

RESOLUTION 2019-05

BOROUGH OF SWARTHMORE  
DELAWARE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

WHEREAS: climate change impacts will test our infrastructure, emergency and social services; impact our access to food, water and energy supplies; and heighten disruption of services, commerce and quality of life;

WHEREAS: the 2018 United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change found that limiting global warming to 1.5°C would require rapid and far-reaching transitions in land, energy, industry, buildings, transport, and cities, and that, “absent aggressive action, many effects once expected only several decades in the future will arrive by 2040”;

WHEREAS: the internationally agreed upon goals can be met based upon existing and new national, state, and local initiatives; and our actions will contribute to a critical mass of local climate initiatives that can collectively reduce climate disruption and help minimize the impact of extreme weather on our communities; and

WHEREAS: renewable energy sources are the safest, most cost-effective and reliable sources of power generation; and

WHEREAS: in 2006, Swarthmore Borough Council endorsed the goals of the Pennsylvania Clean Energy Communities Campaign and compliance with the Pennsylvania Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act of 2004; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Swarthmore has been an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Green Power Partner since 2007, and has regularly participated in the EPA Green Power Community Challenge Campaign; and

WHEREAS: the people of Swarthmore, Rutledge, and Rose Valley Boroughs and Nether Providence Township articulated their shared vision by commissioning the 2011 Climate Action Plan, which called for developing carbon reduction goals; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Swarthmore has purchased Renewable Energy Credits equal to or greater than its actual electricity usage since 2015; and

WHEREAS: the Mayor of Swarthmore has acted on this priority and pledged support for a goal of 100% clean energy as part of the 2017 Mayors For Clean Energy Endorsement; and

WHEREAS: in 2017, Swarthmore Borough Council called on PECO to increase its share of solar-generated electricity to 20% by the year 2025, and to prioritize rooftop solar panel installations that create jobs for residents of high-unemployment areas in partnership with the Philadelphia Earth Quaker Action Team, and

WHEREAS: Swarthmore College has set a goal of carbon neutrality by 2035; and

WHEREAS: the Borough of Swarthmore strives to support the highest quality of life for current and future residents by maintaining a community characterized by health, safety, livability, prosperity, and equity; and

WHEREAS: a key strategy for achieving a cost effective, even cost saving, energy source transition is through collaboration with other Delaware County energy leaders and participating in aggregated procurement contracts such as Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) for regional wind and solar energy; and

WHEREAS: a renewable energy initiative can produce energy cost savings for residents and local businesses while stimulating new economic activity and local jobs while providing life protecting benefits for everyone;

Now therefore be it RESOLVED that:

1. Borough Council encourages residents businesses, and institutions of Swarthmore to join in the nationwide movement to transition to 100% clean renewable energy and complete this transition for electricity by 2030 and for heat and transportation by 2050, if possible in partnership with nearby municipalities, including the Boroughs of Rutledge and Rose Valley and the Township of Nether Providence; and
2. The Swarthmore Environmental Advisory Council will provide guidance for commissioning a committee by April 22, 2020, to draft an energy transition plan for achieving these goals, to include interim milestones, financial impacts, equity metrics, potential financing mechanisms, and percentage of clean energy that will be locally produced; and
3. The committee will report quarterly to Borough Council on their progress in establishing the transition plan until the plan has been officially adopted; and thereafter, require the committee or consultant to report quarterly to Borough Council on the progress and achievements of the plan; and
4. Clean renewable energy will be defined as carbon-free and pollution-free energy generated sustainably from renewable sources such as wind, solar, small hydro, tidal, fuel cells and geothermal; and
5. Energy efficiency will be a top priority because by developing more energy efficient infrastructure, it becomes easier to develop, finance, and integrate the remaining infrastructure required to meet our energy needs with locally available renewable resources; and

6. Locally produced and distributed energy will be prioritized whenever feasible for the many advantages it provides to the community; and
7. All Swarthmore residents and stakeholders will have the opportunity and be encouraged to participate in the planning and implementation process in an equitable way; and
8. Cooperative energy purchasing opportunities will be investigated; and
9. The energy transition plan will prioritize projects that benefit low-income residents; and
10. The Borough will call on the State of Pennsylvania to set a goal to use 100% renewable energy for all purposes no later than 2050, to adopt codes and standards to increase the efficiency of buildings and appliances, and to increase the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standard to levels that put us on track to meet 100% renewable energy goals.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Swarthmore Borough Council acknowledges that this resolution does not financially obligate the Borough in any way.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND EFFECTIVE on this 9th day of September, 2019.

SWARTHMORE BOROUGH COUNCIL

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DAVID J. CREAGAN  
PRESIDENT

ATTESTED THIS 9th DAY  
OF SEPTEMBER, 2019

APPROVED THIS 9th DAY  
OF SEPTEMBER, 2019

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JANE C. BILLINGS  
BOROUGH MANAGER

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MARTY SPIEGEL  
MAYOR

