- 6.E. **Discuss EAC Involvement At December 7, 2020 City Council Work Session On Municipal Emissions - Darren Parkin/EAC Discussion**
- 6.F. **Discuss EAC Member Joining A Potential Ad-Hoc Committee With Other Volunteer Members Of The Community To Assist And Advise In Updating The Casper Aquifer Protection Plan - Darren Parkin/EAC Discussion**
- 7. **OLD BUSINESS**
- 8. **DATE OF NEXT REGULAR MEETING- February 4, 2021**
- 9. **ADJOURN**



City of Laramie

City Manager's Office
P.O. Box C
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MINUTES

Laramie/Albany County Environmental Advisory Committee Thursday, October 1, 2020 at 6:00 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting convened at 6:00 PM

Members present: Ellen Currano, Eric Krszjzaniek, Ramsey Bently, Evelyn Hill, Rhiannon Jakopak, and Brad Carr.

Members absent: one vacant seat.

There was a quorum present at all times.

Council Liaison: Erin O'Doherty (present).

Albany County Commissioner Liaison: Pete Gosar (present).

Staff Present: Darren Parkin (Natural Resource Specialist), Nancy Bartholomew (City Clerk), Derek Teini (Planning Manager), and JR Slingerland (Solid Waste Manager).

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

2-A. Changes and Approval of Agenda

MOTION BY KRSZJZANIEK, seconded by Jakopak, to approve the agenda as written.

MOTION CARRIED by voice vote.

2-B. Thursday, August 6, 2020 Environmental Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

MOTION BY CARR, seconded by Jakopak, to approve the Minutes as written.

Aye: 6

Nay: 0

Absent: one vacancy.

MOTION CARRIED by voice vote.

3. CITIZEN COMMENTS - Non-Agenda Related Topics – No Action Can Be Taken

Harry Plendl- introduced himself.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND STAFF: REPORTS AND COMMENTS

4.A. Expiring Terms and Muthig Vacancy

Parkin- Dr. Carr's presentation, Monolith Ranch Solar project, net metering, Special Meeting is not required at this time.

5. DISCLOSURES — Ex-parte communications; potential conflicts of interest

No disclosures.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

6.A. Laramie Brownfield Project - Ayres Associates

Speaker/Presenter: Planning Manager Derek Teini introduced Ayres Associates representatives Matt Ashby and Jeff Steiner

Ayres Associates gave presentation. Future presentations of their conclusions will be made on the following dates:

October 14, 2020 – 5:30-6:30 pm Lincoln Community Center
October 19, 2020 – 12-1:00 pm Zoom presentation
October 26, 2020 – 4:30 pm Planning Commission
October 27, 2020 – 6:00 pm City Council

6.B. City of Laramie Solid Waste System – JR Slingerland, Solid Waste Manager
Speaker/Presenter: JR Slingerland, Solid Waste Manager
JR Slingerland provided committee with presentation regarding the operations of the solid waste division.

7. OLD BUSINESS:

7.A. Solar Installation Subcommittee - EAC Discussion

Speaker/Presenter: Darren Parkin introduced item.

Parkin gave update that Alec Muthig resigned from the committee.
Commissioner Gosar suggested working on net metering since it will be going through the legislature.

8. DATE OF NEXT REGULAR MEETING – December 3, 2020

9. ADJOURN

MOTION BY JAKOPAK, seconded by KRSZJZANIEK, to adjourn the meeting.

Aye: 6

Nay: 0

Absent: one vacant seat.

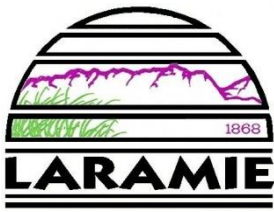
MOTION CARRIED by voice vote.

Meeting adjourned at 8:02 PM.

Minutes taken by: _____

(Print)

Contact me at: _____ (phone number)



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MINUTES Laramie/Albany County Environmental Advisory Committee Thursday, November 5, 2020 at 6:00 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting convened at 6:03 PM

Members present: Ellen Currano, Eric Krszjzaniek, Evelyn Hill, Rhiannon Jakopak, and Harry Plendl.

Members absent: Ramsey Bently and one vacant seat.

There was a quorum present at all times.

Council Liaison: Erin O'Doherty (present at 6:33 pm).

Albany County Commissioner Liaison: Pete Gosar (present).

Staff Present: Darren Parkin (Natural Resource Specialist) and Nancy Bartholomew (City Clerk).

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

2-A. Changes and Approval of Agenda

MOTION BY KRSZJZANIEK, seconded by Hill, to approve the agenda as written.

