

**Sierra Club of Pennsylvania, Southeastern PA Group Executive Committee Meeting
December 7, 2016
Call-in Only Meeting**

ExCom Members Attending: Pat Beudet, Bill Brainerd, Gerald Brown , John Butler, Mathew Himmelein, Mike Hoppus, Dave Moscatello, Prasad Ramnath, Dennis Winters, JimWylie

ExCom Members Absent: Anne Lovett,

Other Members Attending: Emily Davis, Sue Edwards

The Meeting was called to order by Jim at 6:20.

Secretary: Minutes were approved as emailed

Treasurer: (Dennis)

\$2261.76	October Balance
Income:	
\$520 - PayPal	
\$150 Fall Fundraiser	
\$670 TOTAL Income	
Expenses:	
\$462.69 "Watch" Postage	
\$1287.92 "Watch" printing and Handling	
\$400.00 CoHo Rent	
\$10.00 Bank Charges	
\$2160.61 TOTAL Expenses	
\$771.15	December Balance

Standing Committee Reports

Conservation Committee: (Jim)

Ready For 100: Jim

A joint workshop with 4CP in West Chester is planned for 12/14. We will include introduction, strategy discussion, volunteer assignments, toolbox. There will be aSkype call with Kassie Rohrbach (asst Dir of Ready For 100). The Workshop is focused on "the suburban problem" – many small municipalities. Hope to have a similar workshop in Phildelphiaa when we make some more progress on the planning matrix.

Post Election Response: Jim

For those that are not a member of the sierra-philly-volunteers list, or did not keep up with the "Statement on election results" started by Charlie Isaacs, I urge you to skim through the 23 posts on the topic here - <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/sierra-philly-volunteers/9Q4-E7-J5DQ>

Clean Power Plan: John

Penn environment is meeting with all senators asking them to sign the clean power plan

I joined them in their meeting with State Senator Tom McGarigle (District 26, Delaware County). He said he would review the letter and get back to them. I pushed him to update our current building code. The discussion included enforcement of Act 129 (energy efficiency)and from large users not meeting regulations and protection of net metering and the savings on the distribution charge at least for current contracts.

Tom was also concerned about his environmental rating. He didn't think it should be low. Neither penn or myself know the number at the time but Bill told me later it was 20%

Future Energy: Dave

Summary of on Green Justice Philly (GJP) Activities

Coordinating Committee Meeting November 18, 2016. Attending: Mordechai (IPL, facilitating), Tracy (DRKN) Sam R. (FWW), Peter (IPL Southport Working Group), Matt (CAC) Christine (MCAF) Dave M. (SC), Emma (PT) Susan (IPL, Outreach, minutes), Coryn (POW, by phone) (Sam B, joined during discussion of logistics for 11/22) (Maurice from CWA joined at the end of the December 15 contingency planning agenda)

I. Update on Southport VICTORY!

Peter: Tuesday Nov 22 last PRPA board meeting on submission of proposals. Not aware of any hints from ILA or others in the know, may be single bids for site 1 (Energy Consortium) and site 2 (USDG).

Sam: Letter from state reps on cargo, not fossil fuels at Southport is a huge victory. 19 out of 23 members of the Philly delegation signed it. Some of the strongest language that any of these reps have ever used.

There is some blowback from a sector of labor.

Ongoing campaign to change Mayor Kenney's position is showing results. They are getting enough calls to have to develop talking points. Richie Lazer, (Labor contact for Kenney administration) is the VP of the Whitman Neighborhood

Article about this included at end minutes: [Wolf pledges \\$300M for Phila. Port](#)

Future Energy: Links to Articles (at end of minutes)

1. [Renewable Energy Drumpf of the Month: \(From Yahoo News\)](#)
2. [Utility CEO Confirms Coal Is Finished](#)
3. [Peak Oil Was Correct - It's Just It Was Peak Demand, Not Peak Supply](#)

SEPTA Nicetown Generation Plant:

The SEPTA Board voted to build a plant to electricity fueled by natural gas. At the board meeting they did not permit all of the registered speakers to present. Board Member Richard Fox presented his view and ended the public comment session so our request to postpone the decision was denied. The group is continuing to pursue the issue through Nicetown residents and their Councilwoman, Cindy Bass

Political Committee: Bill Brainerd and Karen Melton, Co-chairs

All of our endorsed incumbents won election, while all of our non-incumbents lost, except for Carolyn Comitta where recount is still ongoing. County teams will be developed for interviewing candidates in the next round of endorsements. Mike also suggests that we encourage people to run for local office including positions on school boards. John will draft an invitation to environmentalists to run for office for the next newsletter.

