



CITY OF TACOMA SUSTAINABLE TACOMA COMMISSION MEETING NOTES

Date: December 13, 2016

Commission Members Present: Lowell Wyse, Philip Coughlan, Alison Baur, Peter Hickman, Theda Braddock, Josh Jorgensen, Christine Cooley

Commission Members Excused: Sarah Chessman, Alexandra Brewer, Alyssa Illich

Others Present: Kristin Lynett, Emily Campbell, Ryan Dicks, Emma Keese, Erica Tucci, Jane Moore, Jim Parvey, Jetta Antonakos

- **Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 pm.

- **Approval of November 8, 2016 Meeting Notes**

The November meeting notes were approved with no changes.

- **Review of November Agenda**

- **Pierce County Sustainability Plan – Ryan Dicks**

Ryan is the Sustainability Manager for Pierce County, and has been since 2009. He gave an overview of their Sustainability 2020 Plan using their website as reference. Pierce County has 3,200 employees and owns 7,000 acres of forestland. They focus on saving money, limiting waste, protecting the environment and protecting human health. They have ten focus areas for sustainability right now, some of which include climate change resilience, air quality, water quality, and transportation. Air quality has historically been a problem for the County: the biggest problem has been in winter from woodstove smoke, and they were in violation of federal regulations for air quality. To get in compliance, they had to work with the public to get rid of uncertified woodstoves, educate people about wood smoke, and give tickets for violations of burn bans. In 2009, they were at 44ppm, while 35ppm was the allowable limit, and now they are at 32ppm. The County's goal is to achieve 25ppm for safe human health. More efficient engines and potentially greater electric vehicle use will hopefully help them achieve that goal.

The County is reducing energy use in its buildings, and one current and very important initiative is switching to LED lights in parking garages. Considering growth in the County, they have achieved significant energy and money savings with their sustainability efforts. A big success was their ability to hire a Resource Conservation Manager (RCM) which helped them make some of their important energy saving improvements. A Commissioner asked if dollar savings have been tracked back to the RCM. Ryan answered that RCMs generally pay for themselves more than 100%, and that an RCM is one of the best things to have. A big challenge for efficiency is that the County buildings and employees are so spread out.

Ryan went into some detail on the other sustainability focus areas. Most of this information can be found on Pierce County's website, <http://www.co.pierce.wa.us/Index.aspx?NID=2058>. They plan to create nine teams to achieve the plan (putting Human Health in with Commute Trip Reduction).

The County has saved about \$95,000 on paper and switched to 100% recycled paper, mostly by moving to double-sided printing and moving away from printing all together. Big Belly trash compactors collect 5-6 times as much trash as regular trash cans, and they have a good return on investment because it reduces staff time and trips to empty the bins. The County is working to support local markets for County farms, such as having boxes of local food delivered to County buildings for employees to purchase, and creating the Puget Sound Fresh app. The City of Tacoma will be a partner in creating their Climate Change Resilience Strategy. A Commissioner asked if the flood control district will help with the resilience study? Yes, it is a possibility, especially since the emergency management is a good place to start the conversation. The County has an "Electric First" policy for vehicles and equipment. When it comes to electric equipment, the benefit is largely to human health. The County has already reduced fossil fuel use by 13%, and aims to reduce by 20%. Ryan hopes the County will start charging employees for parking. A Commissioner asked if they are looking at hydrogen as a fuel option. They will look at it, but electric vehicles are here and are already working well and are affordable. Hydrogen fuel is something to consider for the County's two ferries, though electric ferries are an option too once the technology catches up. Switching to an alternative fuel source for the ferries could save 160,000 gallons of diesel.

A Commissioner asked if the County uses chemical on its facilities. They have dramatically reduced their use, but still have a way to go. A Commissioner made the recommendation to switch to better chemicals, such as avoiding neonicotinoids, while working on moving away from them all together.

A Commissioner asked about the relationship between Pierce County and the City of Tacoma. They share information and collaborate, but there isn't a formal relationship really. County buildings in the city have to comply with City regulations and use City services. A Commissioner would like to see the relationships formalized and institutionalized.

