



Climate and Sustainability Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
June 23, 2022

Committee Members in Attendance: Kendra Smith, Renee Koplan, Janet Alderton, Jerry Whitfield, Vince Dauciuinas, Adrian Kilpatrick, Jay Kimball, Chris Greacen Luke Fincher, Michael Shanks

Committee Liaisons in Attendance: Jeff Dyer, Paul Andersson, Lynn Bahrych

Convene meeting

Meeting called to order at 5:35pm by Kendra Smith. Kendra opened the meeting with the Coast Salish Acknowledgment.

Public Comment

No members of the public in attendance. Committee liaison members identified themselves.

Business Operations

Previous meeting's minutes approved; motion made by Vince, seconded by Janet.

Staff Updates

1. Consultant research for GHG inventory

- Kendra meeting with Cascadia Consulting, who has done some GHG work, the following day.
- Vince also suggested looking into a company called E3; working with state of WA looking at residential space heating usage. He will send contact info.
- Kendra requested 50K starting funding from Council for this work in May, it has been promised to be in second budget amendment in August.

2. Summary of STMP community sessions and crossover issues

- Kendra shared the work that has been done for the Sustainable Tourism Management Plan as there are several elements of crossover.
- Discussion during the STMP Sessions was around transportation/electric vehicles, stewardship education, preparedness education, protecting and conserving lands and marine waters, electric charging stations and transit options, looking at regulations and fees including a possible impact fee for boaters to offset boater impacts. Some elements around accommodation regarding VR permits, long-term housing types and energy efficiency.
- County has been working on this since 2016 with a series of public surveys which gathered info about crowding, infrastructure considerations and much more. All that background info is available at www.sjctourism.com as well as summaries of the phase just completed with a series

of public meetings in May, which was to clarify our vision and identify what actions the county and others should invest in to support a more balanced approach to tourism.

- Next Steps
 - Start to determine who is the owner, what is the cost, and what actions need to be taken. Environmental Stewardship will be meeting with those responsible for the various items to flesh out some more of that detail.
 - Bring Plan draft to back to the public feedback and then to Council approval.
 - Enter implementation mode: raising money to be able to do certain tasks, making sure that things are in the Capital Improvement Plan of the County, etc.

Climate Action Plan Updates

At previous meeting, members gave input on which items they saw as priorities. What came to the top is shown in updated table, which was reviewed together.

Transform Transportation

- Vince noted he weighs potential actions by two things:
 1. How much carbon will it take out of what we directly produce in the county, what is it going to cost to do that, and what actions are accomplishing the goals that WA state has set for reduction?
 2. What does that do with respect to adapting or mitigating the impacts that we expect to see from climate change?
 - Noted that a lot of good ideas are not going to get funded; a lot will have to be buy-in and we can't mandate a lot of this. We have to pick the most bang for the buck, including willingness of people to adopt lifestyle changes, new rules etc. We need a doable and effective package at the end of the day.
- Kendra suggested perhaps we conduct a survey to gauge public willingness to make a lifestyle shift. This can be part of our scoring process. We can't do everything; we will have to cull it down.
- Jerry suggested building on work done already, such as the [WA 2021 State Energy Strategy](#), and getting a baseline of emissions in our county and who are the major players. Recognizing the County has no authority for taxation or to set new laws for these goals, our group needs to point out what our current emissions are, what the target we are trying to get to, then lay out a pathway by which to get there showing top priorities that are particularly pertinent to SJC. Major culprits of emissions need to be defined.
- ES Dept has been tracking potential grants from various sources. In most cases it has been for shovel-ready work, not for planning efforts.

Retrofit Buildings

- Opalco may already be doing some of this, we can document items already underway. Opalco reps on the committee can share perspective on their targets: how much energy efficiency do you need to achieve and in what kind of time frame to really have an impact. Educational impact mentioned again - "keeping up with the Joneses" such as a sign on your property, or a LEED-certified building.

