

MINUTES FOR THE CLIMATE & ENERGY ACTION PLAN ad hoc COMMITTEE
Wednesday, May 18, 2016
Siskiyou Room, 51 Winburn Way

1. Call to Order

Councilor Rich Rosenthal called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Committee members James McGinnis, Cindy Bernard, Greg Jones, Isaac Bevers, Jim Hartman, Bryan Sohl, Marni Koopman, Louise Shawkat, Roxane Beigel-Coryell, and Claudia Alick were present. Staff member Adam Hanks was present. Consultant Andrea Martin and Eugene City Councilor Alan Zelenka participated in the meeting by phone.

2. Approval of minutes

Bevers clarified names of public speakers from previous minutes.

Minutes were approved with amendments made by Bevers.

3. Around the Room

Group did around the room team building regarding their favorite part of their morning routine.

4. Public Input

Huelz Gutchen: Stated he has been talking at City Council meetings for a while and recently has been putting those discussions on YouTube. He stated that Commissioner Hartman recently called him a bulldog – he doesn't believe he is, but that he is just a community development director "wanna be." He wants this position because climate issues are so important. He stated that in China there are over 1 billion people, all on one grid. There is one set of rules for all aspects of electricity use, solar panel installation, etc. We can regulate similarly here. He stated that Exxon recently got into trouble for hiding climate issues for years.

Robert Block-Brown: He is here representing Rogue Climate and is in support of all the youth presentations and participation in this process. He offered appreciation for the group's work. He encouraged the group to have the plan be science-based, socially equitable, and something that protects Ashland's quality of life. He also encouraged the group to have an ordinance in order to make sure there is plan accountability. He and Rogue Climate are looking forward to the open house and they, along with the Interfaith Social Justice Coalition, have been putting out information about the open house to encourage participation.

Ken Crocker: Stated that he has been sitting with two things since the last meeting: 1) that it seems like we're on a path to set targets of where we want to be in 2050 but we should avoid focusing on targets which may change. He instead encouraged the group to focus on how to change Ashland culturally to meet the challenge of climate change. In other words, be focused on what we can do to be more adaptable. 2) The plan relies on the City of Ashland to help implement and this might be scary for city staff. The group needs to build into the plan sufficient resources for city staff to implement effectively. He encouraged Hanks in his role as the liaison to city staff.

5. Review of Climate Assessment Document

Hanks stated the document is currently still in draft form. Some of the document will be adjusted for the sake of public understanding and inclusion in the upcoming open house. Consultant Martin reviewed some of the plan and requested the group give input on what might be missing. This document is related to the “primary” climate impacts, but doesn’t take the next step to say how these impacts might affect specific sectors in the community.

Martin reiterated that there will be visuals (charts, graphs, etc.) added to make the document more readable before it is finalized.

Group discussed the possibility of including low and high climate predictions. Some thought that Cascadia’s choice of moderate and extreme predictions were well chosen. Most of the group agreed that using standard scenarios is important for consistency between the plans of various communities in the northwest. There was some concern that much of the information is very global – which is important for framing – but not much is reflective of our specific area.

Group discussed the desire to have the specific data sources referenced better in the document.

Group requested inclusion of both night-time temperature and freezing temperature predictions. Martin agreed to see if those could be included.

Group discussed possible inclusion of analysis of demographic shifts due to climate change (climate refugees). Martin stated that there likely isn’t data available for this.

Group discussed why the climate science primer is on page 28, rather than at the beginning of the document. Martin stated this was done because most of the people who will be looking at this document are looking for the hard science, and won’t need the primer. Group determined that including a brief primer in the executive summary might help.

6. Open House #1

Martin thanked the group for the input they gave at the last committee meeting. She stated they are working on getting a videographer to record the event and participate in one of the stations. She gave details of when the committee needs to arrive and how they will be used at the open house. Group gave their general preferences regarding which station they would like to be assigned. Group thanked Martin for her work. Martin’s conference call ended.

7. Goals and Targets in Ordinance Form

Group discussed whether it would be appropriate to let the Council know at the scheduled July update that there is a strong possibility of an ordinance proposed as part of this plan. Group discussed what timeline would be most appropriate.

Eugene City Council member, Alan Zelenka, joined the group via conference call to discuss how the ordinance in Eugene came to be, what has been positive from the ordinance and what challenges they have faced due to the ordinance. Some of what he encourage the group to consider when drafting/proposing an ordinance:

- Having an ordinance has the force of law and public hearings are required for changes to the ordinance.
- Use the ordinance (or discussions of the ordinance) to engage the community to participate in the plan.
- Be specific on timelines for every piece of the plan.
- Have scientifically-based actions. “Having an unrealistic goal is worse than having no goal.”
- Short-term goals need to be consistent with long-term goals. Having an ordinance helps keep that consistency.
- Think about the overall costs – focus on the lowest cost options for achieving goals. In other words, having either social or economic costs too high will cause the plan to fail.
- Make sure that the reporting requirements are realistic.

Group discussed with Zelenka if there has been any negativity from the plan or the ordinance. He stated there hasn't been much, other than people frustrated by the perception that nothing is being done. He stated that Cities aren't good at letting people know what they have achieved, and encouraged the group and the city to be transparent about every achievement and to frequently report what they are doing well.

Group asked if Eugene included consumption in their plan. He stated the next update to the plan will include some of that, it's just harder to track accurately.

Group asked if the ordinance helped to make funds available for city projects (or staffing). Zelenka stated that there was no real additional funding but that it has helped create a “core staff” team who help focus and implement projects in each department. It also helps with selecting what projects will get funded in the CIP.

Group asked if the Eugene plan considered including carbon offsets to achieve goals. Zelenka stated they are now considering using offset to achieve the 2020 goals (up to 40% of the goal). They are looking into focusing on local offsets to also use it as a “mini economic development tool.”

Group thanked Zelenka for his information and his phone call ended.

Group discussed whether it was appropriate to move forward with an ordinance at this time. Most agreed it was too early in the process to create a specific ordinance but it shouldn't be left out of the process. Most felt it was important to get more community input and to let the Council know that this concept will likely be coming to them as part of the action plan. Group expressed concerns with rushing to an ordinance without getting the details correct.

8. Geos Project Update

Koopman stated that Geos is moving forward with their polling project. They have incorporated the comments from the committee and will be doing a test run of the poll next week. Geos is also doing five vulnerability meetings with local community leaders. They are hoping to schedule most of these meetings in early June.

Rosenthal departed the meeting at 7:21 p.m.

Koopman stated that the vulnerability assessment information will be used in the group's process, mostly during the development of adaptation strategies. Hopefully the information gathered will make the adaptation strategies more robust.

9. Next Meeting

Hanks stated that there have been some adjustments to the meeting schedule (shown in packet) to reflect a better connection between the projects such as the open houses and other group activities. The next full-committee meeting is June 15, 2016 at 5:30 p.m., though members are encouraged to attend the city staff and committee member workshop on May 25th at 2:00 p.m.

10. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Diana Shiplet, Executive Assistant