A Commissioner asked if the County has a group similar to the Commissioner. Not really, but they have an internal Green Team and they will be creating the 9 work groups to implement the Sustainability 2020 Plan. There is an informal group called the Sustainability Coalition that meets monthly. The Commissioner asked if their efforts go beyond the scope of County operations to engage with citizens. Yes, the new plan calls for him to meet with a new community group monthly and he is working on being more externally focused. The Commissioner mentioned a sense that people in the County outside of the City don't focus as much on environmental sustainability. Ryan responded that he tries to include them, but there needs to be resources dedicated to it and someone needs to be in charge. He believes that the County has done a great job getting employees to buy-in. A Commissioner asked if Ryan could come to Steilacoom to help encourage and support sustainability, and he would be happy to.

A Commissioner will send information to Ryan so he can add "plant a tree" to the actions on the webpage.

- **Metro Parks Tacoma Sustainability Plan – Emily Watts**

Emily Watts was not able to attend so this agenda item did not happen.

In place of this, Jane Moore, Chair of the City of Tacoma's Transportation Commission, mentioned the City's North 21st Street redesign project. The project currently lacks funding but will be impacted by the placement of Tacoma Power's new power poles. She briefly mentioned the design options; option one has a single vehicle lane in each direction with bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and the hybrid option also has single lanes of travel, but allows for potential future addition of a second lane in one direction which wouldn't be consistent with the goals of the Transportation Master Plan. There has been disagreement between the public and parts of City Council about which option is preferred. People will be speaking about this at tonight's Citizens' Forum at City Council. There is no formal

comment period on the design, and the design is up to City staff to determine. There was a question of which design option is recommended by staff, and Jane said they have recommended to Council the hybrid option with the potential future addition of a second lane. She briefly mentioned the City's and a Council Member's outreach. There was concern about the Council Member putting out a survey individually, rather than opening it up to a formal public comment and allowing equal opportunity to participate. Jim Parvey mentioned that it might be helpful if there was a City standard for how to do a survey. A member suggested having best practices while the standard was developed. A Commissioner asked about the timeline for deciding on a design option, and about the argument for the hybrid option. Jane gave a few reasons for the hybrid including traffic backup and safety if cars speed along side streets. The deadline is whenever TPU finalizes their power pole design for installation, which should be in the next month or two.

- **Subcommittees Discussion and 2017 Goal Setting**

Each subcommittee reported out about what they have accomplished or discussed since the last Commission meeting.

Buildings and Energy: The discussed energy updates and Tacoma Public Utilities (TPU) provided them with an info sheet on this. They have two potential dates for an upcoming meeting at TPU with Clark, Erica, Lisa and Stephen: December 20th 9am and December 21st 1pm. They discussed a Green Building Advocate and the Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability (OEPS) potentially funding two interns for 6 months. Kristi shared that there is currently discussion about possibly placing one intern in the City's Permitting Department. OEPS is currently looking at staffing needs for 2017, and this should help reveal if they have capacity to do this. OEPS would need to have conversations with Planning about this. OEPS should know the plan by the end of January 2017. The group discussed wanting to have Public Works come talk with them about LED lights in the spring. They briefly talked about funding for the RCM, which might happen at the biennium mid-point. STC would like to support OEPS getting an RCM. Kristi mentioned having a strategic opportunity to talk to the Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee (IPS) about the RCM and inviting Ryan Dicks to join a possible meeting in late summer.

The group also mentioned that they want the search criteria for a new City Manager to include a focus on sustainability. The Commission should send a letter to City Council about this. Phil and Chrissy will draft a letter.

Transportation: The group discussed electric vehicles (EVs) and doing outreach for the South Sound Sustainability Expo in the spring. OEPS applied for an EV grant, and expects to hear back next week about that. OEPS met with TPU staff and are excited to potentially partner with them on EVs. TPU is doing a cost-benefit study on EV infrastructure, education and outreach. Kristi would like to plan ahead on this and be intentional about working on EVs through OEPS. There is a lot of excitement around this for people who are already focused on EVs which might not be translating to the public.

A Commissioner attended a City workshop on the redesign of Portland Ave to C Street which will connect with Water Flume Line and Prairie Line trails. Attendees designed their own streets, and could include things like street trees, high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes for buses, safety for pedestrians, and other design elements. Now might be a good time for the Commission to weigh in on this and to encourage green stormwater infrastructure and sustainable elements. The comment period is open for another month or so. Commission members should look at the project's website which Kristi will send out after the meeting.

