Holly Licht

From: Ben Heili <bheili87@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, November 22, 2019 11:34 AM
To: Holly Licht; Jean Ligocki; Ben Heili; Tim Swadley; cneeley@wppienergy.org
Subject: Item for CACP - WPPI outreach to other communities for cooperation on climate

Holly, Jean, could we add an item to the December CACP meeting for discussion and possible action about WPPI climate outreach? We have discussed such an effort at previous meetings. As a starting point, I'm including a draft of a letter we could send to partner communities.

Thanks,
Ben

Hello,

my name is Ben Heili. I serve on the city council in Stoughton, WI. Like many communities, Stoughton is working to grapple with the realities of human-caused climate change. The sudden 2018 flooding in Dane County, widespread flooding in the upper Midwest this year, and intensifying worldwide trends toward extreme weather have made this an issue of extreme importance and urgency for our communities.

As our council works to set targets for renewable energy and energy efficiency, we feel it is important to reach out to other member communities in the WPPI energy co-op and work together to have a greater effect on the co-op's energy decisions. The co-op will need to make energy purchases from new sources in upcoming years as contracts expire and energy needs change. If enough communities work together, we can have a great effect on making sure that energy comes from renewable sources. Members of our council worry that individual communities acting alone on energy targets will have the effect of simply pushing WPPI's fossil fuel energy elsewhere. We all face the same problems in upcoming years, and I think this coordination will be a good way to show that many communities in the co-op are united in confronting this massive problem.

If your community is willing to cooperate, together we can make a strong statement of purpose and make the targets we set more likely to happen. A reliable commitment from a larger bloc of communities may also allow WPPI to make renewable energy purchases more economically. What we propose is:

- Each community declares the climate crisis to be an emergency that should inform all major decisions by the local government and public electric utility.
- Each community sets aggressive renewable energy use targets. We don't want to tell you what level is right for your community, but the hope is for a commitment that sends a strong signal to WPPI and is more than simply a good-luck handshake to the next generation.
- Each community pledges to revisit and revise these targets if a major federal or state climate/energy policy passes.
- Each community lays out a plan for improving energy efficiency of public and private buildings.

Many cities are branding similar packages as a local Green New Deal, but that is not a requirement. Despite much misinformation from the fossil fuel industry and associated media, such policies have proven broadly popular. Most voters now recognize the climate crisis as a threat that worsens with each passing year of inaction. According to a Yale/George Mason poll from this year, 64% of Americans consider climate change to be an important issue. An NPR/PBS/Marist poll from July 2019 found that 63% of Americans support a national "Green New Deal to address climate change by investing government money in green jobs and energy efficient infrastructure." With good messaging

and a sober yet hopeful outlook on the problem, our communities can show leadership in enacting real change and set examples for other communities to follow.

Many of us feel helpless as individuals in the face of such an all-encompassing issue. Our hope is that this initiative will help break down this helplessness and serve as an example of the massive cooperation that will be needed worldwide as we tackle this issue in the coming decades.

Please reach out if you have questions or comments.

Thank you,
Ben Heili
Alder, 4th district
Stoughton WI

Co-signed: