Resolution on climate emergency

Whereas emissions from fossil fuels and other human activity are demonstrably causing a catastrophic warming of Earth's atmosphere; and

Whereas the effects of such warming will continue to cause with increasing frequency unpredictable extreme weather, droughts, famines, floods, and wildfires, which in turn cause increasing instability in human society worldwide; and

Whereas the United Nations climate diversity report of May 2019 concluded that over one million plant and animal species are at risk of extinction due to climate change and human life relies on fragile ecosystems in ways science has yet to fully understand; and

Whereas the rain event of August 2018 caused over $150 million in flood damage in Dane county, and a warmer climate makes similar events far more likely; and

Whereas July of 2019 was the warmest month globally in recorded history; and

Whereas the only potential solutions to this crisis demand disruptive structural changes to the United States economy, and the people made vulnerable by the crisis and these economic changes deserve a just transition; and

Whereas the Stoughton city government now faces crucial decisions about how our community should grow in the future, and has a responsibility to represent our youngest residents' right to a livable world; and

Whereas the interests of fossil fuel companies and their investors have spread misinformation about this crisis for decades and successfully captured our national regulatory bodies and many lawmakers, and the city's obligation to our community's well-being compels us to counteract those forces; and

Whereas the city's public utility and its energy purchasing co-op arrangement allows it greater leeway in affecting local energy policy than a community with investor-owned utilities; and

LET IT BE RESOLVED that the City of Stoughton considers the climate crisis to be an emergency of both an immediate and long-term nature, which should inform every major decision made by its council and staff,

that the City of Stoughton declares September 20, 2019 a day of climate action,

that the City of Stoughton acknowledges the solutions to this crisis must necessarily emphasize support for the most vulnerable in our city and society, and

that the City of Stoughton endorses the Green New Deal as the only national plan proposed so far that can lead to a swift and just transition of our economy.