

**TOWN OF AMHERST  
DRAFT Committee Charge**

**Name:** Energy and Climate Resilience Committee

**Type:** Standing

**Authority:** Amherst Home Rule Charter Section 2.6€

**Appointing Authority:** Town Council and Town Manager with Town Council Confirmation

**Number of Voting Members:** Nine (9)

**Term of Appointment:** Three (3) years; first terms pursuant to Charter 9.12(d)

**Special Municipal Employee:** Yes

**Staff Support:** Town Manager or designee

**Purpose:**

The Energy and Climate Resilience Committee shall guide the Town in reaching climate action goals established by the Town Council.

**Authority:**

The Energy and Climate Resilience Committee (hereafter “the Committee”) is charged as follows:

- 1) Recommend to the Town Council within 90 days of appointment:
  - a) Climate action goals for adoption that at a minimum specify:
    - i) Date certain by which Amherst shall achieve carbon neutrality, thereby eliminating all net greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Amherst that originate from electricity, heating, Amherst-based and Amherst serving transportation, and other energy-consuming sectors. This effort shall include residential, commercial, institutional, and municipal stakeholders;
    - ii) Date(s) certain by which Amherst residential, commercial, institutional, and municipal electricity shall be sourced from 100% renewable energy;
    - iii) Target annual GHG emissions reductions and a baseline year to which reductions shall be compared.
- 2) Plan and prioritize cross-sector efforts to reduce Amherst’s GHG emissions and build climate resilience.
- 3) In support of climate action goals, recommend to the Town Council and Town Manager:
  - a) Funding needed from the Town in the FY2020 budget to enable the work of the Committee.
  - b) Actions to implement climate action and resilience goals that include programs and policies that reduce emissions in residential, commercial, institutional, and

municipal sectors of Amherst, and build climate resilience. Programs and policies may include, but are not limited to:

- i) Energy efficiency and conservation, including the adoption of a zero energy stretch code;
  - ii) Electrification of the building, transportation, and other energy sectors;
  - iii) Local renewable energy development;
  - iv) Battery storage development;
  - v) Microgrid development;
  - vi) Green Community Choice Aggregation;
  - vii) Adoption of formal climate mitigation and resilience plans;
  - viii) Green infrastructure projects;
  - ix) Sustainable agriculture and forestry.
- 4) In the conduct of its work, the Committee may propose to the Town Council and Town Manager:
- a) The creation of task forces to develop and propose specific policies and programs that advance emissions reduction or climate resilience initiatives;
  - b) Strategic options and incentives that advance the above policies and programs, based upon overcoming barriers to implementation of climate action goals;
  - c) Actions to protect environmental justice communities from disproportionate effects of climate change;
  - d) Measures that assist in tracking and reporting Amherst's progress towards fulfilling emissions reduction goals;
  - e) Funding opportunities the Town should consider.
- 5) Furthermore, in the conduct of its work, the Committee shall:
- a) Work with relevant multiple-member bodies to help ensure that the Town's Master Plan [Charter Section 9.8(c)] integrates and codifies the benchmarks and progress in all sectors towards carbon neutrality;
  - b) Coordinate with other multiple-member bodies, Town departments, businesses and residents, regional organizations, and the University and colleges on programs and policies associated with climate and sustainability;
  - c) Engage the public and relevant stakeholders in education and planning around climate mitigation and resilience, with attention to inclusion of underrepresented groups and environmental justice communities.
  - d) Assist in educating Town staff on climate action goals and strategies.

### **Membership:**

The Energy and Climate Resilience Committee shall be composed of nine (9) voting members: two (2) of whom shall be Town Councilors and seven (7) of whom shall be residents with experience in one or more of the following areas: zero energy building, energy efficient retrofits, climate change mitigation/advocacy/research, clean energy practice/policy/infrastructure, green infrastructure for climate adaptation, and/or sustainable transportation. One (1) additional non-voting member shall be Town staff appointed by the Town Manager. The Town Manager

appoints resident members subject to Town Council confirmation. Members shall elect a Chair and Vice-Chair who shall be a resident member and who shall serve for a term of three years.

**Reports:**

Within 90 days of appointment the Committee shall submit to the Town Council the climate action goals established in 1a(i-iii), and shall submit to the Town Manager the funding request established in 4a. The Town Council shall act by voting to adopt the goals with or without amendments within 90 days of receipt.

The Committee shall make an annual report to the Town Council detailing annual emissions reductions, progress towards climate action goals, measures taken to achieve climate action goals, and funding requested from the next FY budget to enable the work of the Energy and Climate Resilience Committee.

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