



Climate and Sustainability Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes Regular Meeting – December 15, 2022

Committee Members in Attendance: Kendra Smith – Chair, Janet Alderton, Vince Dauciunas, Chris Greacen, Jay Kimball, Barbara Marrett, Michael Shanks

Committee Liaisons in Attendance: Paul Andersson, Steve Bernheim, Heather Oaksen, Jeff Dyer

Ex-officio and County Staff: Cindy Wolf, Debbie Boyer, Grant Carlton

Members of the public: Addie Bash (Cascadia Consulting Group), Jess Newley, Faith VanDePutte

Committee Members absent: Luke Fincher, Adrian Kilpatrick, Renee Koplan, Jerry Whitfield

Convene meeting

The meeting was called to order by Kendra Smith. She confirmed that a quorum was present and then opened the meeting with the Coast Salish Acknowledgment.

Public Comment

None

Business Operations

- Approve Agenda – The Agenda was approved after including a request from Barbara to add on a report on the glass recycling meeting that was held with representatives. Kendra agreed and asked Barbara to go ahead and report on that meeting now. Barbara reported that the meeting was encouraging. The Port is considering purchasing a glass crusher but are researching what to do with the glass after it is crushed. Considering using it as septic systems bases or art.
- Approve October 27, 2022 Meeting Minutes – Janet moved, and Chris seconded, to approve the minutes of the October 27, 2022 Meeting. Barbara asked that the last page of the minutes be amended to read: “Barbara noted that Erin Wygant the County’s new Communications Coordinator could be a great resource to help make needed improvements.” The motion to approve with that friendly amendment was passed.

Staff Updates – Baseline Climate Assessment update

Kendra introduced Addie Bash of Cascadia Consulting Group and asked Addie to give the Committee a briefing on what Cascadia has been working on. They will be completing three inventories for the baseline assessment: a community-wide greenhouse gas inventory, a municipal inventory for emissions from County government operations, and a consumption-based inventory. They will be using 2019 as

the inventory year. Addie reported the project kicked off earlier this month and they will begin data collection in early January for about two months. A final report should be available in mid-June.

- Chris asked about the overlap of the three different inventories, and Addie confirmed there is overlap and the inventories are teasing out different aspects. Vince voiced caution on using carbon calculators that come down to a personalized level. Discussion continued around calculating emissions from wildfires, and firewood burning and other home fuels. Addie noted that firewood emissions is tricky but that we can use census data regarding home heating by fuel type and well-established consumption estimates. Kendra noted the Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan, which addresses wildfires, is due for an update. Paul added that they've done some biomass studies and wildfire risk analysis, and the Community Wildfire Protection plan is also due for an update. Janet noted embedded carbon in people's homes as a significant factor in wildfire risk, and suggested ember screens could be helpful. Cindy shared that local firefighters have told her that local conditions put us at low risk for a crown fire. Paul asked about baselines and targets for other WA communities, Addie responded that the standard is the K4C targets (a collaboration of Puget Sound cities) of 50% reduction by 2030, 75% by 2040 and 90% by 2050 (as a reduction from 2007 levels.) The committee thanked Addie and she left the meeting.

Updated Prioritization of Strategic Actions

Kendra reviewed the updates to the Climate Action Plan data table based on feedback from the previous meeting and asked the committee if they would prefer to put the table prioritization on hold until the GHG emissions report is completed.

- Vince agreed the table should be put on hold and noted that the GHG will be helpful. He noted the upcoming biannual budget he posed questions to consider: how many dollars/FTEs would be committed to climate plan activities, what projects/activities will be first priorities, and how do goals and activities intersect.
- Kendra mentioned the larger discussion in WA state regarding the integration of climate action in to Comp Plans either spread throughout the document or as a stand-alone element. Cindy expressed curiosity about municipalities' success in a paradigm shift of it is integrated throughout or isolated and treated as specialty items. Kendra remarked on the universal challenges around FTE resources in this role and building buy-in.
- Michael voiced disappointment on the last election results regarding funding; noted we will need to work towards funding opportunities if taxes/levies are not voted in. Notes that inspiration will be a better tone than punitive.
- Jay pushed for climate action and highlighted that it takes an investment of time and money. Also how do we move beyond aspirational language to specific items in the budget.
- Chris would like to see climate actions both integrated in the Comp Plan and as its own section. Suggested a well cross-referenced climate section with active links to other sections. He suggested the committee might do parallel research to identify project costs/scaling while waiting for GHG results. Kendra said she'd love help determining the carbon footprint of actions.
- Janet remarked about the "coolness factor" for community buy-in, suggesting competitions between groups/departments, plaques/awards for reducing emissions. Offered to share what she's doing on her land.

- Jay reported that Washington has a short form approach for grants, but then you need FTE time to administer them. There are billions of dollars of federal money available soon but will be complex in terms of administration overhead. Emphasized grants are critical but will require beefing up staffing.
- Vince feels that we can guess what the GHG report is going to tell us - transportation will be the biggest emitter in the county. We need a charging station plan – where will they go, who will pay for them? Docket process is coming up in 2023.
- Cindy noted the County Critical Areas Ordinance is 7 years out of date and we will not be able to apply for Dept. of Commerce grants until it has been updated.
- Barbara shared that she attended a Washington Public Ports Assn meeting – WA State is considering streamlining permitting to put in infrastructure to reduce carbon emissions. Permitting has been a hurdle. Large boats and airplanes are going electric so Ports are looking into updates to their infrastructure now – more electricity in the state is needed.
- Jay reported that OPALCO is working on grants to get those types of projects done to handle the coming electrical load.
- Vince noted that OPALCO has two cables that supply power to SJC from Anacortes – each cable handles 100MW, we used 82MW in our last cold snap. In the future, electrification of ferries will be the largest draw on the power infrastructure. OPALCO considering adding a third cable, possibly from Orcas to Lummi Island/Bellingham. If all cars in SJC go to EV, that's about a 25% increase in our load. We are projecting about a double load of where we are now by 2050.
- Kendra asked for volunteers to help put together the charging station plan for the County. Mentioned combining it with the Tourism Plan and parking plan.
- Jay noted that finding contractors to install the charging stations has been a challenge. Chris agreed with recent electric bus for Lopez School District and had trouble finding a contractor to install it.
- Barbara asked about considering hydrogen fuel cells for transportation (300-mile range but cost 3 times as much). Vince said it would require 40% of the total power supply for the US to supply electricity to the commercial trucks currently on the road so hydrogen options are being considered. The county would need hydrogen fuel stations and supply. Orkney Islands has small-scale example. It will be part of our future. Janet asked if hydrogen makes metals brittle and Vince reported they have made great progress with new materials to combat that problem.
- Jay said the Port of Los Angeles is looking at electric trucking for the 10-mile short-haul to the distribution centers. He thinks that could be used here for inter-island distribution and short-haul off island distribution.
- Chris asked the County to look at costs to implement the plan and Kendra discussed the costs of adding bike lanes and/or wider shoulders in the county.
- Michael encouraged liaison assistance for incentives to the community.
- Kendra requested ideas and assistance on outreach from the Education Working Group. She thanked everyone for their time and wished them Happy Holidays!

The next meeting will be held on **Thursday, February 23, 2023.**

Meeting adjourned at 7:10pm