THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE

STAFF REPORT

Council Meeting Date: April 13, 2021

Subject: Interlocal Agreement with Buncombe County for Onsite Renewable Energy Systems

Staff Resource(s): Amber Weaver, Sustainability Officer
Bridget Herring, Energy Program Coordinator

Action Requested: Adoption of a resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into an interlocal agreement with Buncombe County to conduct feasibility site assessments and to issue a joint solicitation for onsite renewable energy systems.

Background:

- The City of Asheville will enter into an interlocal agreement with Buncombe County to give authority to conduct feasibility site assessments and issuance of a joint solicitation for onsite solar energy systems.
- Onsite energy systems installed will be a photovoltaic (PV) system. A PV system is a power system in which solar panels will convert sunlight to electricity. Electricity generated will be consumed at the site where they are located. Any additional electricity not able to be used on site will be supplied back to the electricity grid managed by Duke Energy.
- The solicitation will be issued by Buncombe County and will also include sites from Buncombe County, Town of Weaverville, Town of Black Mountain, and UNC Asheville.
- Joining the solicitation with these partners will increase the requested number of renewable systems which may provide all parties with lower prices.
- It also supports Buncombe County Resolution 17-12-06 to transition all of Buncombe County to renewable energy by 2042.
- The City will be responsible for selection of the sites, funds for feasibility assessments, and funds to prepare solicitation documents.
- The City is under no obligation to enter into an agreement with responsive bidders if it is not deemed in the best interest of the City.

Council Goal(s):

- A Clean and Healthy Environment
- A Fiscally Resilient City

Committee(s):

- Sustainability Advisory Committee on Energy and the Environment - March 10, 2021- Support

Pro(s):

- Supports Resolutions 11-77 (80% carbon reduction goal), 18-279 (100% renewable energy goal) and 20-25 (climate emergency declaration).
- An interlocal agreement with Buncombe County will increase the requested number of renewable systems which may provide all parties with lower prices.

Con(s):

- None

Fiscal Impact:

- $10,000 has been budgeted from the Green Savings account to prepare solicitation documents for solar systems and $13,172 has already been spent in technical analysis.
- The solicitation will accept “solar leasing” or “energy as a service” responses.
- Solar leasing or energy as a service would require a long-term agreement that translates into a low-to-no upfront cost to install the solar systems with an annual or monthly payment agreed upon with the bidder and recipients.
- Ideally, the annual cost would be at or below the electric utility cost already incurred by these facilities.

Suggested Motion:

- Motion to adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into an interlocal agreement with Buncombe County to issue a joint solicitation for onsite renewable energy systems.

Attachment(s):

- Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 21-____

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO AN INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WITH BUNCOMBE COUNTY TO CONDUCT FEASIBILITY SITE ASSESSMENTS AND ISSUE A JOINT SOLICITATION FOR ONSITE RENEWABLE ENERGY SYSTEMS

WHEREAS, the City of Asheville has authority pursuant to N.C.G.S. 160A-461, units of local government may enter into agreements with each other in order to jointly exercise any power or function of local government; and

WHEREAS, per City Council Resolution No. 18-279, the City established a goal to transition to 100% renewable energy from fossil fuel energy by December 31, 2030; and

WHEREAS, onsite renewable energy systems will support City Council Resolution No. 11-77 to reduce the municipal carbon footprint at a rate of 4% per year; and

WHEREAS, onsite renewable energy systems will support City Council Resolution No. 20-25 to end greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible to restore a safe climate; and

WHEREAS, partnering with Buncombe County will increase the number of requested onsite renewable energy systems and may result in lower costs from responsive installers of renewable energy.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE THAT:

The City Manager is hereby authorized to enter into an interlocal agreement with Buncombe County to conduct feasibility site assessments and to issue a joint solicitation for onsite renewable energy systems.

Read, approved, and adopted this the 13th day of April 2021.

_____ _____

City Clerk Mayor

Approved as to form:

_____

City Attorney