

CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-18

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA INCREASING THE ENERGY INDEPENDENCE OF THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA BY DECARBONIZING CITY OPERATIONS BY 2030

- WHEREAS,** we, the duly elected representatives of the City and Borough of Sitka (Sitka Assembly), are concerned for the well-being of our citizens and future generations; and,
- WHEREAS,** global and local prices and supplies of fossil fuels including heating oil, diesel, and gasoline are in flux due to increasing geopolitical conflict and decreasing stores of these fuels; and,
- WHEREAS,** Sitka, Alaska has access to plentiful, locally generated energy in the form of hydropower provided by the consistent rain the local temperate rainforest climate produces, along with forward-thinking investments made by the City and Borough of Sitka in regards to our hydroelectric infrastructure; and,
- WHEREAS,** the 11th UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (“IPCC”) report from October 2018 states that we have only until 2030 to limit devastating global warming and avoid a climate catastrophe, and the latest IPCC report from February 2022 confirms we have a “brief and rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a livable and sustainable future for all”; and,
- WHEREAS,** global greenhouse gas emissions need to peak by 2025 (per the IPCC) if we are to achieve a goal of keeping global temperatures from rising above 2 degrees centigrade; and,
- WHEREAS,** the Sitka Assembly is concerned for the well-being of future generations and vulnerable populations that stand to be the most disproportionately impacted by the climate emergency, especially the Indigenous people of Alaska and their traditional ways of life which are particularly threatened due to their reliance on Alaska’s natural systems; and,
- WHEREAS,** the citizens of Sitka are reliant on our oceans and forests and the wildlife and resources contained within them, in our economies including fisheries and tourism and our way of life, including subsistence food gathering, and the oceans and forests hold their own inherent cultural and historical importance; and,
- WHEREAS,** the climate crisis poses an imminent, existential threat to all life on Earth that demands timely action at the scale and speed necessary to mitigate harm to all people, including the residents of the City and Borough of Sitka; and,

- WHEREAS,** in November 2020, the CBS declared a Climate Emergency through Resolution No. 2020-29A, which articulates the Sitka Assembly's recognition that a climate emergency threatens our city, region, state, nation, and calls for the re-establishment of Sitka's Climate Action Task force to "study and make recommendations to the Sitka Assembly on ways to plan for and mitigate the impacts of climate change on the City and Borough of Sitka's economy, infrastructure and future development, and methods the City and Borough of Sitka can employ to reduce the emission of greenhouse gasses;" and,
- WHEREAS,** the updated 2021 Municipal Greenhouse Gas Inventory identifies combined emissions from the City's municipal buildings (heating oil) and fleet (diesel and gasoline) contribute approximately 54% and 43% of total municipal emissions from the municipal operations of the City and Borough of Sitka, respectively, and we know that we cannot meet our municipal and broader community carbon reduction goals without tackling clean transportation and clean buildings as we move forward; and,
- WHEREAS,** the municipally-owned utility in Sitka provides customers plentiful clean hydropower energy and comparatively affordable electricity for powering the City's municipal operations, maintenance, and growth, along with all of its community-wide electricity needs; and,
- WHEREAS,** all the electricity that the City and the community as a whole purchase goes directly back into Sitka's local economy and supports maintaining affordable local electricity rates, instead of the funds leaving the community to support petrochemical corporations; and,
- WHEREAS,** the Sitka Assembly has voiced their desire to be a community that leads by example to make decisive, transformative, and sustainable changes in its municipal energy consumption during the work session with the CBS Climate Action Task Force held in May 2021, and this body has the power to significantly lower the City's greenhouse gas emissions and overall carbon impact; and,
- WHEREAS,** the City supports a legislative agenda that advances our community's energy independence and ability to decarbonize operations through maintenance and rehabilitation of our hydroelectric facilities and utility infrastructure; and,
- WHEREAS,** the City has repeatedly demonstrated successful efforts to plan for clean energy utilization in City assets, which represents a sound investment of the City's resources into long-term infrastructure that is in line with its energy independence and carbon reduction goals and which creates the opportunity for the rest of the community to transition to low or no emission heating and transportation options; and,

WHEREAS, electrification of land transportation for Sitka's tourists will provide options for businesses exposed to the impact of increasingly volatile fossil fuel prices, and increase income to our publicly-owned electric utility; and,

WHEREAS, assisting local businesses in switching to locally available clean power sources demonstrates leadership in stewardship of our land, which has been protected since time immemorial by the Tlingit people; and,

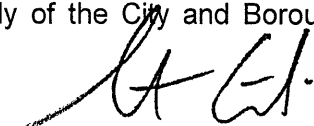
WHEREAS, the City desires to increase economic development opportunities in the community and recognizes the need for increased transmission line capacity out Halibut Point Road to provide for economic growth and increased electricity consumption from proposed and potential developments including: electrification of pilot ferries for the Alaska Marine Highway System, electrification of cruise ships while in port, electrification of visitor industry bus fleets, and to support the future development on the north end of the community.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA ASSEMBLY:

Section 1. That the City and Borough of Sitka intends to decarbonize city operations (facilities and transportation) by 2030 through the implementation of clean energy infrastructure for heating, lighting, power, and transportation, and exclude fossil fuel energy sources, except where exemptions are necessary due to reliability and resiliency of resources, technical, or cost infeasibility.

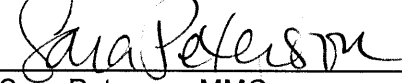
Section 2. The City recognizes the greatest opportunity to decarbonize rests with the broader community, which comprises the vast majority of the carbon emissions originating in Sitka, and City staff will look for opportunities to collaborate, incentivize, set policy, and engage with local businesses, institutions, and residential and commercial developments to encourage similar decarbonization efforts in the private sector.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED by the Assembly of the City and Borough of Sitka, Alaska on this 24th day of May, 2022.



Steven Eisenbeisz, Mayor

ATTEST:



Sara Peterson, MMC
Municipal Clerk

1st and final reading: 5/24/2022

Sponsors: Himschoot and Mosher