

To: Oldenburg Town Council

FR: Claire Whalen, OSF, Chair Oldenburg Renewable Energy Commission (OREC)

RE: September, 2019 Report

September 9, 2019

The Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory Team is in the process of revising drafts of its report to your Council, and when completed, they will share the document with the rest of OREC's members at OREC's next meeting, September 25, 2019. We want to get their input for follow-up recommendations which will become part of that report to you and the residents of Oldenburg. By mid-October OREC would like to make a formal presentation to the Town Council rather than giving its results and recommendations at a regular monthly meeting. Or you may want OREC to announce its results in connection with your public presentation of the town's comprehensive plan. The Inventory team would be available at another time to field questions and offer further explanations. If you agree to a special meeting, would you like to set a date for this later in October or early November?

OREC has two new members who learned about our work at the Freudenfest booth. They are Brian Mason and his wife, Rachel Stark-Mason. They recently moved to Oldenburg, but work in Cincinnati and Indianapolis. See their short bios at the end of this report. Rachel has volunteered to take on the updating needs for OREC's webpage on the town's website relieving Don Lamping of that task. Don's work load has increased and he is no longer able to do the updating. I will connect Rachel with Jonathon Maple for this task.

There is not much to report about donations to the Street Light Upgrade project. The online Go-Fund-Me project really did not get off the ground. Donations for the month of August came to just \$45. There was some discussion at OREC's Aug. 20th meeting about other possible options for the LED upgrade, especially for "motion sensitive" bulbs. Michael Cambron did some research and emailed Denny Moeller on August 22nd with this new information and the current drawbacks to this option. There has been no follow-up as yet. Cambron encouraged OTC to review the input from that email.

Individual OREC members are realizing the importance of connecting with our state elected officials who will be voting on bills that affect Indiana residents regarding the future of energy use and cost of electricity in our state. In preparation for the next General Assembly in 2021, we want our state reps to know about the work of OREC and the town's desire to lessen the town's greenhouse gas emissions.

To that end we invited Senator Jean Leising and Rep. Cindy Ziemke to one of our meetings. Rep. Ziemke did attend our August meeting and entered into a spirited discussion with our members. We hope Senator Leising will come to a meeting soon. If not, several of us may meet with her privately. Michael Cambron and Claire Whalen did meet with Senator Leising at her office in Indianapolis near the end of the 2019 General Assembly. Both of them have been attending recent stakeholder meetings in Indianapolis to offer concerns about policy development that we hope will promote additional use of renewable energy resources. Cambron plans to attend a public hearing on September 9th in Carmel, IN by Indiana's Utility Regulatory Commission about Duke Energy's request to increase electricity rates by 19%. Two other hearings are scheduled in Terre Haute and New Albany for Duke's customer input.

A July 30 webinar from Advanced Energy Economy, "How these advanced energy bills became law," tracked the political action in 2019 of two US states, Colorado and Nevada, from the governor's offices and from legislative sessions to describe bills that became law to promote renewable energy initiatives and encourage diverse portfolios for public utilities. They also mentioned some special political effort in

Indiana and Texas that had promise of advancing renewables in those states. In both Colorado and Nevada political action had an impact on advancing electric vehicle use and infrastructure investment for charging stations. Colorado's Climate Action Plan focused on cost effective ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Indiana University's ERI webinar on August 14th offered lessons learned from the North Carolina flooding for both urban and rural areas. Most of that state's industrial hog farms and the public utility coal fired-plants took a hard hit in that flood. Manure lagoons and coal ash pits released great amounts of hazardous waste materials into cities and towns and compromised the health of NC's citizens. Both economic enterprises need to be moved out of flood plains and have protective linings used for these toxic materials. While such conditions are not widespread in our area and maybe in not most sections of Indiana, whatever vulnerabilities we may be exposed to in a changing climate should be considered.

Another webinar in August actually offered positive avenues for cities and towns to plan for low-carbon, resilient communities. This was offered through Security & Sustainability Forum. Presenters said a good way to start climate action planning was to conduct a greenhouse gas emissions study and create a vulnerability assessment. Two presenters co-authored a book on Climate Action Planning published by Island Press which might be valuable for OTC and OREC to use to guide our follow-up to the GHG emissions inventory. I suggest OTC purchase the book--\$35.

Since OREC has no town funds to pay for materials or projects we undertake, I am wondering how OREC goes about creating such a budget for OTC's approval. And what date does that need to be submitted for approval? OREC's Freudenfest booth financing was done by the members themselves, but I do not think OREC members should be expected to pay for future projects that benefit the town. They are already offering many hours of volunteer service.

Short bios of new OREC members

Brian Mason grew up in Zionsville, Indiana. He is a graduate of Denison University, where he studied economics and history. He also earned master's degrees from Bluffton University in education, Purdue University in sports management, and Ohio State University in kinesiology. Brian is in his third year as an assistant football coach at the University of Cincinnati. Prior to joining the University of Cincinnati, he worked for the football programs at Bluffton, Butler, Kent State, Purdue and Ohio State. He married his wife, Rachel, in 2018. They moved to Oldenburg to accommodate both of their jobs. In their spare time, the couple enjoys running, reading and traveling the world. They have visited 18 countries together.

Rachel Stark-Mason grew up in Columbus, Indiana. She is a graduate of Indiana University, where she studied journalism and psychology. Rachel is a writer and content strategist for the NCAA in Indianapolis. Prior to this role, she was a reporter whose byline appeared in a variety of local and national media outlets. Rachel and her husband, Brian, who works in Cincinnati, married in 2018 and relocated to Oldenburg to accommodate both of their jobs. In their spare time, the couple enjoys running, reading and traveling the world. They have visited 18 countries together.