

RESOLUTION NO. 2014-_____

Resolution to support exploring biomass energy in Jefferson County

Executive Summary

The purpose of this resolution is to create a biomass energy system that is local, restorative, precautionary and cost effective over time. The proposal is to utilize locally grown biomass to heat and power some or all of the Jefferson County campus of buildings. Beginning with a pilot project, a co-gen utility would be built that would source its fuels from local plantings of perennial, poly-cultures of coppicable woody plants, utilizing alley cropping, key-line water management and other permacultural methodologies. The plantings would be grown on numerous public and private lands that are well suited to this initiative, such as: highway right-of ways, riparian areas, areas with poor soil, areas prone to flooding, around retention ponds, lands coming out of CREP (Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program), steep topography, wetlands, along bike paths for buffering - buffering from industry, and in conservation parks. Waste from DNR savanna management, emerald ash borer diseased trees and other biomass waste streams may also provide biomass fuels.

WHEREAS, Jefferson County's public facilities are exclusively heated by natural gas, and

WHEREAS, exploring the diversification of investment in Jefferson County's energy budget is prudent and fiscally responsible, and

WHEREAS, biomass energy can be produced within Jefferson County, create jobs within Jefferson County, regenerate the environment and provide diversification of energy sources, and

WHEREAS, biomass energy production is a precautionary measure against natural gas shortages and price fluctuations with the costs of implementation ultimately being off-set by reduced energy costs to Jefferson County.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Jefferson County Board of Supervisors supports the idea of investigating the potential benefits, costs and funding sources for a biomass energy facility in Jefferson County, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Jefferson County Board of Supervisors supports the submission of Supervisors Christensen, David and Kelly to the UW-Madison Climate Quest Challenge to explore the potential of biomass energy use in Jefferson County facilities.

Fiscal Note: The Climate Quest Challenge has no fiscal impact on the county budget, except for staff time supplying input for the project. If the Climate Quest submission is successful in the next round for consideration, to be determined in September 2014, biomass team members will receive a planning grant to continue to develop the project. Should the team be successful in the final round of elimination in December 2014, funds will be made available to implement the project. The Jefferson County Board would not be subject to any cash outlays at this time. If the Board deems biomass energy a good investment, the Jefferson County Board of Supervisors must authorize this expenditure.

Ayes_____ Noes_____ Abstain_____ Absent_____ Vacant_____

Requested by
Infrastructure Committee

Date of Co. Bd. meeting

J. Blair Ward: 06-25-14, 06-30-14
Supervisors Christensen, David & Kelly: 06-30-14