

Climate and Sustainability Advisory Committee Meeting  
April 21, 2022

**Committee Members in Attendance:** Adrian Kilpatrick, Janet Alderton, Jerry Whitfield, Vince Dauciuonas, Barbara Marrett, Chris Greacen, Jay Kimball, Renee Koplan, Michael Shanks, Kendra Smith.

**Committee Members Absent:** Luke Fincher

**Ex-officio, County Support Staff, and Members of the Public:** Councilmember Cindy Wolf, Lynn Bahrych (Clean Water Committee Liaison) Jeff Dyer (Marine Resources Committee Liaison), Steve Bernheim (Ag Resources Committee Liaison), Susan (citizen)

**Convene C&S Meeting - Kendra Smith**

**Self-Introduction of Committee Members – All**

Members each introduced themselves, briefly shared about their backgrounds and expertise, and articulated their hopes for the committee.

**Committee Structure and Operation - Kendra Smith**

- Appointed Boards and Commissions Code of Professional Conduct: This County policy is still in progress as draft with Council. It articulates guidelines for kind, respectful conduct.

ACTION ITEM: Policy draft to be emailed out to committee members before next meeting.

- Open Public Meetings Act Requirements (State Law): A 16-min video was sent to all member to watch. Key pieces:
  - o Notice must be posted 24 hours in advance of meeting; we typically aim to post one week in advance.
  - o Note that group emails are discouraged, as this creates a quorum (5 or more members; cumulative in the case of an email chain.)
- General Guidelines
  - o Arrive to meeting on time and let us know in advance if you can't attend
  - o Kendra will facilitate discussion by calling on people; please use raise hand function on video call or visibly raise hand
  - o Take turns speaking and let others have a chance to speak before jumping in again
  - o Utilize the chat function for links of referenced information rather than side conversations
  - o We follow County's guidelines for conducting meetings – a simplified meeting form from Robert's Rules.
  - o Liaisons are not voting members, but we hope will convey information between their respective committees

## Committee Structure and Duties

1. Provide review and recommendations to the San Juan County Council and San Juan County Department of Environmental Stewardship on issues related to the impacts of climate change.
  2. Support the development and implementation of a county-wide Climate Action Plan, assisting with updates to the Plan as needed.
  3. Facilitate connection and communication with your networks around the committee's work.
  4. Identify and encourage actions with partners and individuals within the county to support the Climate Action Plan.
  5. Participate in education and outreach efforts around climate action and stewardship efforts in the county.
- Chris: Should I plan to use a separate email address for work with the committee?  
Cindy: We can revisit recent discussion at Council; meanwhile it's not a bad idea to set up a separate Gmail address just for work with the County.
  - Michael: How can we communicate over the summer?  
Kendra Smith: Key thing is not to be doing work of the committee with a quorum of 5 outside the typical public meeting. But if we are breaking into sub-committees working on particular tasks, you can go ahead and communicate with those couple of partners because you will be bringing that work back into the group. We don't want a majority of committee members having dialogue outside this meeting setting.

ACTION ITEM: Cindy suggests we check in with Amy Vira on this.

## Core Member and Liaison Roles

Kendra reviewed the Committee Structure with a 'hub' Core Committee (voting members) and 'spoke' County Committee Liaisons (non-voting active participants). There are likely to be actions that we'd like to see done that are already being worked on by these other committees.

## Summary of Climate Work to Date

We are working from Resolution 20-2020 and have been making progress on the action items since then.

- Kendra shared the Climate Action Score Card Year 2021 Progress to show action items, owners, and status. Kendra reviewed a selection of the items and shared the progress being made, as well as some of the hurdles to meeting these actions.
- Cindy shared that Council has been talking with the local State Reps about the possibility of local gov's co-owning a system of locally manufactured hydro-powered foot ferries that would connect to nodes of electrified public transportation, moving away from large electric ferries (which the islands have not been prioritized for) and looking at something that's a little lighter footprint.

ACTION ITEM: Kendra to share slide deck and Climate Progress xls

- Chris: A lot of these measures are within the operations of the County government. Are we going to address the broader county and a bigger transition?
- Kendra: Yes, this was just our toe in the water, we need to refresh and aim higher at this point. We need to work with various partners to work more broadly, but this shows that we haven't just been sitting on our hands.

Some discussion occurred around solid waste and other materials transport to/from and between the islands. Cindy feels we should start with a carbon inventory to help identify best projects to prioritize.

### **Draft Planning Process Review- *Kendra Smith***

Kendra reviewed the draft Climate Action Planning Process which is meant as a starting point that the committee can further refine. Key part will be: how do activities fit into the various objectives, and what are our measure for success. Rather than having meetings over the summer, we might like to have some teams dive into the information around carbon impacts in the island and help us see where we are going to get the biggest bang for our buck. In the fall we can come back together with these pieces of information and start to set priorities and gather public comment. The hope is to create a proper plan but not spend all our time planning, so we can take action. Our goal is to quickly move to make a plan and get moving on the top items.

- Jerry: Where do we stand with having our legislators onboard with what's going up here? I think we need a lot of their help and heavy lifting.
- Kendra: We have had conversations with and support from Debra Lekanoff Alex Rommel.
- Cindy: Alex Rommel and Debra Lekanoff in the House are both extremely supportive. In the Senate we have Liz Lovelett; both Alex and Liz have been very active in the Blue Green Alliance, the working group bringing together labor and environmental movements to find where just transition happens. This means transitioning away from a carbon-based economy but not on the backs of the most vulnerable members of society. When Gov. Inslee and Rep. Fitzgibbons brought forward the latest climate action legislation, Lekanoff and Lovelett had some legislation that went a bit further and had a different way of paying for it which built in a different level of equity. Expect a lot of cooperation and support – how effective that will be in the Legislature will depend on who gets voted for in the rest of the state. I will be happy to invite them to see what's happening with this committee, but rest assured they are staying well informed and brought up to speed about what we're working on.
- Kendra: Rep. Larson is also in the loop, particularly around managed retreat, road infrastructure, and multi-modal transportation.

