BERKELEY ROTARY CLUB CLIMATE ACTION COMMITTEE: RCAC

MINUTES

November 19, 2020 5:30 PM ZOOM MEETING

Present: Ignacio Franco, Chris Ahoy, Ed Church, John Pardee, Tina Etcheverry, Anne Pardee, Steve Beckendorf and late arrival Mac Lingo.

Meeting called to order at 5:33 PM by Chairman, Ignacio Franco

**\*= Action items**

1. **Discussion of email /bulletin to be sent to all District 5160 Clubs by District Governor Mark Roberts**
2. **\***Chris to do a 3rd follow up with Mark
3. **\***John as the***Environmental Sustainability Officer for District 5160,*** said he would draft a message (under Mark’s auspices) to send to all the Club Presidents to invite them to form a Study Committee about wild fires as a way of getting them engaged in discussing climate change. John mentioned an interesting talk from a Berkeley professor of wildfire science on managing CA forests with fire and other techniques.  He feels it is good information for when we are talking to other clubs about this issue, which also impacts the ability of forests to absorb CO2.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MhQA7RRkTiA&feature=emb_title&ab_channel=UCBerkeley%3ALighttheWay>

1. Chris suggested we might also invite all 72 presidents to an RCAC meeting.
2. Ed cautioned that getting too much into forest management might divert their attention away from climate change.
3. Tina mentioned the Idaho group’s focused on food safety as a sort of “soft” or back door way to get attention focused on climate change.
4. In an effort to maintain awareness and engagement, Anne suggested having meeting notes or a newsletter of each club’s activities related to climate change sent to each President after the meeting to keep the line of communication open.
5. Anne mentioned attending the last BARSHEEP meeting and hearing a club president talk about recycling yard signs, an indication that although the other clubs might not label their projects as Climate Action, their efforts are in the right direction.
6. **Tina presented possibility of Club Maxi Grants**
7. Board member, John Denvir, has brought to the attention of the Board that there is about $200,000 in undesignated Endowment Funds. He feels it is important to spend at least ½ of that in needed, impactful ways during this time of economic hardship.
8. Tina is proposing that the various committees (Peace, Supportive Housing, Climate Action, Social Justice Interest group, etc.) be encouraged to apply for a 2 year grant of $50,000/year to establish a new venture or a Maxi Grant. The proposals would be competitively based on 4 qualifications: to attract younger members, to help the “branding” or visibilty of Rotary, to partner with outside agencies, and to encourage outside funding. An underlying requirement would be proven potential for success and sustainability.
9. Proposals should be on the table by February, 2021
10. **Discussion of potential Climate Action Projects under consideration**:
11. **Electric Charging Stations for the City of Berkeley** (with Rotary wheel on each)

There is potential partnership here with companies with large funding capabilities – Google, Uber, electric car manufacturers, etc.

Ed stressed if we were to do this that we need to consider having them available at multi-family dwellings, BART, the University. **\***He will contact Tim Lipman, Co-Director of the UC Transportation Sustainability Research Center to find out how best to target deployment of potential EV charger stations.

**\***Tina is to check with the City on their Climate Action Plan, the Ecology Center and the University as to current stations and viability. John mentioned after the ballot measure HH was defeated, which would have increased taxes, that there may be increased community support for this part of the Measure.

1. **Pollinator Gardens** in partnership with Transition Berkeley

John sponsored the grant request for $3,900 for Bee-Friendly Berkeley; a local Berkeley community-project consisting of the creation of four pollinator gardens in Berkeley, including two at Berkeley elementary schools, with attendant educational materials, activities, and interpretative signage. It addresses the problem of loss of habitat for pollinator species by creating new habitats specifically designed to attract those species in our urban environment and could be expanded to a much larger effort.

1. **Urban Tree planting** in partnership with the BARSHEEP Clubs.

Ed proposed this idea focused on increasing the health and viability of low- income neighborhoods. Planting trees in urban environments has a remarkable effect on lowering our carbon emissions. [**https://grist.org/justice/tree-equity-american-forests-bridging-the-canopy-gap-counting-mapping-trees/**](https://grist.org/justice/tree-equity-american-forests-bridging-the-canopy-gap-counting-mapping-trees/)

1. Ignacio suggested we might consider more than one of these projects – or possibly in combination with proposals from other committees.
2. **Freon project update**:

No current plans for another Meet-Up. 3 cylinders were sent to Tradewater last week. They will send packaging for the remaining ones. 5 cylinders are being stored in Josh Oliver’s warehouse. Ed will meet with him regarding another storage area. No more sellers have been identified. Ed suggests using BARSHEEP clubs to identify sellers. He will also check with Eric Holland for possible sellers as he asks him to join Rotary.

1. **Letter to Berkeleyside**:

Lewis Ames drafted a well thought-out letter to be sent to Berkeleyside & Oaklandside under Ignacio’s and Anne’s signature. **\***Anne to review and edit for emphasis.

1. **Book Club – Project Drawdown**

**\***Anne , through email and eRev, to contact the members and encourage them to invited others who might be interested in forming a Book Group to read & discuss DRAWDOWN, by Paul Hawken, a comprehensive plan to reverse global warming. Suggestion was made of meeting weekly, 3 to 4 times over the month of December.

1. **Climate Minute**

**\***Ignacio to send a link to Chris. Committee decided that Climate Minute okay to be controversial, just not political.

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, December 3, 2020. 5:30. ZOOM invitation and Agenda to be sent by Chairman Ignacio Franco.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Pardee

Berkeley Rotary Climate Action Committee