



Watertown Town Council

Administration Building
149 Main Street
Watertown, MA 02472
Phone: 617-972-6470

ELECTED OFFICIALS:

Mark S. Sideris,
Council President

Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr.,
Vice President &
District C Councilor

Caroline Bays
Councilor At Large

Anthony J. Donato,
Councilor At Large

John G. Gannon,
Councilor At Large

Anthony Palomba,
Councilor At Large

Angeline B. Kounelis,
District A Councilor

Lisa J. Feltner,
District B Councilor

RESOLUTION #34A

2021 – R –34A

RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE DECLARATION OF A CLIMATE EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, in April 2016 leaders representing 175 countries, including the United States, recognized the threat of climate change and the urgent need to combat it by signing the Paris Agreement and in doing so agreed to keep warming “well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C”; and

WHEREAS, in October 2018 the United Nations released a special report, which projected that limiting warming to 1.5°C (2.7°F) above pre-industrial levels will require deep emissions reductions and rapid, unprecedented transitions in all aspects of society; found that there are clear benefits to keeping warming to 1.5°C rather than 2°C (3.6°F) or higher; and asserted that “Every bit of warming matters. Every year matters and every choice matters”; and

WHEREAS, we are currently on pace to increase temperatures a further 0.3°C (0.55 °F) per decade, reaching 2°C (3.5°F) of warming by 2050; and

WHEREAS, climate change and the global economy’s expansion beyond ecological limits are driving the sixth mass extinction of species, causing a 60% decline in global wildlife populations since 1970; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change and has already been subjected to devastating disasters caused by global warming, including increasingly severe Nor’easters, blizzards, droughts, heat waves, and coastal and inland flooding; and

WHEREAS, restoring a safe and stable climate and reversing biodiversity loss requires an emergency mobilization of resources to attain zero greenhouse gas emissions across all sectors, to rapidly and safely draw down or remove all excess carbon from the atmosphere, and to implement measures to protect all people and species from the consequences of abrupt climate change and ecological destruction; and

WHEREAS, On March 18, 2021, the Massachusetts Legislature sent a veto-proof bill to the Governor for **An Act Creating the Next-Generation Roadmap for Massachusetts Climate Policy**, which, among other things, mandates that the Commonwealth reduce its emissions by 50% below 1990 levels by the end of the 2030 and puts Massachusetts on a path to effectively eliminate its carbon emissions by 2050; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Watertown has demonstrated a commitment to making Watertown a greener, more sustainable, and resilient Town by:

- (2014) becoming a Green Community and thus enabling the Town to be eligible for state grants for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects;
- (2018) requiring solar renewable energy installations in new commercial developments;
- (2019) contracting to buy electricity for the Watertown Electricity Choice program with the goal of increasing the amount of renewable energy in Watertown's electricity supply;
- (2019) committing to aspirational goals of using 100% renewable energy for municipal electricity by 2035, and using 100% renewable energy for municipal heating and municipal transportation by 2050;
- (2019) resolving to develop a Climate and Energy Master Plan;
- (2019) requesting that the Town Manager provide an annual report to the Town Council on the progress toward a transition to 100% renewable energy, for both municipal and non-municipal uses;
- (2020) beginning construction on two new net-zero-energy and LEED Gold certified elementary school buildings.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Watertown declares that a climate emergency threatens our city, region, state, nation, civilization, humanity, and the natural world; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town of Watertown supports educating our residents about the climate emergency; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town of Watertown endorses a town-wide emergency mobilization effort to combat global warming, which, with appropriate financial and regulatory assistance from State and Federal authorities, would further the goal of ending town-wide greenhouse gas emissions as quickly as possible and before the Commonwealth of Massachusetts target of 2050; and

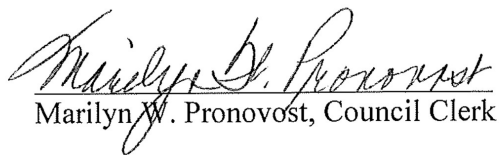
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town of Watertown joins a nation-wide call for a regional climate emergency mobilization effort focused on transforming our region and rapidly catalyzing a mobilization at all levels of government to restore a safe climate; and

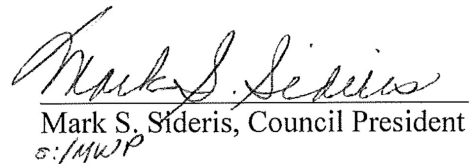
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town of Watertown calls on the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the United States of America, and the peoples worldwide to initiate a mobilization effort to reverse global warming by restoring near pre-industrial global average temperatures and greenhouse gas concentrations by immediately halting the development of all new fossil-fuel infrastructure, and as quickly as possible, phasing out all fossil fuels and the technologies that rely upon them, ending other greenhouse gas emissions, and initiating an effort to safely draw down carbon from the atmosphere; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town of Watertown calls on its residents to participate in the creation of the *Watertown Climate and Energy Master Plan* that will set specific goals to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions in Watertown, determine steps to mitigate the impact of climate change on Watertown, as well as developing a timeline for achieving them.


s: /MWP Council Member

I hereby certify that at a regular meeting of the Town Council for which a quorum was present, this Resolution was adopted by a vote of 8 for, 0 against, and 0 present on May 11, 2021.


Marilyn W. Pronovost, Council Clerk


Mark S. Sideris, Council President
s: /MWP