Newsletter/Communications: (Pat Beaudet)

Newsletter: Pat: The deadline for submission of articles is December 28. The newsletter will be sent out on January 16.

Social Media: Mat: I continue to share relevant environmentally conscious and community event postings via our facebook page. Some partners/allies include, Sierra Club PA Chapter, and Sierra Club National- postings about our club stances and events. 350 Philly happenings, PowerShift community postings which is a youth wing organized by Sierra Club and other major enviros, Mom's Clean Air Force, Clean Air Council, Standing Rock affiliated organizations, among many others.

This month I'd like to expand the membership of the Social Media Committee and coordinate more regularly with other administrators of our group. My goal is to communicate more effectively with other 'posters' so we can get our announcements out to our members and the general public earlier and more effectively. This may increase volunteer turnout and attendance or just general interest at events or for causes

Education Committee: (Bill Brainerd)

No program is planned at this point

Nomination Committee:

Jim reported that Anne is resigning from the Executive Committee. This means all 6 candidates will be in joining the committee. It was suggested that next year's slate of candidates several more candidates than needed to fill the committee.

Old Business

Budget: A spreadsheet for the 2017 budget is still available and Jim asks us to continue to suggest items and /or recommend amounts for budget lines.

Holiday Party: The Holiday party will be on December 20, 6:00 on the second floor at CoHo

Weekly Activist Call (Jim): Jim suggested we might occasionally include a guest speaker on the weekly activist call to educate volunteers about a particular topic. This would be short 10 to 15 minutes. Suggestions of topics and speaker are welcome.

Essay Board (Jim)

Jim suggested we might add a blog to our facebook page. This blog would consist of series of essays researched and developed by volunteers. Topics would be planned and individuals could volunteer to research a topic and write an essay about it. Topics would not have to be connected..

New Business

Volunteers: Jim reported that, since the election, a larger number of people have joined Sierra club and that about ten current members have contacted him about becoming more active in the chapter. He is trying to contact the new volunteers with committees or people in the group. Bill suggested we develop a welcome letter for new members to help them connect with group activities.

Announcements:

Meeting Call-in Number:

1-866-501-6174, PIN is 1004100#.

