



CITY COUNCIL Agenda Item #20-051

Date: February 12th, 2020

Consent ___ Discussion X

SUBJECT: Climate Emergency Resolution

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT: City Council member Lauren Hierl

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Consider and adopt the proposed resolution endorsing the declaration of a climate emergency and the mobilization effort to mitigate damage due to climate change.

RELATED COUNCIL GOAL/PRIOR ACTION: Thoughtfully planned built environment

EXPENDITURE REQUIRED: None

SOURCE OF FUNDS: N/A

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS: N/A

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: A group of Montpelier residents has submitted the attached resolution on the climate emergency for Council's consideration.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS: Climate Emergency Resolution

INTERESTED PARTIES: Council, residents, community members, outside agencies, rate payers, staff

CITY MANAGER'S APPROVAL:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. Hoffman".

RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE DECLARATION OF A CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND EMERGENCY MOBILIZATION EFFORT TO MITIGATE DAMAGE DUE TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND RESTORE A SAFE CLIMATE

WHEREAS in 2014 Montpelier City Council passed a NET ZERO GOAL resolving to use entirely renewable energy for all municipal government operations by 2030; and

WHEREAS Montpelier passed a NET ZERO GOAL resolving to use entirely renewable energy citywide for all municipal, residential, and commercial operations by 2050; and

WHEREAS, Vermont has already experienced long-term warming, extreme weather events, serious flooding; and

WHEREAS, economists have concluded that Vermont's families and businesses are likely to incur billions of dollars of annual economic costs if communities fail to drive reductions in greenhouse gas pollution. These economic impacts include increased energy costs, storm damage, reduced food production, increased flooding, and increased public health costs; and

WHEREAS, The City of Montpelier municipal government is responsible for the public health and safety of its residents including access to clean air, clean water, and a livable environment; and

WHEREAS, the entire community will be impacted by climate change. Communities facing socioeconomic and health inequities (such as youth, elders, communities of color, and low-income) will suffer disproportionately, requiring the City to invest in resilience that is proportionate and accountable to these communities; and

WHEREAS, the transition to 100% renewable energy will provide a range of benefits, including improved air quality, enhanced public health, increased national and energy security, local jobs, reduced reliance on finite resources, and will bring tangible benefits to low-income residents and others who have historically been disadvantaged by our energy system; and

WHEREAS, the City of Montpelier has shown its commitment declaring ambitious climate action goals commensurate with its obligations as a signatory of the Compact of Mayors, and has been nationally recognized as a Finalist in the Georgetown University Energy Prize and named by the White House as a Climate Action Champion; and

WHEREAS, the massive scope and scale of action necessary to stabilize the climate and biosphere will require unprecedented levels of public awareness, engagement, and deliberation to develop and implement effective, just, and equitable policies to address the climate emergency;

WHEREAS, climate justice requires that frontline and marginalized communities, which have historically borne the brunt of the extractive fossil-fuel economy, participate

actively in the planning and implementation of this mobilization effort and that they benefit first from the transition to a climate-safe economy;

WHEREAS, Montpelier can act as a local and global leader through initiating an emergency climate mobilization to convert to an ecologically, socially, and economically regenerative local economy at emergency speed, as well as advocating for regional and national efforts necessary to reverse global warming and the ecological crisis;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MONTPELIER declares that a climate and ecological emergency threatens our city, region, state, nation, civilization, humanity, and the natural world;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, (re Section 3 of NET ZERO RESOLUTION) The CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MONTPELIER will create and adopt a PLAN by the end of 2020 that will lay out how the city will achieve the 2030 NET ZERO GOALS. The plan will engage every department and all city staff. The plan will require scheduled annual demonstration by all parties of effective work toward the goal. To this end, City Council will define markers of success setting measurable and actionable goals.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, during 2021, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MONTPELIER will create a similar plan for the citywide NET ZERO GOAL for 2050. This plan will include community resiliency planning.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, City Council will investigate opportunities for radical greenhouse gas reductions, especially in transportation and heating sectors, and greenhouse gas drawdown opportunities through possibilities such as tree planting, soil carbon sequestration, pyrolysis, reduction of food waste, and climate-adaptive land use planning.