MOTION CARRIED by voice vote.

3. CITIZEN COMMENTS - Non-Agenda Related Topics – No Action Can Be Taken

None.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND STAFF: REPORTS AND COMMENTS

None.

5. DISCLOSURES — Ex-parte communications; potential conflicts of interest

No disclosures.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

6.A. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding House Bill 0226 Related to Public Utilities and Net-Metering System.

MOTION BY KRSZJZANIEK, seconded by Jakopak, that EAC approve a position statement opposing the proposed amendment to Wyoming's net-metering statutes.

MOTION TO AMEND BY KRSZJZANIEK, seconded by Jakopak, to amend 2nd paragraph to add "already minimal" after reduce.

MOTION TO AMEND CARRIED by voice vote.

MOTION TO AMEND BY PLENDL, seconded by Jakopak, to remove "maintaining or".

MOTION TO AMEND CARRIED by voice vote.

MOTION TO AMEND BY JAKOPAK, no second received, to move sentence 2, paragraph 2 to a new paragraph below.

MOTION TO AMEND FAILED due to lack of second.

MOTION TO AMEND BY JAKOPAK, seconded by Plendl, to move the 3rd sentence to a new paragraph below.

MOTION TO AMEND CARRIED by voice vote.

MOTION TO AMEND BY JAKOPAK, seconded by Hill, to move the sentence "Private citizens..." to the end to a new paragraph.

MOTION TO AMEND CARRIED by voice vote.

MOTION TO AMEND BY JAKOPAK, seconded by Plendl, to change "Rec Center" to "Laramie Community Recreation Center and the Laramie Ice and Event Center."

MOTION TO AMEND CARRIED by voice vote.

MOTION TO AMEND BY JAKOPAK, seconded by Plendl, to change "feel" to "experience" and add the following at the end of the sentence and strike the next three sentences in the paragraph, "This September, the Mullen Fire decimated over 175,000 acres in our beloved Snowy Mountains and threatened Cheyenne's water supply. Air quality in Albany was terrible for weeks as the fire burned."

MOTION TO AMEND CARRIED by voice vote.

MOTION TO AMEND BY PLENDL, seconded by Hill, to include these sentences: 1) The term net-metering is a nationally recognized term and should not be removed from the conversation in Wyoming as it would create the appearance that Wyoming does not permit net-metering; 2) Purchase rates must be equivalent to the retail rate; 3) Opportunity for the community to return land to the tax rolls through renewable energy projects are discouraged by the utility purchasing back energy at the avoided cost rate; and 4) Net-metering production capacity authorized to produce >25 kilowatts in supported.

MOTION TO AMEND CARRIED by voice vote.

Member Plendl left the meeting at 7:32 pm.

MOTION TO AMEND BY JAKOPAK, seconded by Krszjzaniek, to amend "and preventing increased occurrences of events like the Mullen Fire."

MOTION TO AMEND CARRIED by voice vote.

MOTION TO AMEND BY JAKOPAK, seconded by Krszjzaniek, to amend to say, "is threatening 40% of our water supply".

MOTION TO AMEND CARRIED by voice vote.

MOTION TO AMEND BY JAKOPAK, seconded by Hill, to move sentence 2, paragraph 2 to a new paragraph at the end and strike "instead" before advocate.

MOTION TO AMEND CARRIED by voice vote.

MOTION TO AMEND BY KRSZJZANIEK, seconded by Jakopak, to add a sentence, "Opportunity for the community to return land to the tax rolls through renewable energy projects are discouraged by the utility purchasing back energy at the avoided cost rate."

MOTION TO AMEND CARRIED by voice vote.

MOTION TO AMEND BY KRSZJZANIEK, seconded by Jakopak, to amend changes to the first sentence "as well as ensuring that retail rates are paid for consumer generated energy..".
MOTION TO AMEND CARRIED by voice vote.

MOTION TO AMEND BY JAKOPAK, seconded by Hill, to amend "Legislation is often most effective when it reflects the involvement and interests of many diverse segments of the public. Although there was substantial public involvement opposing amendment."
MOTION CARRIED by voice vote.

MOTION TO AMEND BY KRSZJZANIEK, seconded by Hill, for leaving the term net-metering in the bill, raising the current cap.
MOTION TO AMEND CARRIED by voice vote.

MOTION TO AMEND BY KRSZJZANIEK, seconded by Jakopak, the committee approves as is with the understanding of grammatical edits.

MOTION BY JAKOPAK, seconded by Krszjzaniek, to approve this letter and give the presenter permission to make grammatical edits.

