



CITY OF TACOMA SUSTAINABLE TACOMA COMMISSION MEETING NOTES

DATE: January 10, 2012

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Jane Moore, Phil Coughlan, Jim Gawel, Steve Garrett, Bliss Moore, Dale Anderson, Bill Anderson, Carol Shiflett, Ellen Moore

COMMISSION MEMBERS EXCUSED: Dan Dzyacky, Elaine Ott

OTHERS PRESENT: Bill Smith, Kristi Lynett, Jim Mack, Lisa Rennie, Colleen Hall Barta, Ashley (SOTA intern), Jessica Ludwig, Catherine Taylor

▪ **Approval of the December 13, 2011 Meeting Notes**

The December 13, 2011, meeting notes were approved and adopted.

▪ **Review of the January Agenda**

The January agenda was approved, with the inclusion of information on recent budget cuts, negotiations and other staff updates that may impact sustainability.

▪ **School of the Tacoma Arts (SOTA) Intern**

A senior at SOTA, Ashley is serving as the Office of Sustainability intern for the month of January. Junior and senior students at SOTA are encouraged to do internships; there are currently 140 interns in the area. Ashley will be job shadowing and working on the 2011 Sustainability Accomplishments report.

▪ **Presentation on Materials Management and Climate Mitigation – Bill Smith**

Senior Environmental Specialist, Bill Smith, presented the information on Materials Management and Climate Mitigation which was authored by EPA Region X staff, and derived from the West Coast Climate and Materials Management Forum. (Bill co-chairs the Materials Management Subcommittee of the forum). It was EPA's intent to put together information that would educate people about the connection between materials management and climate change, as well as define materials management. EPA's definition of materials management is: "an approach to using and reusing resources most efficiently and sustainably throughout their lifecycles. It seeks to minimize materials used and all associated environmental impacts."

Since the turn of the century, the consumption of materials has increased dramatically. Energy primarily comes from fossil fuels in most of the country; in the NW the majority of the energy comes from hydropower. We do not have the same ghg impacts from energy production. The provision of goods and food contribute 42% of the nations' ghg emissions; transportation of people and energy in our buildings contributes about one-half (24%) of the nations emissions. 32% of the nations emissions are a direct result of producing the materials consumed; 7% is from shipping; 2.2% is for disposal.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. The national recycling rate is 33%. A benefit of recycling is it's a cost effective way to reduce ghgs. Curbside recycling programs are inexpensive compared to upgrading residential energy efficiency or producing wind power.

The current trend is the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) laws. There are two EPR laws in WA state, the Ewaste Law which was passed in 2006 and the Mercury Lighting Law which has yet to go into effect, but there will be a similar type of take-back program for fluorescent lighting (set-up and paid for by the manufacturers). Product categories that are covered by EPR laws include: batteries, carpet, electronics, cell phones, and paint. Local governments can adopt EPR resolutions. Although Tacoma does not have a resolution, they do have a strong statement of support for product stewardship approaches in the climate action plan. Product stewardship is the idea that if the responsibility of end-of-life costs is placed on the manufacturers, they will make different decisions upfront on the design of their products.

Because it is a more hand-on labor intensive activity, recycling typically generates jobs anywhere from 6-1 to 10-1 over disposal. Diverting a ton of recyclable/compostable material has twice the economic impact of sending it to a landfill. If WA state were to recycle 75-80% of the current curbside materials, this would create an additional 2K jobs, reduce ghg emissions by 467K metric tons and generate an additional \$48M of recyclable commodity value. The increase to 100% recycling nationally yields 450M metric tons of ghg reductions per year.

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) commissioned a study to look at ghg impacts of various water delivery systems. Drinking bottled water and recycling the bottles reduces ghg emissions by 16% vs. a 79-98% reduction by drinking tap water. ODEQ also found that plastic shipping bags, even if made from virgin resources and not recycled, have lower environmental burdens in most categories than cardboard boxes, even if the boxes contain high-levels of recycled content. Another ODEQ study found that building smaller homes reduces both material and energy use over time, and is the most significant leverage point for creating greener buildings.

The concept of collaborative consumption = sharing. There are hundreds of websites dedicated to the sharing and resale of used goods. Governments also provide libraries, including tool libraries, where people can share and reuse many types of goods; this access proves to be better than ownership. A good website for more information www.captoolkit.wikispaces.com.

Following the presentation, members discussed various options on how the STC would move forward in organizing a public awareness campaign.

▪ **Finalization of 2012 Priorities/Work Plan Discussion**

Members were given an opportunity to revisit the 2012 priorities in an effort to finalize this 'living' document. Staff will share the results with the City's senior management team.

With the onset of a new year, members are anxious to begin looking at ideas and ways in which to generate and maintain momentum on the work plan. It was suggested appointing one or two members to take accountability for each of the *major* projects within the five categories (land use/green building, transportation, energy efficiency, waste reduction/recycling, and education/outreach. By the February meeting, members will have reviewed their commitments and outlined a timeline of what they hope to be accomplished. The next level of detail on the work plan implementation plan will be discussed at the next meeting.

▪ **Staff Updates**

- Budget cuts – Information from a recent Study Session indicated that 107 public safety positions were being negotiated and 69 general government positions impacted. 14 will no longer be employees, 36 who received layoff notices were being mitigated by either taking pay cuts or being transferred to utility-funded positions. (Employee names are not being released).

The Commission's main concern with recent budget cuts is the possible loss of staff for those that have been tasked with implementing items that directly effect sustainability (i.e., mobility master plan). And that the remaining staff, as a result, will be more directly focused on day-to-day duties and may consider sustainability a secondary importance

- Members reviewed the Sustainable Tacoma Commission's letter of support to the City's Planning Department for the Dome/Brewery Subarea Plan and EIS scoping process.
- Legislative Updates
 - Bill related to the non-attainment area for small particulate matter; designed to clarify the authority of PSCAA; Senate to hear on January 20

- Bill (reintroduced) to increase the size of the facility to 3mw, and increase the existing cap for utility service territory
- Possible Bill by the WA Environmental Coalition to clarify some of the inconsistencies in state law regarding the release by the utility of customer consumption data (public disclosure laws)
- Bill that would qualify most biomasses renewable energy resources for the purposes of burning wood
- There is legislation to preempt counties and cities on the siting of small alternative energy facilities and give that authority to the state.
- House Bill on community solar that – re: storage of energy on off-beat hours from small customer generator
- There may be some tax exemptions/credits for renewable energy that will be expiring in 2012/2013
- Senator Chase has introduced a bottle Bill (deposit raised from \$.05 to \$.10); she also introduced a ban on non-compostable Styrofoam at restaurants, as well as a plastic bag ban; hearing will be held on January 11
- Bill on product stewardship of carpet, paint and batteries (all statewide)
- The Request for Proposal on community solar will go out soon
- Shift Happens – with the Mayor’s State of the City address and EB Alliance presentation - Tacoma Convention Center, January 30, 3:00 pm to 9:00

▪ **Public Comment**

There was no public comment

The next meeting of the Sustainable Tacoma Commission will be Tuesday, February 14, 2012, 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., Tacoma Municipal Building North, 733 Market Street, Room 16.