

ORANGE COUNTY LEGISLATURE

B. Chene

Committee: Rules, Enactments and Intergovernmental Relations
Sponsors: Bonacic, Amo
Co-Sponsor: Eachus

Agenda No. 2

RESOLUTION NO. 227 OF 2011

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY OF ORANGE TO JOIN THE NEW YORK STATE CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITIES BY PLEDGING TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE AND INVENTORING THE COMMUNITIES' GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS.

WHEREAS, the County of Orange (hereinafter "local government") believes that our response to climate change provides us with an unprecedented opportunity to save money, and to build livable, energy-independent and secure communities, vibrant innovative economies, healthy and safe schools, and resilient infrastructures.

NOW, THEREFORE, it is hereby

RESOLVED, that in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate, the County of Orange will:

1. **Pledge to Combat Climate Change by Becoming a Climate Smart Community**

Set goals to reduce GHG emissions and adapt to predicated climatic changes. Based on the County Planning Board, establish a task force of local officials and community members to review the issues and propose a plan of action. Designate the County Planning Commissioner as a point person who will oversee climate change initiatives and publicly report on progress. Work cooperatively with similar task forces in neighboring Counties to ensure that efforts complement and reinforce one another. As an official signal of commitment and for access to technical resources, sign on to a widespread climate campaign such as ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability-Climate Protection campaign.

2. **Set Goals, Inventory Emissions, Move to Action**

Gather data, inventory GHG gas emissions, and establish baselines for local government operations and community sectors. Develop quantifiable interim GHG emission targets consistent with emission reduction goals and propose a schedule and financing strategy to meet them. Encourage stakeholder and public input and develop an action plan. Report emissions to The Climate Registry (TCR), which has developed a standardized method for reporting emissions inventories; use ICLEI and TCR's tools, or similar tools, to track and evaluate progress.

3. **Decrease Energy Demand for Local Government Operations**

Adopt a goal of reducing electricity use by 15 percent from projected levels no later than 2015.

Existing Public Facilities. Building on the completed U.S. Department of Energy block grant work, complete an inventory of current building electricity usage and identify additional opportunities for conservation and efficiency retrofits. Obtain professional energy assessments for facilities not already completed under the Department of Energy block grant or similar work. Consider actions such as purchasing energy efficient equipment and appliances, such as ENERGY STAR®; improving lighting, heating, and cooling efficiency; setting thermostats for maximum energy conservation; decreasing plug load from office equipment; and increasing pump efficiency in water and wastewater systems.

New Public Buildings. Work to achieve at least minimum U.S. Green Building Council Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design standards (LEED Silver) or comparable standards for all new County government buildings.

Infrastructure. Incorporate energy efficient technologies and operations and maintenance practices into municipal street lighting, traffic signals, and water and wastewater treatment facilities.

Vehicle Fleet and Commuting. Improve the average fuel efficiency of local government fleet vehicles. Discourage vehicle idling and encourage bicycling, car-pooling and public transit for employees. Consider reducing the number of vehicles; converting fleet vehicles to sustainable alternative fuels; and using electric vehicles where possible.

4. **Encourage Renewable Energy for Local Government Operations**

Supply as much of the local government's power, heat and hot water needs as possible from solar, wind, and small hydro through purchase or direct generation.

5. **Realize Benefits of Recycling and Other Climate Smart Solid Waste Management Practices**

Expand the "reduce, reuse and recycle" approach to waste management in local government operations and in the whole community. Reduce the amount of solid waste generated--promote backyard composting, implement volume-based pricing and educate residents on how to prevent waste. Promote reuse by organizing community-wide yard sales, and providing a space for drop-off or trade of reusable goods. Provide recycling receptacles in local government buildings and outdoor spaces, require duplex printing in government offices, compost food scraps and green waste, and adopt a comprehensive green purchasing program.

6. **Promote Climate Protection Through Community Land Use Planning**

Combat climate change by encouraging low-emissions development that is resilient to climatic changes. When updating land use policies, building codes or community plans, include provisions to combat climate change; reduce sprawl; preserve and protect open space, biodiversity, and water supplies; promote compact, transit-oriented, bikeable and walkable communities; promote infill development; minimize new development in floodplains; maintain or establish healthy community forests; and promote best forest

management practices and encourage tree planting, especially along waterways to increase shading and to absorb carbon dioxide.

7. Plan for Adaptation to Unavoidable Climate Change

Evaluate risks from unavoidable climate change, set adaptation goals and plan for adaptation. Identify climate change impacts (such as flooding, drought, and extreme temperatures) that could affect the community. Identify areas such as water supply and sewer infrastructure that may be at risk due to sea-level rise and future changes in climate. Factor risks into long-term investments and decision-making. Execute climate change adaptation and preparedness measures through local government planning, development and operations, giving priority to the highest risk areas.

8. Support a Green Innovation Economy

Identify opportunities to incorporate climate protection, sustainability and environmental goods and service industries into economic development plans. Encourage workforce development training and school curricula that support the emerging green collar job sector, including renewable energy and energy efficiency, as well as climate smart solid waste management practices. Procure climate smart goods and services for local government operations and support modernizing of local and national electricity grids.

9. Inform and Inspire the Public

Lead by example. Highlight local government commitment to reducing energy use, saving tax dollars, and adapting to changing conditions. Demonstrate the benefits of energy savings, energy efficiency, and renewable energy projects by hosting open houses; distributing fliers; holding local meetings, working with school districts, colleges, and universities to develop climate change curricula and programs; engaging faith-based communities in climate protection; and regularly communicating community climate protection goals and progress to constituents.

10. Commit to an Evolving Process

Acknowledge that research and policy on climate protection are constantly improving and evolving. Be willing to consider new ideas and commit to update plans and policies as needed. Compare successes, cooperate and collaborate with neighboring communities to redirect less-effective actions and amplify positive results.

APPROVED: DECEMBER 1, 2011



EDWARD A. DIANA, COUNTY EXECUTIVE

**STATE OF NEW YORK
COUNTY OF ORANGE**

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT I, LAURIE M. WHIGHTSIL, Clerk of the County Legislature of said County of Orange, have compared the foregoing copy of resolution with the original resolution now on file in my office and which was passed by the County Legislature of said County of Orange on the 1st day of December, 2011, and that the same is a correct and true transcript of such original resolution and the whole thereof.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and the official seal of said County Legislature this 2nd day of December, 2011.

Laurie M. Whightsil

Clerk of the County Legislature of the County of Orange