

Resolution Supporting the Goal of 100% Clean Energy by 2050 for the Town of Hillsborough, and the Fostering of a Resilient and Sustainable Community

Whereas, climate change is real, is affecting our community now, and the choices we make today will affect future generations;

Whereas, climate change is human-caused, primarily due to emissions from burning coal, oil, and natural gas, is already affecting and will continue to affect North Carolina's temperatures, precipitation, and sea level with harmful consequences;

Whereas, 15 of the 16 hottest years on record have occurred since the year 2000, and the 3 hottest years on record were 2014, 2015, and 2016;

Whereas, the ongoing increase in global temperature, if not stopped, will continue having major adverse impacts on both natural and human-made environments including the effects of more and frequent and intense extreme weather events;

Whereas, the harmful consequences are already being felt locally and across the state, for example, in wetter, more destructive storms; longer, deeper droughts, and heavy rains that threaten our local food system and economy; increased suffering from seasonal allergies and asthma; increased threat and instances of tick-borne and other diseases;

Whereas, these consequences will be most severe for low-income neighborhoods and communities; low-income communities and communities of color in North Carolina and the United States are inordinately exposed to pollution, which causes serious health problems such as cancer and asthma, from fossil fuels, including the dirtiest coal-fired power plants, which produce coal ash, are disproportionately located in communities of color; and the town of Hillsborough contributes to that pollution by dependency on coal-fired energy;

Whereas all scientific bodies in the U.S. and the world have concluded, based on the evidence, that human activities are the dominant cause of climate change. These scientific bodies include the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, U.S. National Academy of Science, American Meteorological Society, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Department of Defense, and many more;

Whereas, leading economists, policy experts, and business leaders conclude that transitioning to a clean energy economy available for all would create millions of green jobs nationally and improve the living standard for a wider range of people;

Whereas, Stanford University and University of California-Davis studies conclude the United States energy supply could be based entirely on renewable energy by the year 2050 using current technologies and 80% renewable energy by 2030, while creating numerous green jobs;

Whereas the Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change Fifth Assessment Report found that near zero greenhouse gas emissions are necessary to stabilize the global temperature and avoid climate catastrophe;

Whereas government bodies at every level, including local government, have a moral obligation to adopt practices and policies to make our communities more resilient to the consequences of climate change and prevent climate change from getting worse, wherever possible;

Whereas, North Carolina installed 1,140 MW of solar electric capacity in 2015, ranking our state second in the nation; and nearly \$1.7 billion was invested on solar installations in North Carolina; and there are currently more than 200 solar companies at work throughout the value chain in North Carolina; and there are state companies employing some 6,000 people; and North Carolina ranks third in the nation in installed solar capacity, enough to power 260,000 homes; and North Carolina has more offshore wind energy potential than any Atlantic state;

Whereas, 600 colleges and universities including 20 North Carolina (and four Triangle-based) institutions of higher learning have committed to reduce greenhouse gases; the Mayor of Hillsborough has signed on to the Climate Mayors Agreement; the Mission of the Town is to act as stewards of the Public trust to “manage, provide the infrastructure, resources, and services that enhance the quality of public life for the living beings and land within our town”; and the Town is pledged to serve the Community by enhancing economic vibrancy;

Now therefore, be it resolved by the Hillsborough Town Board that it endorses the following;

Section 1. The Town of Hillsborough, North Carolina shall establish a transition from fossil fuel-powered operations to 100% clean/renewable energy by December 31, 2050 or sooner and 80% clean, renewable energy by 2030, to build a more resilient community, promote an environmentally sustainable economy, and to protect our local community and the Earth for current and future generations. This commitment shall aspire to transition all energy sectors in town operations, including electricity, heating and cooling, and transportation. Clean, renewable energy is defined as carbon and pollution free energy sustainably collected from renewable sources including wind, solar, and geothermal. Other approaches may be included after being evaluated for sustainability and environmental justice implications. The Town firmly commits to achieving equity, affordability, and access for all members of the community in the transition to renewable energy. Nuclear, natural gas, coal, oil based, or any other forms of carbon-based energy production are not included as clean or renewable sources of energy.

The Town also calls on The State of North Carolina to establish a transition from fossil fuels to 100% clean renewable energy for all energy sectors by 2050 or sooner and 80% clean renewable energy for all energy sectors by 2030. We appreciate Governor Cooper’s current efforts on clean energy, and call for Governor Roy Cooper to establish a Governor’s Work Group to assist local governments across the state achieve this goal, and for the North Carolina General Assembly to enact policies and budgetary decisions that support a sustainable, clean energy economy for our state. Furthermore, we commit to a transparent and inclusive process for planning and implementation, ensuring that the public has an opportunity to participate as the town adopts a transition roadmap.

The Town commits to work with surrounding communities and municipalities in achieving aligned clean energy and equity goals as well as advocating for policies or regulations at the state, regional and/or federal level that aid our Town in this just transition.

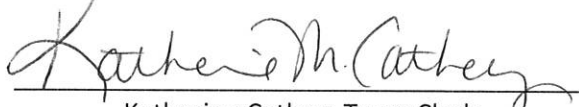
Section 2. This resolution is effective upon adoption.

Adopted this the 11th day of September, 2017.




Tom Stevens, Mayor

ATTEST:


Katherine Cathey, Town Clerk