



MARQUETTE COUNTY  
CLIMATE ADAPTATION  
TASK FORCE

CATF Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, February 18, 2021  
10:00 a.m. on Zoom

**Members in Attendance:** Karen Alholm, Zosia Eppensteiner, Martha Gerig, Bob Kulischeck, Emily Leach, Brad Neumann, Greg Seppanen, Ryan Stock, Jes Thompson, Jenn Hill

**Meeting commenced at 10:06 a.m.**

- 1. Approval of Agenda and Minutes from previous meeting**
  - Greg moved to approve, Bob and Ryan seconded
- 2. Steering Committee**
  - Brad Neumann will join the Steering Committee
  - Ryan Stock volunteered for future years.
- 3. Membership Committee Appointment**
  - Jes Thompson will join the Membership Committee
- 4. Guest: Jenn Hill**
  - She serves on and represents the Citizen Utility Board of Michigan (CUB) (NOT the City!)
  - CUB has a contract to promote electrification of Michigan
  - Final recommendations from the UP Energy Task Force will be coming out in April. There will be a lot of activity coming out in the next 12 months related to that effort.
- 5. Election of Officers**
  - Bob moved to elect the officers as stated with the members of the steering committee and membership committee
  - Ryan seconded
  - Motion passes unanimous thumbs up.
- 6. CATF Bylaws Committee Appointment**
  - By-laws would help to keep our committee organized and give guidance for decision-making and group processes
  - Members for this committee includes: Bob, Brad, Zosia, Tyler, and Emily
  - Brad is eager to help and find examples from other committees like this.
  - Zosia echoed and thinks that some simple bylaws would be useful.
  - Bob is willing to provide some institutional memory, since he was one of the founding members.
  - **Motion:** Ryan moved to approve. Brad seconded. All in favor.
  - **Action item:** Committee will meet and develop by-laws over the next year.
  - **For Consideration:** CATF membership and representation
- 7. 2020 Year-End Report**

- Tyler put together last year's report (attached) which documents all of the things that we've accomplished over the past 12 months.
- Greg noted that it was well-written and comprehensive.
- **Motion:** Greg moved to accept. Ryan seconded. All in favor.
- **Action item:** Tyler will post the 2020 report on the CATF website for all to access.

## 8. 2021 Work Plan

- The work plan is divided into sections, each building off of existing projects and proposing additional work.
  - Jenn Hill asked: Has CATF endorsed the Governor's Climate Action Plan and/or the Paris Climate Agreement. Businesses have been doing this, including Cleveland Cliffs Mining Company (see: <https://www.uppermichiganssource.com/2021/01/28/cleveland-cliffs-announces-commitment-to-reduce-greenhouse-gas-emissions-by-25-percent-by-2030/>). Letters like this show support for the project and urgency of multiple efforts. The Governor's initiative is the Michigan Healthy Climate Plan (see: [https://www.michigan.gov/whitmer/0,9309,7-387-90499\\_90640-540289--,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/whitmer/0,9309,7-387-90499_90640-540289--,00.html))
  - **Motion:** Jes moved that we support these two initiatives in writing on our website and a formal statement. Ryan seconded. All in favor.
  - **Action item:** Add supporting these initiatives to our 2021 Work Plan.
  - **Action item:** Tyler will post the 2021 Work Plan on the CATF website for all to access.
- Work plan also includes seeking the development of a full-time position for climate adaptation. As the federal and state governments move toward climate action, there may be additional funding opportunities to support a paid position for regional adaptation and mitigation. Greg said that we may now be well positioned to capitalize on this shift, and go further with regional climate adaptation work. Karen asked if this person would be responsible for writing grants. Greg noted that grants as well as network and relationship building will be critical for this position. Bob suggested that we use the CATF FAQs to help build the job description.
- Jenn noted that the recommendations are coming next month from the UP Energy Task Force and a lot of those are going to be related to climate change. There will likely be funding to follow.
- **Action item:** Add a bullet point to the Work Plan related to implementing the UP Energy Task Force recommendations locally, as appropriate.
- **Consider:** the upcoming local strategic planning efforts among many municipalities and the County, and we may want to be included in those efforts in some way.
- **Motion:** Greg moves to approve to the work plan, Jes seconded. All in favor.

