



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: SEPTEMBER 16, 2020

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: MARK B. JINKS, CITY MANAGER /s/

DOCKET TITLE:

Consideration of a Resolution to Establish an Ad Hoc Energy and Climate Change Task Force. [ROLL-CALL VOTE]

ISSUE: Consideration of a resolution to establish the Ad Hoc Energy and Climate Change Task Force.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- (1) Approve the attached resolution establishing the Ad Hoc Energy and Climate Change Task Force ('Task Force'); and
- (2) Authorize the City Manager to appoint no more than 13 members of the Task Force.

BACKGROUND: The City Council adopted the City's Environmental Action Plan 2040 (EAP2040) in July 2019. The EAP2040 establishes a target of reducing community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 50 percent by FY 2030 and 80 to 100 percent by FY 2050 (base year 2005) supported by significant contributions at the state and federal level toward renewable energy and energy efficiency mandates. This target supports meeting the goal of increasing the City's preparedness to respond to the impacts of climate change and environmental emergencies. To work towards meeting this target and goal, the EAP2040 includes Action 1.1.1 where "by FY 2021, establish a multidisciplinary task force to guide an update of the Energy and Climate Change Action Plan."

In October 2019, the City Council adopted a resolution declaring climate emergency, recognizing that climate change poses a grave threat to everyone in Alexandria and around the world. The resolution expresses City Council's commitment to climate change action at it is likely to have a particular impact on the Alexandria community where adapting to climate change will be key to Alexandria's environmental and economic future.

In 2011, the City Council passed an Energy and Climate Change Action Plan 2012 - 2020. Since that time, significant advancements in climate change science and solutions, identification and analysis of climate-induced vulnerabilities, climate adaptation and resiliency practices, and climate action planning approaches provides the City opportunity to meaningfully advance the Alexandria community's efforts towards climate change action.

Staff proposes that the Task Force be established to provide guidance to City staff in the development of the updated Energy and Climate Change Action Plan. The Energy and Climate Change Action Plan will 1) support implementation of the EAP2040's existing actions, and 2) identify additional actions available for the City to consider in order to act on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and to address climate change according to the EAP2040's targets and goals.

The proposed Task Force will also support two additional components of the Energy and Climate Change Action Plan's development process, including 1) focusing on priorities of diversity, racial and social equity, and inclusivity as a critical lens for conducting energy and climate change action planning, and 2) leveraging climate change action solutions to support Alexandria's COVID-19 pandemic economic recovery efforts and economic development goals.

DISCUSSION: The purpose of the Task Force is to provide guidance to the City's effort to update the Energy and Climate Change Action Plan. This guidance includes feedback on various analyses - including greenhouse gas emissions and climate change vulnerabilities - and in consideration of implementing the EAP040's actions as well as the identification, evaluation, and prioritization of recommendations for additional policy, programmatic, or technology actions to achieve specific, science-based emissions reductions consistent with the EAP2040's targets and goals. Such actions may include, but are not limited to, efforts that:

- 1) increase of renewable energy production and availability for city residents/businesses;
- 2) work to curtail consumption of fossil fuels;
- 3) engage Alexandria residents and businesses in emissions-reducing actions;
- 4) identify opportunities for climate adaptation policies and practices.

Additionally, the Task Force will be requested to provide guidance on an Energy and Climate Change Action Plan implementation roadmap, including identifying and evaluating funding and budgeting strategies, specific implementation steps and approaches, and methods to measure and track progress against time-specific goals consistent with the EAP2040.

Composition: The Task Force recommendation includes a task force comprised of no more than 13 members which seeks to represent a diverse Alexandria community, and aims to include those have an interest in learning and applying proven energy and climate change action solutions on behalf of their respective communities:

- One person designated by, but who need not be a member of, the Environmental Policy Commission,
- One person representing an environmental, clean energy, or climate change action advocacy organization or interests,
- Three persons who are residents of Alexandria at-large and whose representation reflects:
 - Different areas/neighborhoods of the City and interests of homeowners, condo or multi-family residents, and renters/tenants
 - Involvement in civic or community organizations or faith organizations
 - Interests or expertise in relevant fields such as renewable energy, energy efficiency and energy conservation, climate change vulnerabilities, climate change adaptation, land use,

energy/resource economics, community engagement, transportation, or finance,

- Two persons with interest or expertise in diversity, race and social equity, and inclusivity, issues including those of Alexandria's aging population,
- Two persons representing Alexandria youth interests with specific priority of Alexandria high school students,
- Two business representatives from the Alexandria business community which may include representation of a business membership organization, business owner, commercial building owner, or an institutional organization, with consideration of ensuring representing racial and social equity among these representatives,
- One person representing the interest of leveraging climate change solutions to support the City's economic development goals as well as support Alexandria's COVID-19 pandemic economic recovery efforts,
- One professional person representing clean energy and climate policy or technology interests.

Under this proposed structure, the City Environmental Policy Commission would designate their representatives. The remaining members of the Task Force would be appointed by the City Manager following nomination or a call for applications. The City Manager would make selections based upon applicants' stated areas of expertise and would designate the Chair of the Task Force.

Expectations of Task Force Members: Staff recommends the Task Force set a meeting agenda with a recommendation to meet a minimum of (4) four times during the Energy and Climate Change Action Plan development process, beginning October 2020 or after selection of members has been completed. Task Force members would provide feedback and guidance to City staff on the Energy and Climate Change Action Plan development process relative to their representation or area of expertise.

In addition to providing guidance relative to their areas of expertise and as outlined above, Task Force members could assist and support the City's community engagement outreach efforts and meeting activities by 1) providing updates on the status of the Energy and Climate Change Action Plan development process activities and tasks to City commissions, boards, and/or organizations, in addition to community residents and stakeholders at-large and 2) speaking on behalf of those groups and communicating their interests in this process. In addition, as appropriate, Task Force members will be asked to attend work sessions and public hearings of relevant City commissions and the City Council to represent the Task Force's work, concluding upon City Council's consideration of the updated Energy and Climate Change Action Plan in September 2021.

Responsibilities of the Chair: The Task Force Chair will be responsible for serving as a meeting facilitator, spokesperson, and work with City staff to set Task Force meeting agendas and final letter(s) to the departments of General Services and Transportation and Environmental Services.

Staff Support: The Task Force will be facilitated by relevant staff from the departments of General Services and Transportation and Environmental Services. The Task Force's facilitation is estimated to be equivalent to approximately 25% of a City staff FTE and is reflected in FY2021 departmental work plans. As the Energy and Climate Change Action Plan development reflects issues and opportunities that are cross-departmental, representatives from relevant City departments will be solicited to provide additional City staff support. As appropriate, support by representatives from the Alexandria City Public Schools, Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority, Alexandria Economic Development Partnership, and Alexandria Renew Enterprises

will also be included.

Sunset: The Task Force will sunset upon completion of the Energy and Climate Change Action Plan update development process.

FISCAL IMPACT: There is no additional fiscal impact associated with the Task Force. The update of the Energy and Climate Change Action Plan is funded through the Capital Improvement Program using existing funding balances.

ATTACHMENT: Proposed Resolution

STAFF:

Laura Triggs, Deputy City Manager

Emily A. Baker, Deputy City Manager

Jeremy McPike, Director, General Services

Yon Lambert, Director, Transportation and Environmental Services

Bill Eger, Energy Manager, General Services

Bill Skrabak, Deputy Director, Transportation and Environmental Services

Ellen Eggerton, Sustainability Coordinator, Transportation and Environmental Services