

## **Grassroots Institute (GRI) - Climate Crisis Workgroup (CCW) 8-23-21 Meeting Notes**

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The GRI-CCW met at the Casper Community Center on Monday August 23, 2021. Workgroup members present were: Jim Tarbell, Carrie Durkee, Marcy Snyder, Peter McNamee, Jim Schoonover, and George Reinhardt.

The purpose of the meeting was to assess prior climate action work and discuss possible work going forward. In particular, the workgroup's efforts resulted in the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors approving a resolution on 8-3-21 to commit \$2 million towards eliminating county government's carbon emissions.

Similarly, GRI-CCW has requested the City of Fort Bragg install solar/battery systems on municipal buildings, electric vehicle (EV) chargers and electrify the bus system. Despite repeated presentations and requests, the city council has not acted.

CCW's efforts have motivated several groups in the county to make similar requests to the cities of Willits and Ukiah. The CCW continues to collaborate with environmental groups to promote climate action. In particular, the CCW has consulted on several occasions with the Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee (MCCAAC) and intends to continue working with them on the implementation of the County's Carbon Free Mendocino Resolution.

- Carrie Durkee presented a chart, diagramming the growing response to the CCW's initial proposals for climate action. In particular -
  - Discussion with Board of Supervisors (BoS) and MCCAAC to establish permanent county climate action staff for planning and implementing climate mitigation and remediation.
  - A County energy audit is due in mid September with recommendations for projects. CCW has requested MCCAAC take four actions:

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- First, the MCCAAC (as the Bd's advisory body on climate) request the energy audit report be sent to the Committee for review.
  - Second, the CCW requests the MCCAAC share the audit with as many local environmental and community groups; with a simple request - send the MCCAAC their list of the top three projects identified in the audit that they feel the county should pursue first. Also ask them to identify one or more additional projects not identified in the audit they feel the county should pursue as a future project.
  - Third, the MCCAAC hold one public hearing to offer any group or person in the county an opportunity to make a three minute statement about their project choices.
  - Fourth, based on the written comments, the hearing and its own deliberations - make a set of recommendations to the BoS prioritizing the projects. And request, the Bd direct the CEO's office to provide a written report quarterly to the BoS and the MCCAAC on the progress of the Carbon Free Mendocino County Government projects approved by the board so that the MCCAAC can monitor and advise the Bd accordingly.
- The BoS and the MCCAAC are also exploring how to create a mechanism to monitor and capture Federal, State or other (ie. Sonoma Clean Power or the State Strategic Growth Council) funding to finance climate action. CCW already is advising Supervisor Gjerde on grant funding availability, this needs to be coordinated with the MCCAAC's efforts.
  - Solicit and coordinate with Sonoma County in re to expertise and best practices for mitigating climate change. Randy McDonald has been authorized by the MCCAAC to initiate outreach to Sonoma County's Climate Initiative.
  - University of California has initiated a Climate Stewardship initiative.

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- MCCAAC members have expressed a need for increased information sharing and mutual support among the various environmental organizations in the county. A proposal has been made to establish a “Coalition for Climate Action” to serve this purpose.
- GRI plans to advocate for inclusion by the LatinX, Native American and economically excluded communities to leverage good green living wage career jobs in Mendocino County.
- Jim Schoonover presented information concerning a proposal being considered by the California Public Utility Commission to raise the rates that PG&E can charge to distribute electricity on the grid generated from solar panels. If approved the new rates would negate the cost benefit of installing solar panels and retard efforts to promote clean energy. The Solar Alliance (a statewide coalition) is spearheading efforts to oppose the new rates. Jim agreed to contact Supervisors Gjerde and Williams about sponsoring a county resolution requesting the CPUC not approve the new rates.
- Peter McNamee expressed appreciation for the hard work of all the CCW members over the past six months and congratulations on the progress made by CCW to address vital climate action in our community. But he also noted that there are many challenges that fall outside the scope of the work of the CCW and requested that GRI hold a future session to examine many of these challenges to determine if similar workgroups could be initiated modeled in part on the lessons learned from the CCW initiative.
- Peter listed several challenges which might be address by forming additional workgroups and recruiting activists to begin work on them:
  - **Water/Drought**
  - **Co-ops**
  - **Mill Site**
  - **County General Plan Update**
  - **Sustainable Local Food - Mendo Village Garden Project**

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- **The Recall Election on September 14th**
  - **Jackson Demonstration State Forest**
  - **The Sheriff - Racism, RICO Charges, Audit & Accountability and 2022 Election**
  - **Alliance for Democracy - How do we build organization outside the county?**
  - **Racial & Gender Equity - How do we build a inclusionary equitable green economy?**
  - **Federal/State/Local Elections 2022**
  - **Reapportionment**
  - **Developing our resources - building a workable email database, funding, recruiting activists, skill development, etc.**
- Additionally, the CCW discussed how to respond to the request by Fort Bragg Council Member Lindy Peters to meet with the CCW. The CCW has made repeated efforts to meet with and discuss the GRI Climate Action proposal with council member Peters. Council member Peters agreed to participate in a GRI-CCW meeting in July but then failed to show up for the meeting. A second effort was made to meet with Mr. Peters but he did not respond. Finally after repeated presentations by CCW members to the City Council, Mr. Peters agreed to meet with the CCW on Tuesday August 24, 2021. Then Mr. Peters demanded the meeting on August 24 be limited just a few members of the CCW. CCW agreed to limiting the meeting to three people - Peter McNamee, Carrie Durkee and Jim Schoonover from CCW. (Subsequently, Mr. Peters again canceled the August 24, 2021 meeting at the last minute.)
- George Reinhardt volunteered to meet with Mr. Peters and to encourage him to sponsor action by the Fort Bragg City Council similar to the action already taken by the County BoS. CCW members encouraged George to remind Mr. Peters that over 650 signatures in support of city action on climate change were collected by CCW and more than 40 businesses and community organizations have endorsed GRI's climate action agenda.

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- George Reinhardt will report back to the CCW after his discussion with council member Peters. CCW members also indicated that it maybe time to reach out to other Fort Bragg members to see if a majority of the council is willing to support authorizing a climate action agenda for the city similar to the county's program.