

MINUTES FOR THE CLIMATE & ENERGY ACTION PLAN ad hoc COMMITTEE
Wednesday, January 4, 2017
Siskiyou Room, 51 Winburn Way

1. Call to Order

Councilor Rich Rosenthal called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Committee members Jim Hartman, Cindy Bernard, Roxane Beigel-Coryell, Bryan Sohl, Greg Jones, Claudia Alick, and Louise Shawkat were present. Staff member Adam Hanks was present. Committee member James McGinnis arrived late. Committee members Claire Pryor, Isaac Bevers, Stuart Green, and Marni Koopman were absent.

Rosenthal and Hanks gave an overview of upcoming meeting dates and some of the alternate Council presentation possibilities. Rosenthal stated that he is sensitive to deadlines but feels that altering the date to present this information to Council makes sense in order to have a good result. Group discussed how the best way to be effectively prepared for the upcoming Council study session and regular meeting presentations. Agreed that, to the degree its possible, all members of the group will attend these meetings.

Committee member James McGinnis arrived 3:38 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes

Hartman requested two changes to the minutes, group agreed he should email them to staff and the minutes will be reconsidered at the next meeting.

3. Public Input

Robert Block-Brown – thanked the group for their time and commitment. Stated that at the December 20th City Council meeting there was a group of youth who testified concerning the critical nature of the ordinance. He was pleased to see that this is scheduled for presentation at a Council study session and feels is it most important that the group spend their time getting the implementation plan ready. He stated he is concerned that in the implementation plan the staff position is listed as a coordinator position, not an administrator level position. This position will need to work on negotiating with businesses and the community as well as integrate policy throughout the city. The implementation plan needs much stronger language with goals that the departments will have to achieve. Also he is concerned that the list of departments included in the future commission does not include someone from Administrative Services, who will be needed to cover risk management issues, along with other similar issues. Also, why is there no Administration staff other than conservation staff?

James Stephens –stated there will be an electric bus demonstration on January 10th. Five stops are organized in various Ashland locations, each lasting approximately two hours. The bus is a 40-foot transit bus, run entirely by electricity. If charged by renewable energy options, the bus creates no greenhouse gases. He gave a rundown of the schedule for January 10th.

Ray Mallett – stated the implementation plan is great progress but he questions near-term vs. mid-term actions and how those timeframes were established. He wondered why some of the

mid-term actions started so late, when many could be started immediately. Is the timeframe related to completion-date rather than start-date?

Huelz Gutchen – stated he can't keep up with all the news of global warming getting worse. He will send another e-mail explaining the double-bundle. The highest priority of Council should be fixing climate change so we need more than just one staff member to do it. We need ten to twenty new staff members plus multiple commissions. What we really need is engineers to understand this issue.

Hanks gave information regarding the staff position in the implementation plan and why it is proposed as it is. More information will be coming to the group but they need to be aware that there are lots of issues related to things like union contracts, City classification and compensation policies, budget, and keeping the job consistent with similar position in other organizations which all go into what the position can and cannot be. He also informed Mr. Mallett that the proposed action timelines were established due to budget and staff availability.

4. Implementation Plan

Hanks asked the group for overall issues or concerns with the plan, and asked them to recognize that many of the specific details will occur outside of this policy-level document. He gave examples of the types of actions and indicators which are currently placeholders for either yet-to-be-determined projects or are currently lacking tracking methods.

Rosenthal stated that “committee” needs to be changed to “commission” in the document. He stated that an organizational chart might be helpful for the group to understand where the proposed position may fit, but ultimately that decision is up to Council. Group discussed the proposed position and raised concerns with how to balance the need to “get things done” and still have enough oversight throughout the City organization. Hanks and Rosenthal reminded the group that it's not the committee's charge to dictate job descriptions or staff work.

Group discussed ways to make the plan more readable including: doing something like a “household equivalent” to make larger numbers more understandable; indicators in both electric and natural gas; switching references to “neighborhoods” to “populations” as Ashland doesn't have neighborhoods the way larger cities do; and including symbols and definitions in both the action and implementation plans.

Group discussed the equity section and whether or not it reflected previous discussions. Most in the group liked the section, Alick felt it should be stronger, particularly as it's missing disability as a callout and information about accessibility.

Alick raised concerns that there isn't mention in the plan about connecting or partnering with other cities in the valley. Hanks stated that this is in the cross-cutting strategies, but agreed that clearer wording was necessary.

5. Draft Ordinance

Rosenthal stated that the draft in the packet may be as far as this group can go until Council gives a general thumbs up and direction for any changes they may want to see.

Group discussed whether they want to continue with the previous decision to have two members of the proposed commission under the age of 25. Sohl raised concerns that the population under 25 tends to be fairly transient and this may pose challenges in keeping those seats filled. Rosenthal stated that he doesn't want to lose the unique voice this group has gained by having the two high school members. Hanks gave some history of the challenges other commissions have faced in getting and keeping high school or college age members.

Sohl/Hartman m/s that of the nine members of the proposed commission, at least two should be under the age of 30 at the time of appointment, with at least one of those under the age of 25. Discussion: Bernard stated that knowing it is always a challenge to fill positions, she is concerned that this may limit the quality of the membership (i.e. what if there is someone outside of that age range who might do a more effective job?). She would rather this be a recommendation and not a requirement of the membership. Shawkat stated that 25-30 isn't a wide enough age range and she would rather have the upper end be 35.

Sohl/Hartman agreed to amend the motion to change, "under the age of 30" to, "under the age of 35." Discussion continued: Bernard stated that this change makes her more comfortable with the motion though she is still concerned with limited the membership. Sohl stated that having this membership requirement sends a strong signal to all the youth who have been participating that their input is appreciated and valuable. Beigel-Coryell stated that she agrees their input has been valuable, especially as the community as a whole tends to be older. Jones stated that the key is finding a person who will actively recruit the best participants. **Voice Vote: All Ayes. Motion Passes.**

Group gave some minor gramatic edits to the ordinance to Hanks.

6. Next Meeting

The upcoming meeting schedule is as follows:

January 18, 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

January 23, 5:30 p.m. preview of plan at Council Study Session (please note: this date is subject to change)

7. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 5:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Diana Shippet, Executive Assistant