



## CITY OF TACOMA SUSTAINABLE TACOMA COMMISSION MEETING NOTES

**Date:** May 12, 2015

**Commission Members Present:** Sarah Chessman, Phil Coughlan, Nick Cutting, Ellen Moore, Felicity Devlin, Alyssa Ilich

**Commission Members Excused:** Chrissy Cooley, Karen Hamilton, Agnes Pate, Holly Williams

**Others Present:** Jim Parvey, Kristin Lynett, Laura Wisdom, Steven Atkinson, Lisa Rennie, Dave Rossman, Steve Bicker, Peter Meyer, Jeremy Stewart, Nancy Oakley, Pete Hickman, Lowell Wyse

- **Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order at 3:32 p.m.

- **Approval of April 14, 2015 Meeting Notes**

The April notes were approved with no changes.

- **Review of May Agenda**

The May agenda was approved.

- **Subcommittee Report-Outs**

- Electric Vehicles Subcommittee

- A Vision2Action Symposium is being planned for June 19, with the planners still in search of additional sponsorship.
    - Jim: There is still some recalcitrance from the Master Builders Association on the question of electric vehicle requirements being added to City code.

- Outreach Subcommittee

- The Stewart Heights neighborhood litter pickup was a successful and festive event. It was a good medium for doing outreach as people were receptive to information about trash and recycling issues.

- **Presentation from TPU Regarding Energy Benchmarking & Conservation and Renewable Energy Efforts—Lisa Rennie, Dave Rossman, and Steve Bicker, TPU**

- Energy Benchmarking

- Lisa and Dave gave an update on the automated system that is being developed to comply with state requirements. The 2009 law requires TPU to retain consumer information while protecting privacy. The law requires use of the Energy Star benchmarking program.

- A pilot was conducted with 3 large customers: MultiCare, Pierce County, and City of Tacoma. All three of these customers are unhappy with the product so far. A staffing issue (a City employee who was acting as a key subject matter expert has left), a service gap, and various technological issues are among the reasons for delay.
- In light of these slowdowns, the steering committee is being reconvened in the coming months. A subcommittee will meet with the pilot customers to identify short- and long-term problems, then report back to the steering committee. TPU is eager to release this system but is waiting until the issues are ironed out. This is a high priority for TPU management.

#### Conservation and Renewable Energy

- Steve presented on TPU's conservation efforts. The Integrated Resource Plan looks at numerous scenarios based on different combinations of projected new supply-side (energy) resources and demand-side resources (conservation, etc.).
  - Solar energy installation is on the rise.
  - Conservation (e.g., energy efficiency) as a resource has the lowest cost and lowest impact. Conservation could add seven years to the timeline before TPU has to seek out new sources of energy ("load resource balance"). Current investments in conservation are around \$32 million per year, about \$6 million of which benefits low-income customers. Many customers (e.g., Point Defiance Zoo) take advantage of multiple programs.
  - Conservation initiatives include the following:
    - Residential weatherization, heating (especially ductless heat-pumps)
    - Multifamily housing—a new program makes it simpler
    - Residential lighting/retail
    - Retail products for homes (e.g., light bulbs & shower heads)
    - Industrial custom retrofit (e.g., large air compressors)
    - Bright rebates (commercial lighting)
    - Equipment rebates—broadly applicable to all kinds of businesses (e.g., kitchens, offices)
    - New construction
  - TPU operates under a continuous improvement model: design, implement, evaluate (and repeat).
  - TPU has a history of exceeding the conservation goals established by I-937.
- **Disposable Bag Outreach Update—Kristin Lynett**
    - Outreach will begin next week. The webpage is almost finalized, including the survey inviting feedback from businesses and citizens. There is also a one-page handout summarizing the issue. OEPS will present outreach results to STC June 9 and IPS July 22.
    - Felicity proposed having a booth at a farmers' market this summer with information on disposable bags.
  - **Staff Update**
    - Agnes accepted the Earth Day proclamation from City Council.
    - OEPS is waiting for responses from potential facilitators for a summer retreat, tentatively scheduled for June 30.
    - Environmental Action Plan: OEPS is interviewing three finalists of firms on Thursday, hoping for a contract within a month.
    - City Commission interviews are tomorrow, including 4 or 5 candidates for STC. New commissioners could be on board by next month's meeting
    - OEPS is scheduled to present at the July 22 IPS meeting on 2 topics: the Environmental Action Plan and the feedback on the disposable bag ordinance. STC members are encouraged to attend.
    - May is Tacoma-Pierce County Bike Month. Lots of events and activities are planned. Visit [www.bike253.com](http://www.bike253.com) for more information.
    - Jetta: NBIS event today was very positive. NBIS connects industries on awareness of waste stream potential.

- **Public Comment**

- Michael from PolyBag (43<sup>rd</sup> and South Tacoma Way) reported that many municipalities are reversing their disposable bag bans based on lack of environmental change; Huntington Beach, CA, is a recent example. He said that grocery store bring-back programs are successful in recycling plastic bags, and there is growing skepticism about cloth reusable bags that have to be washed frequently. The subject brings out high emotion on both sides.
- Nick replied that the ban is not a foregone conclusion, and thanked Michael on behalf of the Commission for the public comment, which is an important part of the process.
- Jim invited Michael to e-mail the studies he discussed to OEPS to include an informational website about plastic bag ordinances.

- **Objectives for Next Meeting**

- Sustainable materials management plan
- Retreat planning
- Green events program update
- Sponsorship grant (aka sustainability grant)

- **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

The next meeting of the Sustainable Tacoma Commission will be Tuesday, June 9, 2015, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., Tacoma Municipal Building, 747 Market Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor Visibility Center.