ACTION ITEM: Create carbon spreadsheet as part of gap analysis

- Vince: I think we have good existing Plans to work from, and Jerry went through this process with Skagit previously, so it shouldn't take too long – just pull out what applies to our region. It helps to identify – What problem are you trying to solve? – rather than just making

lists.

A quick snapshot on the carbon issue I worked up: our electrical use is about 5k tons, transportation is 25k tons, home heating etc. is 25k tons, agricultural waste is 25k tons, ferries are 35k tons. This roughly equals 96k tons of CO2 emissions for the county. Divided by population of 16-17k is about 6 tons per person, which is about the American average. Being able to back this up with more granular detail will help. If the goal is to cut this in half in about 7 years, that's a heavy lift. The problem is what you can do versus what requires behavioral changes on the part of the population. I think you can come up with what you need to do, but the question will be will the people buy it and how are you going to fund it.

- Adrian: getting the community involved is a key part of it and making them feel that they are a part of this work and it's not just happening in committees. Mentioned retrofitting program and other outreach.
- Janet: Opalco's Switch It Up campaign and lowered cost of EVs are helping
- Kendra: In the fall we can host some community meetings to share what we've come up with and the programs they can take part in. Possibly work with EDC to try and facilitate the retrofitting work.
- Cindy: Keep in mind the public-private partnerships that can be utilized. Eg. Opalco can apply for grants that the gov can't but we can support. Code changes will probably need to be looked at too.
- Jay: 40% of the county's emissions may be coming from ferries, according to Vince's 'back of the envelope' work up. So, if our goal is to cut county emissions by 50%, are we talking about the emissions we have control over, which is 60%, or do we convince the Dept of Transport to electrify our ferries?
- Kendra: I think we need to look at the full picture as ferries are in the realm, but our ability to move the needle on that is based on our legislators and others. Maybe not a specific performance target on it since it's not within our control.
- Cindy: We are the people who are going to be able to make a difference in the ferry system, it's not going to come from anywhere else. We need to rethink how were getting back and forth and then ask for what we need. Looking at financial and fuel resources we are devoting to that is important. We need to get a very clear picture.
- Jerry: Are we including the tourism impacts, this is a big portion of ferry emissions.
- Barbara: We do need to look at our carbon emissions to get a clear picture of where the biggest bang for buck may be made not just locally but globally. Food production is a big global issue.
- Adrian: Vince, where did you get your data for the carbon numbers?
- Vince: electrical was from WA Dept of Commerce, transportation from Dept of Licensing, home heating from Census Bureau, agriculture from USDA. Data we need: Port data, how much gasoline is brought into the county, aviation/boats diesel fuel. What I did was a starting point; more needs to be parsed out.

ACTION ITEM: Vince/Jay/Kendra to coordinate sharing out the carbon info Vince compiled.

- Michael: Did numbers include wood/bush-burning?

- Vince: that was not specifically included, it can be refined. Ag has not been refined in terms of cattle versus crop, etc.
- Michael: Also commenting that the mitigation measures sound great, but I'd also encourage adaptation for extreme events already happening, forest management and managed retreat.
- Cindy: In pursuing information about kelp farming, I learned that methane emissions from cattle can be significantly reduced by adding seaweed into their diets. Maybe this is a program that can be pursued with local Conservation Districts.

### **Future Regular Meeting Schedule**

Kendra reviewed the proposed meeting schedule as follows:

Regular meetings - fourth Thursdays, 5:30-7:30pm, via Zoom

UPDATE Saturday, May 21<sup>th</sup> Proposed In-Person Special Meeting on San Juan Island at Grange (8:30-2:00 meeting ferry schedule driven)

June 16<sup>th</sup> 5:30-7:30p

July/August off

September 15<sup>th</sup> 5:30-7:30p

- Vince: Is there a committee budget for purchasing reports etc?
- Kendra: We have very little 'walking around' money, maybe 5-7k, but we can talk to Council for more.

### **Public Comment**

Susan: Thanks to each of you, it's a great undertaking. I urge you to look beyond Net Zero and think bi-laterally but also post Net Zero; risk management, new technologies we can adopt here in the county.

Steve: Also want to emphasize the importance of having a reliable carbon inventory, a specific scientific inventory seems to be called for. Also, don't ignore the lifestyle changes. Finally, here on the Ag Resources Committee we have existing attempts to quantify the agricultural GG emissions and we are developing a list of action items for the agricultural community.

Lynn: The Clean Water Committee is working on water resources assessment as well as water conservation. I'm also a supervisor on the SJI Conservation District which has a Forest Health Collaborative working on forest health and fire prevention.

Jeff: I'm liaison with the Marine Resources Committee and I'm passionate about grappling with global warming. At the MRC's retreat we identified 9 stressors to the nearshore habitat directly due to climate effects. I'm impressed by inputs so far and see lots of potential. Reiterated parsing down the carbon impacts and looking at voluntary and mandatory requirements. I'm confident we accomplish a lot with our combined expertise.

**Meeting Adjourned at 7:25pm**