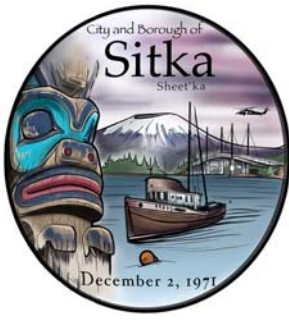


Sponsors: Himschoot and Mosher

POSSIBLE MOTION

I MOVE TO approve Resolution 2022-18 on first and final reading increasing the energy independence of the City and Borough of Sitka by decarbonizing City operations by 2030.



CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

A COAST GUARD CITY

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Eisenbeisz and Assembly Members

From: Assembly Members Himschoot and Mosher

Date: May 16, 2022

Subject: Resolution increasing the energy independence of the City and Borough of Sitka by decarbonizing City operations

Background

In November 2020, the City and Borough of Sitka passed a resolution declaring a climate change emergency and re-establishing the Climate Action Task Force. This body was tasked with making 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.” Since this resolution was passed, the Climate Action Task Force has been researching ways to help the community meet these goals, specifically by exploring electrification of transportation and heating infrastructure.

The first iteration of the Climate Action Task Force conducted a greenhouse gas emissions inventory in 2008, using baseline data from 2003. Using this data, the Sitka Assembly then passed a goal via Resolution 2009-37 to reduce greenhouse gas emission by 25% (from 2003 level) by 2020. The city exceeded this emissions reduction goal by implementing their interruptible power program, with reductions in emissions from municipal buildings and vehicles equating to 64% since 2003.

This resolution sets a broad goal for the city to further these emission reductions by decarbonizing municipal operations, including heating and transportation, by 2030. An updated greenhouse gas emissions inventory for the municipality was conducted by the Climate Action Task Force in 2021 and is attached to this memo. The Sitka Assembly also recognizes that the vast majority of emissions in Sitka are from the broader community. The municipality has proven itself a leader in adopting clean energy technology already, and will use this resolution to pursue federal funding sources that help implement transmission line capacity and energy efficiency and conservation measures that will assist with broader decarbonization efforts in the community.

The idea for this resolution was proposed to Climate Action Task Force members by the Sitka Electric Department to help them extend transmission line capacity out Halibut Point Road to provide for future electrification efforts on the north end of the community. The Climate Action Task Force unanimously supported forwarding this resolution to the Sitka Assembly at their meeting on May 3rd, 2022.

Analysis

This resolution will help the municipality apply for more funding to convert the municipal fleet where feasible, install associated electric vehicle charging infrastructure, as well as converting any remaining municipal facilities to electric heating. In addition, the transmission line that services Halibut Point Road is increasingly overburdened and will need to be extended, with the potential building of a new substation 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. This resolution will assist the Electric Department in their efforts to secure federal funding support for the extension and increasing the capacity of the transmission line out Halibut Point Road in order to provide the possibility for businesses and entities located in this area to decarbonize their operations.

There has been an influx of funding and programs at the federal level that support municipal and community action on climate change. As the Biden Administration releases funding guidance for electric vehicle charging infrastructure, grid modernization, and development of clean energy infrastructure, this resolution will demonstrate our community's commitment towards pursuing a clean energy future and support our intent to apply for federal funding to achieve this goal. This resolution also tasks the City Administrator and relevant staff to 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. The CBS can support these community-wide decarbonization efforts by ensuring that adequate transmission line capacity and charging infrastructure exists throughout town.

Fiscal Note

This resolution does not commit the city to expenditure of any funds for capital improvement projects, although it is likely some staff time will be involved in looking for funding sources. Future expenses may result from pursuing federal funding grants that require a match.

Recommendation

The assembly should support this decarbonization resolution and recommend the Climate Action Task Force develop a plan for achieving the goal of decarbonizing by 2030.