Agenda

- **Introductions**
- **Approval** of [Nov minutes](#)
- **Announcements**, agenda updates
- **Fundraising**
 - o Letter campaign
 - o Online Donations - \$1,185 since Oct 15
 - § Currently in PayPal - \$714 (I had transferred \$520 on 10/20)
 - o Anonymous Matching Grant – up to \$2,500 will be matched
 - § Pick dates, promo to opt-in lists and FB
 - o Swag – sell or give in response to donations?
- **Politics**
 - o Incumbents won, challengers lost, Comitta outstanding
 - o Organizing for 2017
- **Newsletter**
 - o Winter 2017
 - § Editorial deadline – Dec 28
 - § Send date – Jan 16 (approx.)
- **ExCom Elections**
 - o Convio to members – Dec 16-ish?
 - o Pledge to accept election results?
- **2017 Budget**
 - o Anything else, please update - [2017 budget](#)
 - § Current sets our fundraising need at \$3,500
- **Holiday Social**
 - o Tue, Dec 20 at 6:00 pm at CoHo, 2nd floor lounge area – enter from Walnut St
 - o RSVP - [HERE](#)
 - o Guest Speaker – Robin Mann to talk about SC’s roll in Standing Rock standoff
 - o Pot luck
 - o Should we have a donations pot?
- **Essay Board**
 - o FYI – Jim is forming a monthly essay forum (or blog) – start in 2017
 - o Have some, need more, board members (reviewers and topic planners)
- **Conservation**
 - o Southport – state funding for container shipping - **WIN**
 - o Standing Rock – permit canceled - **WIN**
 - o SEPTA – approved CHP plant – **LOSS**
 - o Beaver Valley Preserve – purchased by conservation consortium – **WIN**
 - o Ready For 100 – workshop planned for Dec 14 in West Chester
 - o Weekly Volunteer Calls – guest speaker calendar for 2017
 - § Post-election response (see below)
 - o New volunteers – Jim has been matching w/ cmtes
 - § Welcome letter to new members?
- **Quick Hitters**
 - o **ExCom elections**
 - o **Chapter survey** - <https://goo.gl/forms/L86JQEe6koVwd8LI3>
 - o **Treasurers Report**
 - o **Calendars**
 - § Outings – internal (tentative dates) & external (announced)
 - § Meetings, Programs, Deadlines, Send Dates – int & ext?
 - § Do we need a Calendar Chair?
 - o **Review of 2016, Plan for 2017** – special meeting in Jan
 - o **Outings**
 - § Join the meetup group - <https://www.meetup.com/Philadelphia-Sierra-Club-Outings/>
 - § Dec 10 was canceled
 - § Dec 11 is on for hike along Pennypack
 - o **Next Education Program**

Wolf pledges \$300M for Philadelphia Port

Linda Loyd STAFF WRITER The Philadelphia Inquirer Wednesday November 23, 2016

The Philadelphia Regional Port Authority, a state agency, approved the plan to add \$200 million in improvements at Packer Avenue Marine Terminal in South Philadelphia, including four new electric “post-Panamax” container cranes. An additional \$12 million will be invested at Tioga Marine Terminal in Port Richmond, along with \$90 million to expand automobile processing currently at Oregon Avenue and Columbus Boulevard. About 150,000 new Hyundai and Kia autos arrive annually at Packer Avenue, headed for dealer showrooms.

The port authority suspended the bid process for the 195 vacant acres on the Delaware River, known as Southport.

Five of the six original groups “short listed” in January to present financial and development plans have dropped out.

The state decided instead to improve and modernize existing port operations. The plan would bolster current terminals and operations, raise capacity, create about 2,000 jobs. [Back](#)

Peak Oil Was Correct - It's Just It Was Peak Demand, Not Peak Supply

Tim Worstall, CONTRIBUTOR I have opinions about economics, finance and public policy.

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/timworstall/2016/11/28/peak-oil-was-correct-its-just-it-was-peak-demand-not-peak-supply/#353121814833>

One of the big talking points earlier this century was that there was a major problem called “peak oil.” The idea being that the world was just about to run out of crude oil and that since the world ran on the stuff that was going to mean the imminent collapse of civilisation. Except, oddly enough for the oil companies themselves. They are the ones now insisting that peak oil really is a valid concept. It’s just that it’s not peak supply of oil, it’s peak demand for it:

Last month Shell finance chief Simon Henry caused a stir when he said the company sees oil demand peaking in five to 15 years. Shell’s latest published forecasts have consumption flattening toward the end of that period.

State-owned China National Petroleum Corp. quietly issued a report in the summer predicting that China’s oil consumption—a major driver of growth in recent decades—will begin to fall by 2030, if not sooner. Global demand is expected to follow suit. ...

Others don’t see peak demand coming so quickly. Exxon expects consumption to grow through 2040, though at a decelerating pace. Likewise, OPEC sees demand continuing to grow beyond 2040, but acknowledges new technologies and efforts to curb climate change could mean consumption peaks within the next three decades.

As Sheikh Yamani pointed out, the stone age did not end because of a shortage of stones. And it looks like the oil age will not end for a shortage of oil, rather simply because we’re finding better ways to get our energy. [Back](#)

Utility CEO Confirms Coal Is Finished

Coal is no longer cost-effective for new electricity generation, and there's no sign that will change in the future.