The group wants Public Works to present updates on energy, building, green roads and LED lights. Jim Parvey should be informed that this is a specific request.

Materials Management: The group talked about product stewardship, incentives for waste and recycling, food grinders, new building codes, disposable bags and more. The City's Solid Waste Department is hiring a Resource Conservation Specialist (RCS) and a Management Analyst. They would like the RCS to look at ways to use incentives to encourage recycling. They plan to contact Andy in Solid Waste to have Commissioners participate in Solid Waste ride-alongs. They are looking into building requirements for a recycling infrastructure law.

They also want interim milestones for implementation of the Sustainable Materials Management Plan (SMMP), an update on implementation of the Bring Your Own Bag law, an update on Environmental Action Plan (EAP) targets, and an update on OEPS's budget. They plan to ask Jetta the status of food grinder use residentially and commercially. Jetta spoke briefly on this.

Natural Systems: A Commissioner started *Tacoma Needs Trees*, a Facebook page to support trees in Tacoma. *Tacoma Needs Trees* is hosting an event on January 5th during Green Drinks to talk about tree policies, and it will be the 90th birthday for Tacoma's tree codes. The subcommittee wants updates from staff every six months or so about trees and stormwater. OEPS got funding to develop an Urban Forestry Management Plan, and there will be opportunities for STC to comment on the plan. It will be six-ten months to develop the plan, and it should include a little open space in addition to forestry.

Air and Local Food: The group wanted an update from Ryan Dicks on the woodstove program. They have been emailing with Dean Jackson and Kristen McIvor.

Climate Resiliency: The group asked who is on this subcommittee. The group may not have ever met. Chrissy will follow-up with members. OEPS got some grant money to participate in sea level study work. Kristi will share the draft scope when it is available.

Education and Outreach: The group wants to do the exercise they previously did with BYOB again. They want to reach communities that aren't normally engaged with sustainability. This spring might be a good time to launch that. Chrissy will check the Google drive.

Chrissy passed around a list of City Committees, Boards and Commissions (CBC), which shows potentials for collaboration. The Historic Preservation Group, the Hilltop Action Coalition, Planning Commission, Tacoma Arts Commission, City Events and Recognition Committee are all groups that have expressed interest in working with the Commission.

Chrissy asked everyone to submit their presentation requests (including timeframes) to her or Kristi by January 5th so they can put together a draft plan for presentations for 2017 by next meeting. There was a clarifying question about if subcommittee requested presentations should be delivered to the entire group or just to the subcommittee – this is a judgement call.

Chrissy reminded Commissioners to submit their subcommittee meeting minutes so they can be posted on the Google Doc.

▪ **Staff Updates**

- Chrissy presented a card to Kristi and Jim on behalf of the Commission in appreciation for their staff support.
- Kristi introduced Emma, OEPS's new AmeriCorps member. She briefly introduced herself.
- Kristi invited members to participate in a 1-hour Expo planning meeting in early January. Chrissy, Josh, Peter and Alison are interested in attending, but the meeting might need to be the third week of January to accommodate schedules.
- OEPS is looking to develop a short presentation series to include preventing wasted food, taking sustainability to the next level, urban forestry, climate science and the Environmental Action Plan. Peter Chrissy Phil and Lowell and maybe Lexi are interested in attending a meeting to review the climate change presentation. These would be available to the public and groups upon request, and OEPS and the STC might do outreach to specific groups.
- In January, Kristi will try to get someone to present on green roads and she may give a 10 minute BYOB update. In March there may be a draft EAP update presentation.
- OEPS is working with Pierce County to consider projects to use some of the \$104 million coming to Washington State from the Volkswagen settlement. More money will be coming in the future similar to this.
- On February 18th there is an evening fundraiser for the Code Innovation Database.

- **Public Comment**

In addition to her earlier overview of the North 21st Street project, Jane mentioned that option one will allow the City to apply for grant funding for stormwater projects, while the hybrid design wouldn't allow that because of the potential future addition of the addition lane.

Jane also shared that the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) has performance measures that are proving difficult to obtain data to measure, so they will be revised and will likely follow measures in the EAP.

- **Objectives for Next Meeting**

None were set.

- **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 5:33 pm.

The next meeting of the Sustainable Tacoma Commission will be Tuesday, January 10, 2016, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., Tacoma Municipal Building, 747 Market Street, 9th Floor Visibility Center.