Upgrade the Grid

- Vince shared that the WA State Greenhouse Gas Emission Report shows WA is currently producing about 100 million metric tons of CO₂ equivalents per year. Housing insulation, heat pumps etc. equals about 10% per year, about 10 million metric tons. Compare that to transportation, the big one – about 45% of emissions comes from transportation each year. Electric consumption is about 16% and that is rapidly decreasing as the coal plants shut down and renewables replace them. Agriculture is less than 6%. Industrial uses and transportation equal about 60% of the problem. Some of these things you aren't getting very much bang for the buck.
- The GHG inventory will help reveal what we can really control and where can we move the needle. Example given of energy efficiency in homes; it's not a huge piece of the pie, but it helps counter the pressure to the grid.
- Janet noted a lot of emissions are incorporated into concrete and steel - let's hope that all these startups and green industries bloom quickly. The article she shared is a good example of new technologies to measure change.
- Suggestion from Jay to expand the Column H priority for more granularity around priorities. Perhaps adding 2 columns: Importance = A,B,C and Easy to Do = 1,2,3. So A1's are important and easy to do, C3's are less important and hard to do. Other members noted support for that, and that this will be iterative process that may change as we go.
- Janet flagged adaptation priorities around forest health and wildlife risk reduction. Vince added supporting data: in 2015 there was 18 million tons emitted due to wildfires, which dwarves the work going into reducing emissions elsewhere in just a couple of month's events. Jerry amplified and added that by taking care of our forest we can increase the carbon sink immeasurably. Not only do we mitigate the emissions by cutting down on fires, but we can make trees healthier and absorb more CO₂ as we go forward.
- Fire risk and carbon emissions from transportation noted as "A" priorities that we will want to look at for mitigation.
- Adrian posed the question: with a lot of these, there's a focus on switching to electric but it comes with the ability of the grid to be able to handle it. How realistic is it if we convert everything right now – what capacity does our grid have to maintain all that?
 - Vince explained in the industry its called resource adequacy – looking at all the ways we generate power and how we consume it and asking if those things are in balance. West of the Rockies we have a problem right now. WA state produced a document from the Dept of Commerce looking forward to 2050 at how energy will be consumed and produced. The answer is we don't know yet. State gov's and utilities all over the US are looking at this right now.
- Question: in winter when Opalco had to buy extra energy beyond our capacity, was it all renewable or was it a mix?
 - Vince responded that it was probably a mix; we paid Bonneville Power Admin and they had to go on the open market to purchase. BPA's is about 42lbs of CO₂ per megawatt hour produced; when they go to open market it can range from 100-1000 lbs per megawatt hour, general average is about 600 lbs. It's improving over time but that's about where it is now.

- Kendra noted that this shows we need to look at conservation as much as increasing grid capacity, and balancing these two out. Vince remarked that the plan has been done but it doesn't balance. Coal plants are shutting down, natural gas is going to get a huge penalty, so the answer is wind, solar and storage. But where is it going to get built, how's it going to happen, who's going to pay for it, when is it going to occur – there are not good answers at the moment. These questions are serious and real.

Protect and Restore Nature

- Lynn: on the forest issue, I'd like to pitch for asking the County to send an alert with a prediction of high winds that open fires be banned. Catastrophic fires here are a result of windstorms with a spark. We need a county-wide alert to educate people not to have open flames during these times. Kendra said she can talk with Brendan in our Emergency Management Dept. about that.
- Noted mention of preserving old growth forest but there are very few here due to the limestone industry. Typically anything 36 inches or greater circumference fits the Forest Service standard; true there are not many.
- Idea raised of expanding the Firewise Program to do more with community outreach, maybe help set up individual properties. Help get community members active rather than having govt come in, easier scope. Paul shared that the Conservation District had some funding last year and has been talking to DNR about a Western WA cost share program for forest health and wildfire mitigation. They are building a lot of capacity with the House Bill 1168 Wildfire Mitigation. They're talking with DNR, local fire districts, and with our state Conservation Commission about Firewise-type and other forest health programs on a consistent basis but can't facilitate county-wide without the right funding came through I would hope we could do that. They do have staff trained for structure ignition assessments and were doing a lot with regard to forest health for landowners, including a presentation on Firewise in July for a couple of homeowners associations that could be expanded.

ACTION: Ranking mechanism for items on master table using ABC/123 ratings to be added, which will be made shareable so all can collaborate.

Fomation of Working Groups

Kendra reviewed the poll outcomes for working group distribution.

- Working groups may have not more than 5 members
- Can convene as sub-group and kick around ideas about their topics
- Staff working with County IT on a Sharepoint account for members to download and share information
- Objective for working groups is to go back to the action table and find what questions we have around these items, what action steps might be taken, and identify 2 or 3 as top targets.
- Working groups are just sharing ideas and thoughts, then bringing that back to full committee and we will have conversation together.

ACTION: Staff will establish Sharepoint site and members can share info and develop core thinking there. ABC/123 ranking (for importance and ease) will be included. Plan to share out when we come back together in August.

Community Vision Exercise

Lynn spoke about her community vision piece, which had been sent to the committee. She said she adapted Salt Spring's for our community and invited anyone to add anything they'd like. Members noted that it was a great start with lots of good elements, including the housing needs for workers, and appreciated the positive tone.

ACTION: Staff will post this on the SharePoint and members can add comments to help flush out the broader story that will be backed by the facts we collect.

To distribute materials to members, members can email to Kendra/Angela. (Please send directly to Kendra/Angela rather than emailing the group.) Moving forward, members will be able to share materials via a Shared Resources folder on the SharePoint site.

Meeting adjourned at 7:08pm.