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,

45 **WHEREAS,** the climate crisis poses an imminent, existential threat to all life on Earth that
46 demands timely action at the scale and speed necessary to mitigate harm to all
47 people, including the residents of the City and Borough of Sitka; and,
48

49 **WHEREAS,** in November 2020, the CBS declared a Climate Emergency through Resolution
50 No. 2020-29A, which articulates the Sitka Assembly's recognition that a climate
51 emergency threatens our city, region, state, nation, and calls for the re-
52 establishment of Sitka's Climate Action Task force to "study and make
53 recommendations to the Sitka Assembly on ways to plan for and mitigate the
54 impacts of climate change on the City and Borough of Sitka's economy,
55 infrastructure and future development, and methods the City and Borough of Sitka
56 can employ to reduce the emission of greenhouse gasses;" and,
57

58 **WHEREAS,** the updated 2021 Municipal Greenhouse Gas Inventory identifies combined
59 emissions from the City's municipal buildings (heating oil) and fleet (diesel and
60 gasoline) contribute approximately 54% and 43% of total municipal emissions from
61 the municipal operations of the City and Borough of Sitka, respectively, and we
62 know that we cannot meet our municipal and broader community carbon reduction
63 goals without tackling clean transportation and clean buildings as we move
64 forward; and,
65

66 **WHEREAS,** the municipally-owned utility in Sitka provides customers plentiful clean
67 hydropower energy and comparatively affordable electricity for powering the City's
68 municipal operations, maintenance, and growth, along with all of its community-
69 wide electricity needs; and,
70

71 **WHEREAS,** all the electricity that the City and the community as a whole purchase goes directly
72 back into Sitka's local economy and supports maintaining affordable local
73 electricity rates, instead of the funds leaving the community to support
74 petrochemical corporations; and,
75

76 **WHEREAS,** the Sitka Assembly has voiced their desire to be a community that leads by
77 example to make decisive, transformative, and sustainable changes in its
78 municipal energy consumption during the work session with the CBS Climate
79 Action Task Force held in May 2021, and this body has the power to significantly
80 lower the City's greenhouse gas emissions and overall carbon impact; and,
81

82 **WHEREAS,** the City supports a legislative agenda that advances our community's energy
83 independence and ability to decarbonize operations through maintenance and
84 rehabilitation of our hydroelectric facilities and utility infrastructure; and,
85

86 **WHEREAS,** the City has repeatedly demonstrated successful efforts to plan for clean energy
87 utilization in City assets, which represents a sound investment of the City's
88 resources into long-term infrastructure that is in line with its energy independence
89 and carbon reduction goals and which creates the opportunity for the rest of the

90 community to transition to low or no emission heating and transportation options;
91 and,

92
93 **WHEREAS,** electrification of land transportation for Sitka’s tourists will provide options for
94 businesses exposed to the impact of increasingly volatile fossil fuel prices, and
95 increase income to our publicly-owned electric utility; and,

96
97 **WHEREAS,** assisting local businesses in switching to locally available clean power sources
98 demonstrates leadership in stewardship of our land, which has been protected
99 since time immemorial by the Tlingit people; and,

100
101 **WHEREAS,** the City desires to increase economic development opportunities in the community
102 and recognizes the need for increased transmission line capacity out Halibut Point
103 Road to provide for economic growth and increased electricity consumption from
104 proposed and potential developments including: electrification of pilot ferries for
105 the Alaska Marine Highway System, electrification of cruise ships while in port,
106 electrification of visitor industry bus fleets, and to support the future development
107 on the north end of the community.

108
109 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA**
110 **ASSEMBLY:**

111
112 Section 1. That the City and Borough of Sitka intends to decarbonize city operations (facilities and
113 transportation) by 2030 through the implementation of clean energy infrastructure for heating,
114 lighting, power, and transportation, and exclude fossil fuel energy sources, except where
115 exemptions are necessary due to reliability and resiliency of resources, technical, or cost
116 infeasibility.

117
118 Section 2. The City recognizes the greatest opportunity to decarbonize rests with the broader
119 community, which comprises the vast majority of the carbon emissions originating in Sitka, and
120 City staff will look for opportunities to collaborate, incentivize, set policy, and engage with local
121 businesses, institutions, and residential and commercial developments to encourage similar
122 decarbonization efforts in the private sector.

123
124 **PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED** by the Assembly of the City and Borough of Sitka,
125 Alaska on this 24th day of May, 2022.

126
127
128

Steven Eisenbeisz, Mayor

129 ATTEST:
130
131

Sara Peterson, MMC
132 Municipal Clerk

133
134
135 1st and final reading: 5/24/2022

136
137 Sponsors: Himschoot and Mosher