

RESOLUTION 12-B-17

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE TOWN'S TRANSITION FROM FOSSIL FUELS TO 100%  
RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES BY 2050

WHEREAS, an immense number of scientific, economic, religious, academic, governmental, business and civil society leaders acknowledge that steps must be taken to limit warming by the end of the century to avoid catastrophic effects of climate change;

WHEREAS, an overwhelming scientific consensus of credentialed climate scientists and scientists in related fields and numerous scientific and governmental organizations support the findings that climate change is happening and that human activities are a key contributor to it;

WHEREAS, an increase in global average temperature, if not stopped, will have major adverse impacts on both the natural and human-made environments due to longer, more intense heat waves, prolonged droughts, rising sea levels, ocean acidification and more intense and frequent extreme weather;

WHEREAS, renewable energy represents an enormous economic opportunity for our nation and our nation's cities and towns to create jobs in an emerging industry, increase economic security, expand prosperity for local residents, reduce air pollution and associated public health risks, reduce the strain on water resources, save consumers money, and address environmental justice challenges in communities;

WHEREAS, "renewable energy" includes energy derived from wind, solar, geothermal, and wave technology;

WHEREAS, "renewable energy" specifically excludes energy derived from fossil fuels, nuclear, incineration of municipal and medical waste, and any large-scale future hydroelectric development;

WHEREAS, the transition to renewable energy will improve air and water quality and protect the health of our families, particularly the most vulnerable across our communities;

WHEREAS, according to the Department of Energy, the cost of wind power is down 41 percent since 2008 and solar costs are down between 54 percent and 64 percent in that same period;

WHEREAS, the renewable energy industry is one of the fastest growing sectors of the national economy with jobs in the clean energy sector already exceeding jobs in the fossil fuel electric sector five to one;

WHEREAS, more than twenty-five U.S. cities, including Columbia, SC, San Diego, CA, Salt Lake City, UT, and San Jose, CA have already adopted ambitious 100 percent clean, renewable energy goals, and six U.S. cities, including Aspen, CO, Burlington, VT, Greensburg, KS, Kodiak Island, AK, and Rock Port, MO have already hit their targets to generate 100 percent of the energy used community-wide from clean, non-polluting and renewable sources;

WHEREAS, the Town of Blacksburg has already established itself as a clean energy leader within the Commonwealth for being the first locality in Virginia to create a Solarize campaign, which resulted in a dramatic

expansion of residential solar energy use in our community and garnered Blacksburg a 2015 U.S. Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Award;

WHEREAS, individuals, families, businesses, and institutions throughout the nation seek greater energy freedom through the expansion of local and distributed energy resources like photovoltaic solar and electric vehicles;

WHEREAS, rooftop solar, low-income community solar, energy efficiency, and demand control technologies offer the opportunity to equitably distribute resources, address poverty, stimulate new economic activity in our nation's cities and towns, and lift up those most impacted by high energy costs; and

WHEREAS, actions by local government and businesses are already a significant driver of renewable energy growth and can put the country on track to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Blacksburg Town Council adopts the following goals and urges subsequent Councils to continue this commitment to protect our community:

1. Support a policy of the Town of Blacksburg to work with regional and statewide allies and other organizations to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions by replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy along with conservation and energy efficiency.
2. Support the achievement of near-zero greenhouse gas emissions through policies that shift the energy supply strategy of our town from fossil fuels to 100% clean renewable energy by 2050.
3. Support tax incentives, when allowed per Virginia State Code, that promote the growth of preferred green jobs in our region to achieve full employment and protect the environment.
4. Continue discussion and policy implementations for well-planned, managed growth by protecting the Town's open spaces through current ordinances and the addition of other procedures such as cluster development policies.
5. Establish policies and procedures to modernize Blacksburg's infrastructure to focus on a clean economy.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Blacksburg Town Council:

1. Supports cities and towns establishing a community-wide target of powering their communities with 100 percent clean, renewable energy by 2050;
2. Proclaims its commitment to equity, affordability, public participation, and access for all people in America as cities and towns pursue this transition to 100% clean, renewable energy;
3. Proclaims that priority should be given to the lowest cost measures to meet energy needs including efficiency, weatherization, cogeneration, district heating and cooling, decentralized electricity generation and smart grids/micro grids, the use of industrial waste heat, building controls, automated lighting, solar-powered hot water heaters and programs that create an energy-saving culture in our nation's cities and towns; and

4. Proclaims that, given the economic potential of clean, renewable energy, the transition to 100% clean, renewable energy nationwide should include structured mechanisms to include low-income citizens in the benefits to be derived from the transition, including creating quality careers adhering to local source hiring to facilitate a just transition for workers displaced by fossil fuel reduction.



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Mayor

ATTEST:



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Town Clerk

Date of Adoption: December 12, 2017