MOTION TO AMEND BY KRSZJZANIEK, seconded by Hill, nominates Ellen Currano to present letter to Joint Corporations Committee.
MOTION TO AMEND CARRIED by voice vote.

MAIN MOTION CARRIED by voice vote.

8. DATE OF NEXT REGULAR MEETING – December 3, 2020

9. ADJOURN

MOTION BY KRSZJZANIEK, seconded by Jakopak, to adjourn the meeting.

Aye: 4

Nay: 0

Absent: Bentley, Plendl, and one vacant seat.

MOTION CARRIED by voice vote.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Minutes taken by: _____

(Print)

Contact me at: _____ (phone number)



Laramie/Albany County Environmental Advisory Committee

November 5, 2020

RE: Position statement on proposed amendments to Wyoming's net-metering bill

Dear Laramie City Councilors and Albany County Commissioners,

Here, the Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) shares our concerns about proposed amendments to decrease the payback of solar power production in 21LSO-0219 of Wyoming's net-metering statutes. We oppose the amendments, "The customer-generator shall pay the retail rate to the electric utility for all energy consumed from the electric utility during the billing period" and "The electric utility shall pay the customer-generator the electric utility's avoided cost rate for all energy produced by the customer-generator and delivered back to the electric utility during the billing period." Further, we oppose the amendment that net-metering only be allowed for "customer generated electricity systems made operational prior to July 1, 2021 and that have not changed ownership on or after July 1, 2021." The position statement here is an update of our 2019 statement, which was shared with Laramie City Council and the Albany County Commissions and read at the Joint Corporations, Elections, and Political Subdivisions Interim Committee meeting. We will read this updated position statement at the Legislative Interim Committee Meeting on Nov. 11 and encourage Laramie City Councilors and Albany County Commissioners to once again join our efforts in encouraging members of this Legislative Interim Committee to oppose these proposed amendments.

The currently proposed amendments would reduce the already minimal incentives for investment in renewable energy by further constraining the net-metering cap and eliminating incentives for systems installed after July 1, 2021.

This March, Laramie City Council unanimously passed a resolution establishing intent to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050, and key to achieving this goal is the installation of solar energy systems on municipal buildings. Solar panels are currently being installed on the Laramie Community Recreation Center and the Laramie Ice and Events Center thanks to a Rocky Mountain Power Blue Sky Award. Future solar installations will require financial backing from the city, which is much more likely with the guarantee of fair payback for excess energy produced.

Private citizens also benefit from net-metering. For example, virtual net-metering would provide opportunities for low-income residents or residents that rent or live in an apartment to save money on power bills. Last, states surrounding Wyoming continue to see an increase of jobs for solar installers while Wyoming currently ranks 43rd for jobs within the solar industry. In times of an economic transition for Wyoming, we need to be doing everything we can to provide employment opportunities for future generations.

EAC exists to “analyze assigned issues, receive and analyze citizen concerns and complaints, formulate options, and advise the City Council and the Board of County Commissioners on environmental issues.”¹ The proposed amendments fall within our mandate because decreasing dependence on fossil fuels and increasing use of renewable energy are essential to minimize climate change. In Albany County, we experience the effects of climate change on our water resources and on wildfire frequency and intensity. This September, the Mullen Fire decimated over 175,000 acres in our beloved Snowy Mountains and is threatening 40% of our water supply. Air quality in Albany County was terrible for weeks as the fire burned. Meeting the challenges of climate change and preventing increased occurrences of events like the Mullen Fire demands urgent attention, primarily through seeking alternative sources of energy. Renewable energy offers an environmentally-sound alternative for meeting our current energy needs, but the proposed amendments would stifle the extent to which Albany County—and Wyoming more broadly—can do so.

We advocate for leaving the term net-metering in the bill, raising the current cap, and ensuring that retail rates are paid for consumer-generated energy to encourage investments that would help Laramie become carbon neutral, provide long-term cost savings, and support job growth. When utilities purchase back energy at the utility’s retail rate, it provides opportunities for the community to return “Brownfield” land to the tax rolls through renewable energy projects.

Legislation is often most effective when it reflects the involvement and interests of many diverse segments of the public. Although there was substantial public involvement opposing proposed amendments to net-metering in 2019, there has not been the opportunity for public engagement and involvement in this iteration of amendments. We recommend that any proposed legislation amending net-metering policies stem from a strong foundation in our communities and with the active participation of our citizens.

We appreciate the attention to renewable energy and thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

The Laramie/Albany County Environmental Advisory Committee

¹<https://www.cityoflaramie.org/217/Environmental-Advisory-Committee>