## 9. Letter from Citizens for a Safe & Clean Lake Superior

- Granot Loma Vertical Launch Site
  - Emily made some calls this week to prepare for our discussion. Jerry shared insights, stating that this request for a letter may be outside the scope of our work. Jerry proposes that it is not appropriate for CATF to have a statement as a neutral party.

- Bob suggests that this is not directly related to climate adaptation, or seen in our work plan or FAQs – we are not an advocacy group. Bob would prefer that CATF stay out of this. Karen agreed. Karen was feeling conflicted as a county board member, which has gone on record supporting this for economic reasons, and that their position may change once the environmental studies are completed.
- There is currently a feasibility study being conducted, and we lack information to even take an actual position on this.
- Greg agrees that this falls outside the purview of organization.
- Greg has kept up with the progress of the MLI planning since the beginning, and he thinks it seems less likely as time goes by for the project to come to fruition. Karen agreed, there is very little information to date. Marquette County included a set of questions and materials about the proposed project on the website:  
[https://www.co.marquette.mi.us/health\\_and\\_environment/michigan\\_launch\\_initiative.php#.YC6M1zKSnD4](https://www.co.marquette.mi.us/health_and_environment/michigan_launch_initiative.php#.YC6M1zKSnD4)
- **Action item:** Emily will share Jerry's letter with CATF
- **Motion:** Karen moves to write a response to Mr. Ferraro, Greg seconded. All in favor.
- **Action item:** Respond to Mr. Ferraro, with a kind thank you, and gentle decline to support since we (1) lack adequate information and (2) see this as outside the purview of our organization's mission.

#### 10. Good of the Order

- **Bob and Greg** thanked Emily and others for their work! Bob noted that COVID numbers are low and NMU did a great job!
- **Jes:** Northern Climate Network has a new website (<https://nmu.edu/northernclimatenetwork/home>), youtube channel and a great line-up for March's webinar series.
- **Martha:** Michigan Sea Grant & MSU Extension will host a virtual event on March 16 on Lake Effect Snow Prediction & Modeling. The presenters work with NASA and NWS to do snow forecasting and its relation to climate change. Following presentations will be on PFAS contamination. Martha said there will be four public presentations coming this spring – on Zoom and FB live – recorded and close-captioned afterward.
- **Ryan:** NMU pledge to commit to carbon neutrality by 2050. Ryan gathered 1000+ signatures from individuals and support from 25+ organizations and institutions (including CATF). After a meeting with President Erickson, Ryan feels confident that the University's commitment will come in the form of a Carbon Neutrality Task Force. Ryan has a proposed plan with 23 projects! There needs to be a concrete plan with a timeline to get the institution there. There will be progress in the next few weeks after the Board of Trustees and the University's leadership approve commitment. Karen asked why the University hadn't explored it earlier. From a financial standpoint, this commitment makes sense now. Jenn asked about MBLP, since NMU is the largest customer. Jenn also noted that the City will be considering all of these issues as they begin their strategic planning, and collaboration will be key. The City is on the hook for \$70 million dollars with the MBLP, and people are going to have to be talking to each other since we're all in this boat together. Finances and politics will be big pieces of this commitment.

- **Jenn:** EV charging centers! Decarbonization work will come with electric vehicles. She explained the details of these efforts and timing for those. There are also funds available for putting these efforts into action. Including switching out electric heat in the City, which is 20% dependent on electric heat.
- **Brad:** Shared three things in the chat – (1) MSU Resiliency Planning Webinar Series. <https://events.anr.msu.edu/event.cfm?eventID=5C6329CE75D1BEBCE3029BE8098C93D3053D69C60B609E19FA712EB619B423DD> and (2) Also working with Negaunee and Marquette Township on implementation of a couple of small climate adaptation projects following the MACHAP. (3) Third is ongoing conversation with EGLE about adding climate adaptation to the Catalyst Communities curriculum and using a similar visualization process that we used here with those participating communities.
- **Zosia:** no new updates on the Clean Energy Fund, the energy committee will meet in March, and will share an update in May. Zosia is enjoying her new role and is keeping the staff taken care of while managing the ongoing work of the Foundation. The regular grant cycle opens March 1 and county-wide scholarship are available for students (they have close to \$100,000 available for students in Marquette County).
- **Emily:** The Marquette County Master Plan is going to be ready for public review in the next month or two. Thank you to the CATF subcommittee to help with those sections.

Adjournment 11:32 a.m.

**Next Meeting: May 20, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.**