



## CITY OF TACOMA SUSTAINABLE TACOMA COMMISSION MEETING NOTES

**Date:** June 9, 2015

**Commission Members Present:** Jeff Bessmer, Sarah Chessman, Chrissy Cooley, Phil Coughlan, Rus Higley, Ellen Moore, Agnes Pate

**Commission Members Excused:** Nick Cutting, Felicity Devlin, Alyssa Illich, Peter Hickman

**Others Present:** Jetta Antonakos, Kristin Lynett, Jim Parvey, Lisa Rennie, Lowell Wyse, Jeanne Walter

- **Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m. For the benefit of the new commissioners, everyone introduced themselves.

- **Approval of May 12, 2015 Meeting Notes**

The May notes were approved with no changes.

- **Review of June Agenda**

The June agenda was approved.

- **Subcommittee Report-Outs**

- Outreach Subcommittee -

- There was no update.

- Electric Vehicles (EV) Subcommittee

- The symposium has been postponed until September in order to gather a diversity of stakeholders, and invite keynote speakers who are otherwise engaged with summer legislation.
    - City Council is waiting for some feedback from STC on EV, but there is no rush. Delaying the symposium makes sense for providing more diversity of opinion and garnering sponsorship.
    - Jim: It is important to get the building community on-board.

- Disposable Bag Ordinance

- City Council has delayed the process of discussion and outreach due to other priorities. The work plan needs to be rebooted, but the new timeline will still seek to remain in step with the Sustainable Materials Management Plan (due in February).
    - Phil: Is it possible to do the survey when public response will be best, not just delaying it to synchronize with Council agenda?
    - Jim: Current plans are to send out the survey in November or December (for 30-day duration).

- Chrissy: Expressed concern that STC has been working on the ordinance for over two years and was told to wait for the SMMP, yet now they're being told to follow it.
  - Kristi: The SMMP will mention disposables, so having the bag ordinance come after will look like following through with plan recommendations. The Mayor is not interested in having public discussion about this issue yet this summer.
  - Public opinion (expressed through survey) will be one data point for City Council to consider alongside industry and Commission recommendations.
  - The Commission briefly considered writing a letter to protest the Mayor's decision to delay the outreach plan.
  - Jim: The process will be delayed by about four months (with some potential for more delay), but there still is a work plan in place. He will keep the group posted.
  
- **Sustainable Material Management Plan Update—Jeanne Walter, Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability**
  - The City has a minimum waste diversion goal of 70%, almost double the rate that existed at the beginning of the process.
  - The work plan is based on the following three tasks:
    - Update waste characterization study (in progress), with three seasonal samplings. This will be the first study that includes organics for single-family residential curb pickup, which should make a big difference (more waste being diverted from the landfill).
    - Complete a Material Recovery Facility (MRF) feasibility study, funded by a grant from Ecology. The facility would be an improved recycling center to aid in a higher rate of recovery through better control over the product to be sold (recovered recyclables). Consultants are working at a very fast pace, along with staff from the City and Ecology.
    - Complete the overall plan (barely begun, will be based on Tasks 1 and 2). Currently, seeking a list of external stakeholders to offer comment on things like multi-family residential recycling, open to suggestions from Commission. Steve Wombach (?) at Solid Waste; Ryan Dicks at Pierce County; Housing; Health Department; MultiCare; universities; Port; business community.
  
- **Green Event Program Update—Kristin Lynett, Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability**
  - Certain events are required to get certification through Green Events (1,000-2,000+ people hosted by the City, on City property, funded by the City, etc.)
  - 15 events have been certified in the past six months; reports allow us to rate these events on a point-based system.
  - There is a wrap-up form that includes data on waste diversion, attendance gains.
  - Kristi: The program is generally working. There could be more participation. City staff gets notification about special events permits and reaches out to these applicants. When people call back, we work with them, but we don't hound them to participate.
  - Impacts of the program are difficult to measure.
  - One obstacle for event planners is a lack of volunteers to staff recycle stations and other staffing requirements. They wish for a bank of volunteers to connect with.
  - Not many cities have a program like this.
  - City is open to suggestions for how to improve the program.
  
- **Retreat Planning—Kristin Lynett; Maralise Hood Quan and Jennifer Unger, Facilitators**
  - Open to suggestions about food at the event. Bates Technical College students do catering.
  - This item was tabled until facilitators would arrive.
  - AmeriCorps will also provide a staff person to run the Healthy Homes, Healthy Neighborhoods program, which will take place in Hilltop, fall 2015 through summer 2016.
  - The Climate Change Risk Assessment process has begun. A consultant has been hired. The City is working on a list of Tacoma's natural areas to look at natural and infrastructure assets, along with priorities for further analysis. The study is a six-month process, exciting yet sobering. Rises in temperature and sea level are among the top concerns.

- Facilitators from the Center for Dialogue and Resolution arrived. They train members of the public, businesses and companies how to interact.
  - Among the goals of the retreat will be to spend some quality time together, build group dynamics and clarify the Commission's role.
  - The retreat will include 9 out of 11 Commissioners, up to two City staff and possibly Council Member Mello.
  - The facilitators began with three questions for each person present:
    - When you applied to the Commission, what was it that excited you enough to put in your application? Sample answers: The City is doing important work; citizen oversight is important; climate change presents important challenges.
    - Why a retreat? Sample answers: opportunity to see the bigger picture; cultivate shared vision; get everyone on the same page; education on role, job descriptions; orientation for the newcomers; realizing the vision of municipal transparency and community connection; build community; learn some history of mistakes and successes of the Commission.
    - What is your name?
  - Additional questions: How to engage Commission members who will not be in attendance? For those who won't be there, what would you like to hear from the attendees to make you feel part of the group? Sample answers: Identify the unified goals; discuss how specific successes have been accomplished; discuss how mistakes have been dealt with; provide overview of what went on at the retreat.
- **Staff Update**
    - Environmental Action Plan: The lead firm is Envirolssues, a firm based in Seattle but with a staffer from Tacoma; the sub-firm is Good Company from Eugene, OR. Both consultants bring a lot of good energy and experience. We are currently in the contract phase, with the goal of beginning sometime next month with advisory committee meetings. This is a key activity on the Commission's work plan this year, something that will help drive the City's work and drive the STC agenda for the coming months and years. Not looking to create a laundry list, but rather a prioritized list of actions for the next five years.
    - Understanding mitigation (carbon reduction, original Climate Action Plan) versus adaptation (adjusting infrastructure and social systems accordingly).
    - City staff will create new name plates for Commissioners by the time of the retreat.
    - Jetta: Commercial food and yard waste is finally available for multifamily residences. She is looking for an advisory board to give feedback on how to implement this program. Phil: Environmental Services Commission has a couple of property owners represented.
    - Tacoma Power Integrated Resource Plan had a second public meeting recently. Doing lots of modeling for different energy scenarios. Next meeting is in August. Plan will be completed by the end of 2015.
    - Emily Campbell will complete her AmeriCorps term in July. We'll be getting a replacement through AmeriCorps this year.
  - Public Comment - There was no public comment.
  - **Objectives for Next Meeting**
    - Retreat debriefing
    - Environmental Element of Comprehensive Plan
    - Revisit subcommittees and work plan
    - Transportation Commission plan status and relation to Sound Transit 3 public outreach
  - **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 5:28 p.m.

The next meeting of the Sustainable Tacoma Commission will be Tuesday, July 14, 2015, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., Tacoma Municipal Building, 747 Market Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor Visibility Center.