

Town and Village of Woodstock Climate Emergency and Action Resolution

WHEREAS:

- Climate change is real as attested to by more than 97% of publishing climate scientists, statements from 18 major scientific organizations, and participation by 175 countries in the Paris Agreement who agreed to keep warming “well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels”;
- The death and destruction already wrought by global warming of approximately 1°C – increased and intensifying wildfires, floods, melting ice floes, rising seas, diseases, droughts and extreme weather – demonstrate that climate change is already dangerously severe;
- Climate change and the global economy’s overshoot of ecological limits are driving the sixth mass extinction of species;
- Climate change is hitting home as Vermont experiences rising temperatures, greater precipitation, and more intense storms with measurable negative impacts on health, water quality, farm and forestry, and plants and animals;
- Climate change is an emergency with the United Nations’ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reporting in November 2018 that, in order to avoid catastrophic climate change, we need to achieve drastic reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions by 2030;
- To date more than 1,000 local governments in 19 countries have declared a “climate emergency” which has helped to mobilize over 260 million people to adapt, collaborate and innovate to address the challenges that they face;
- Climate change is unfair, globally impacting disproportionately people of color, immigrants, indigenous communities, low-income individuals, people with disabilities, and the unhoused;
- “Just Transition” is a necessary framework for a fair shift to an economy that is ecologically sustainable, equitable and just for all its members;
- Restoring a safe and stable climate requires an emergency mobilization across all sectors on a scale not seen since World War II, critical to rapidly and safely drawdown, or remove entirely, excess carbon from the atmosphere, and to implement measures to protect people and species from the consequences of abrupt and catastrophic climate impacts;
- By addressing the climate emergency at this appropriate speed and scale, Woodstock will be fulfilling its statutory responsibility to confront threats and risks that pose dangers to every resident of Woodstock, with greatest concern for historically marginalized populations, and the young and old.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT THE WOODSTOCK TOWN SELECT BOARD AND WOODSTOCK VILLAGE TRUSTEES:

- Declare that a climate emergency threatens our town, region, state, nation, civilization, humanity and the natural world;
- Make both mitigation of climate change, and adaptation to the effects of climate change, a defining focus for Woodstock town and village planning and action;
- Commit to transition Woodstock to net zero greenhouse gas emission by 2030;
- Commit to making Woodstock a town and village that is resilient to the current, expected, and scientifically predicted effects of climate change by 2030;
- Commit to educating Woodstock residents about the climate emergency and to catalyzing a climate emergency mobilization effort at the local and regional level;
- Ensure full community participation, inclusion, and support, recognizing that the residents of Woodstock and the members of its business, community, employee, social and non-profit organizations need to be integral to the mobilization effort;
- Commit to a transition process that is fair and just to all those impacted by this climate emergency mobilization effort, especially those from within the most vulnerable communities;
- Create a ten year Energy and Climate Plan by the end of 2020 that encompasses these commitments to climate mitigation and adaptation, and just transition.