

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS  
COMMISSION ON ENERGY USE AND CLIMATE CHANGE  
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE  
MAYOR**

**Commissioners**

Ramón Bueno  
Liz Galloway  
Eliza Johnston  
Aladdine Joroff – Approved  
Julie Wood  
Larry Yu – Chair  
Christine Blais – *Ex-officio*

**Meeting Minutes  
November 10, 2021 7:00 P.M.  
Virtual Meeting**

Commissioners Attending: Ramón Bueno, Liz Galloway, Julie Wood, Larry Yu, Christine Blais  
Commissioners Not Attending: Eliza Johnston, Aladdine Joroff  
Members of the Public Attending: Mary Mangan, Grace Hall, Julie Katz, Tim Dineen,  
John Despujols  
Meeting started at 7:00 P.M.

Review and adopt the minutes from the October 13, 2021 meeting:

- These will be taken up next month

Announcements:

- The City Council approved the appointment of Aladdine Joroff to the Commission on October 14, 2021.

City updates:

- Accepting applications for the open position on the CEUCC through November 15, 2021 (email [ose@somervillema.gov](mailto:ose@somervillema.gov)). We have not received many applicants. Christine offered to reach out to past applicants.

Discussion: Moving meetings from second Wednesday of the month to the second Tuesday of the month beginning January 2022.

- **7:12 P.M. Ramón motioned to vote to move meetings in 2022 to the second Tuesday of every month.** Larry determined we do not need to vote so therefore there was no second and no formal vote. Larry, Ramón, Eliza, Liz, and Christine agreed unanimously.

Discussion: Transitions in the City of Somerville.

- History of approaches and projects.

The Commission has met with the Mayor and was invited to speak before the City Council (then Board of Aldermen) around the launch of Somerville Climate Forward action plan. During the creation of Somerville Climate Forward, the Commission participated in working groups to

discuss and make recommendations on buildings/energy, mobility, municipal carbon pricing, tree canopy, etc. During the pandemic, the Commission held working groups on the impacts on the community and climate action areas. According to the establishing ordinance, the CEUCC powers and duties are pretty broad, designed even before OSE was created. We should have a discussion about the history and mission of the CEUCC and revisit that text in light of where we are. The establishing ordinance reads:

"It will be the function of the commission to:

- Act as a centralizing force in the city and the community which will address issues of climate change and sustainable environmental policy, providing information, referral, guidance, advocacy and coordination, and offering and providing technical assistance to other public agencies, organizations and institutions engaged in activities intended to reduce the city's greenhouse gas emissions and contribute to local, regional, national, and international efforts to protect the earth's climate.
  - Take such action as the commission deems appropriate to assist the city in taking all necessary steps to effectively control the release of greenhouse gases within the city and ensure the energy efficiency of municipal operations to protect the climate.
  - Take such action as the commission deems appropriate to assist the city in implementing cost-effective measures such as energy conservation, the adoption of "clean energy" standards and "smart growth" policies, as a component of urban development plans.
  - Take such action as the commission deems appropriate to assist the city in advocating and promoting transportation strategies that give people incentives to reduce car use."
- Forwarding City and Commission goals.

With an incoming Office of Sustainability and Environment director, and a new Mayor and several new councilors, it is a good idea to seek a meeting with new leadership. Christine offered to arrange for a meeting with the new Mayor in the new year. Members suggested the CEUCC members should pair up to meet with the councilors, especially those entering their inaugural term. For the meetings, members should assess how CEUCC topics were discussed (climate, energy) during the election campaigns, how the new Council sees them, and what, if any, proposals are coming from the councilors, perhaps through a survey. A member of the public noted that with the changeover it makes sense to engage with the Mayor-elect and councilors, but to first decide where the CEUCC thinks we should go, what we can/should do, and present it. Grace also suggested that once we have met with new councilors, we summarize our findings and circulate it with the whole Council.

With the forthcoming effort to revamp Somerville Climate Forward (SCF), Larry spoke to the new Mayor. She is aware of the effort to revamp the Somerville Climate Forward action plan. Christine noted SCF has actionable goals and there is room for revisiting them and plenty of potential actions. The process is in development.

Members of the public who attended the meeting were interested in the Commission having a voice and role in larger development projects around the city. They noted the Green Line Extension and the Star Market property in Winter Hill as two examples.

Regarding the American Rescue Plan Act and the newly legislated infrastructure funding, the Commission is interested in how the City views the Commission's role in funding. Christine will share information at the next meeting. The Commission recommended we should seek to keep up with and draw on new information, research on/from cities plans and experiences on climate action, equitable resilience, etc., and tap into local academic resources. A member also expressed interest in implications from the completion of the COP26 global summit.

Any and all business before the Commission.

- Julie recalled how the Commission has engaged with the regional plan for early opportunities with sea level rise planning. Julie volunteered to update us at the next meeting. Ramón welcomes such an update from Julie, especially with regard to actions/inactions in a city that have significant impacts on or from adjoining municipalities. Christine noted that Somerville was a host city for the [Lower Mystic Vulnerability Assessment](#) and she will ask about scheduling a briefing for a future CEUCC meeting.
- The next meeting is Wednesday, December 8 at 7:00 P.M.

Meeting adjourned at 8:16 P.M.