Travis Hoium (TMFFlushDraw) The Motley Fool Dec 4, 2016 at 10:25AM

<http://www.fool.com/investing/2016/12/04/utility-ceo-confirms-coal-is-finished.aspx>

Sometimes the best reminder that an industry is dying is the industry itself saying it's dying. Comments from DTE Energy (NYSE:DTE) CEO Gerry Anderson provided maybe the best assessment of the future of coal: "I don't know anybody in the country who would build another coal plant."

This is a quote coming from a man running a company with 3,500 MW of coal plants. And he thinks the future belongs to natural gas and renewable energy, "regardless of what Trump may or may not do with the Clean Power Plan."

Why coal is dying

The reason coal is dying isn't because of regulations or some sort of war on coal. It's dying because it's no longer cost-competitive. In DTE Energy's home state of Michigan, the Michigan Public Service Commission did a study looking at the costs of different energy sources, and coal didn't fare well.

New wind power purchase agreements signed in 2015 came in at \$45 per MWh, and since 2009, the average power purchase agreement was \$73.58 per MWh.

New solar plants are estimated at \$113.52 per MWh, the price of a contract for a project completed in 2016, but Michigan isn't exactly an abundant solar resource state, so this may not be the best renewable source for this comparison.

New natural gas plants are estimated to cost around \$63.70, the average annual transfer price for DTE Electric.

These figures compare to the commission's estimated cost of \$133 per MWh to build a new coal plant.

That's double the cost of new natural gas and wind plants, and more than solar as well. Coal is simply no longer cost-effective for new electricity generation, and there's no sign that will change in the future.

The slow death of coal

It's easy to see that new coal plants don't make a lot of sense, but a fleet of aging coal plants don't make as much financial sense as it used to, either. And that's why DTE Energy's management plans to shut down eight coal plants by the end of 2025, and a total of 3,500 MW of coal plants by 2030.

The First Tidal Generator in North America Is Now Online

The generator harnesses the power of the tides in the Bay of Fundy, and produces enough electricity to power 500 homes.

By Avery Thompson Nov 23, 2016

<http://www.popularmechanics.com/science/green-tech/a24027/first-tidal-generator-north-america-online/>

The first tidal generator in North America has gone online this month in the Bay of Fundy, and is expected to generate enough electricity to power 500 homes. ... At the Bay of Fundy in Nova Scotia, which has the largest tides in the world, that energy is being harnessed to generate 2 megawatts of electrical power.

They plan to install a second turbine in the coming months, increasing power generation to 4MW, and to reach 16MW by the end of 2017. In the long term, they hope to be able to generate 300MW by the end of 2020.

Source: Electrek [Back](#)

Renewable Energy Drumpf of the Month: (From Yahoo News)

Business

As Trump promises to 'cancel job-killing' energy red tape, US renewables grow

Anmar Frangoul, CNBC Fri, Nov 25 3:22 AM PST

<https://verizon.yahoo.com/finance/news/trump-promises-cancel-job-killing-112244298.html>

In a week where President-elect Donald Trump said he would "cancel job-killing restrictions on the production of American energy, including shale energy and clean coal", figures have shown that renewables are becoming an increasingly important part of the U.S. energy mix.

The National Renewable Energy Laboratory's (NREL) 2015 Renewable Energy Data Book, released earlier this week, showed that renewable electricity in the U.S. increased to 16.7 percent of total installed capacity and 13.8 percent of total electricity generation.

The NREL also said that renewable electricity represented 64 percent of electricity capacity additions in 2015, compared to 52 percent the year before, while "renewable electricity generation" grew by 2.4 percent. Electricity generation from solar increased by 35.8 percent, while wind electricity generation rose by 5.1 percent.

... President-elect Trump's views on the environment and climate change are being examined in minute detail following his victory in the U.S. presidential election earlier this month.

In 2012, he tweeted that the concept of global warming "was created by and for the Chinese in order to make U.S. manufacturing non-competitive."

Earlier this week, however, he was asked by the New York Times whether he thought human activity was connected to climate change. Trump responded by saying he thought there was "some connectivity. There is some, something." [Back](#)