

Wednesday, November 3, 2021

## **GrassRoots Institute - Climate Crisis Workgroup (GRI-CCW) Saturday 10-30-21 10 am**

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Attending the meeting: Jim Schoonover, Carrie Durkee, Peter McNamee, Marcy Snyder, George Reinhardt, Garth Saalfield, and Lore' McLaren

- I. Carrie started the meeting by reporting progress expanding capacity of GRI as a venue for activist work in the community. The GRI Infrastructure workgroup is pilot testing a new software package called "Slack" that offers tools to facilitate the efforts of activist workgroups to communicate and share progress using the Internet.
- II. Peter reported that at the Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) meeting next Monday creating a Regional Energy Network (REN) was on the agenda. The purpose of the REN would be to facilitate subsidies for public and private investments in energy efficient infrastructure such as solar, electric heat pumps and EV chargers. Supervisors Gjerde & Haschak and City Council Member Albion-Smith are also recommending expanding MCOG to become a Climate Action Agency for the county. George and Jim Schoonover volunteered to participated in the MCOG meeting and support both initiatives.
- III. Peter also reported that "WillDan" is the name of the company doing the energy audit for the county. Supervisor Gjerde informed him that a draft audit report has been prepared in the form of a power point presentation and that he is working to get copies of the presentation for review by the CCW.
- IV. George has been asked to prepare a letter for adoption by the Mendocino Climate Change Action Advisory Committee (MCCAAC) to put the MCCAAC on record opposing the Skunk Train's purchase of additional land on the Fort Bragg headlands. George noted that the MCCAAC is operating without any staff support from the county and really needs staff to function efficiently and effectively.
- V. Marcy reported a lack of progress between the City of Fort Bragg (FB) and Sonoma Clean Power (SCP) in regard to funding and building additional Solar and Electric Vehicle charger capacity. There has been some communication between the city and SCP, but no concrete action. She also noted recent SCP citizen advisory

meeting were not held and that SCP staff have expressed support for the Net Energy Metering (NEM) changes that the Investor Owned Utilities (IOU) are proposing that would disadvantage many solar users.

- VI. Marcy also reported she's continuing to work with Lore' and others on developing opportunities through the local schools for students to get involved with climate action projects.
- VII. Jim Schoonover reported that a letter published in the Ukiah Daily Journal by Eileen Mitro re NEM was recognized and highlighted by the Solar Alliance. He thanked Eileen for her great work with the LWV, Supervisor McGurdy and local solar installers to gin up opposition to the IOU proposed changes to NEM. Jim continues to collect and pass on information to Supervisors about resolutions from cities and counties opposing the proposed NEM changes. Peter was tasked with asking Supervisor Gjerde to meet with the GRI to talk about sponsoring a resolution by the county to oppose the IOU proposed changes. Carrie was tasked with asking Supervisor Haschak to also meet with the GRI about a resolution re the IOU proposed changes.
- VIII. Jim also noted that one criticism of expanding and increasing solar subsidizes is that solar does not provide electricity at night. The energy industry is pushing to increase generation capacity at night because the relative cost for night time electricity is increasing while day time costs are decreasing due to solar. The solar industry says that expanding use of battery systems coupled with solar is the best solution and should be emphasized rather than decreasing subsidies for solar systems.
- IX. There was a general discussion of next steps to build public opposition to reducing solar subsidies. Lore's volunteered to work with Jim to prepare talking points to be used by activists interested in writing letters to the editor and for call in shows on local radio stations.