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## Council adopts energy conservation resolution

By Alex Lear (published: August 07, 2008)

BATH – A presentation by a Bowdoin College intern of a report on energy conservation and climate protection prompted the City Council Wednesday evening to adopt a resolution in support of those objectives.

The report “City of Bath Energy Inventory and Climate Action Plan” was researched and prepared by Bowdoin student Brooks Winner and city Community Relations Coordinator Erika Helgerson. The study to produce that report was created for the city by the Bath Cool Communities committee in concert with Bowdoin’s summer fellowship program, and an April grant from the Sierra Club to Cool Communities helped to finance Winner coming on board.

Over the past year, city employees and Cool Communities members have worked together to study and create strategies to help Bath’s government become more energy efficient, an effort that has culminated in the detailed 46-page document presented to the council.

Using a software program that inventoried greenhouse gas emissions, the report architects produced baseline data for 2007 of emissions and energy usage in Bath’s governmental and community sectors.

Winner explained that he would like to see the Bath community aim to drop its overall emissions by at least 2 percent annually, reaching a reduction goal of at least 20 percent by 2018. “We believe this is an achievable goal and that action is necessary in light of recent increases in energy costs across the board,” the report states.

That goal is among the measures established in the council’s resolution.

The report points out that in 2007 the Bath community emitted nearly 128,000 metric tons of equivalent carbon dioxide and consumed nearly 1.3 million British thermal units. About 39 percent of those emissions were from residents, while commercial businesses were nearly 14 percent, industrial 25 percent, transportation nearly 20 percent and about 2 percent methane gas released at the landfill.

According to the report, both the city government and community have made several achievements toward energy efficiency. On the community side, for example, single stream recycling and the pay-as-you-throw program have boosted recycling and reduced waste production. Upgrades to school boilers and heating systems are another plus, and the report states that a new burner control system at Bath Middle School saved 9,000 gallons of heating fuel in 2007.

Referring to several areas where the city could save money, the report says that Bath could save nearly \$20,000 annually in electricity costs by replacing old appliances with Energy Star-rated products and changing lights to compact fluorescents and high-energy efficiency T-8 fluorescents. By reducing their vehicle miles by only 5 percent by walking more, biking or carpooling, Bath’s equivalent carbon dioxide emissions could drop by 900 tons and the city could save more than \$350,000 each year, the report states.



"I just think this [report] is fantastic," said City Manager Bill Giroux. "We need to make sure going forward that this thing doesn't get put on the shelf."

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