

## **MINUTES FOR THE CLIMATE & ENERGY ACTION PLAN ad hoc COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, July 6, 2016**

**Siskiyou Room, 51 Winburn Way**

### **1. Call to Order**

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

Committee members Cindy Bernard, Bryan Sohl, Jim Hartman, James McGinnis, Roxane Beigel-Coryell, Sarah Lasoff, Cluadia Alick, and Stuart Green were present. Staff member Adam Hanks was present. Consultants Andrea Martin and Kendra White were present via speakerphone.

### **2. Around the Room**

Group did an around the room team building regarding something joyful they did on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday.

### **3. Public Input**

Huelz Gutchen: Stated that there are many kinds of renewable energy – solar is the most effective here. Solar created near or very near residences, businesses, and overall community is the most effective, particularly solar created on-site, because it eliminates the need for wires. Another model for solar production is corporate-owned. This is a relatively new model where the utility acquires, finances, and maintains the solar panels installed on residences or businesses. If utility and planning departments work together, with good outreach, this is the most promising market for solar. If it's done wrong though it could be undersubscribed and have too high of a cost. We need to have people pre-educated on this possibility.

Ray Molett: Stated he was happy to see at the last meeting that the group approved consumption-based reductions. He is working with SOCAN to find a way to calculate those emissions. There is a Berkeley calculator he hopes can be used by City residents.

Hannah Sohl: Stated that she sent a draft ordinance to members of the group and staff and got great feedback. She would love to be able to share the updated version of the ordinance. She gave information about Eugene and the update they have recently approved to their ordinance in order to meet goals. She stated that she is concerned that the group is considering waiting until the plan is finished to propose the ordinance. There is currently lots of excitement and momentum regarding the ordinance and she is worried that we will lose the political will, especially with the holidays. The current Council seems to be good at pushing climate actions forward and she thinks the group should do the ordinance while they can.

Ken Crocker: Stated he recently traveled in Europe and to the city of Davis, California. He found it neat seeing how other communities have embraced pedestrians, alternative energy, etc. He recently read an article about the proposal to narrow East Main Street to two lanes and wondered how much of that decision was made in consideration of climate change. Is the group

setting this plan up so that all decisions are made with climate action as the most important factor? He hopes that the group has been talking about making a cultural shift and not just a metrics tracking plan. He wanted to know how the group, he, and others can help make that cultural change.

#### **4. Review of Goals & Targets**

Group discussed the bullet points in the draft Council Communication included in the packet.

- Be more than carbon neutral by 2050.
- Goal/target should include community consumption (GHG from purchased goods and services).

Several members of the group stated that after leaving last meeting they became concerned with the decisions made. Partly they felt, “more than carbon neutral,” is too ill-defined (how much “more”?) and partly they worried these goals the plan too ‘kooky’ for Council and the community to accept. However, group members were also concerned that the goal might get too watered-down while trying to please everyone.

Group discussed the possibility of having the goal be slightly lower (carbon-neutral, not more than carbon neutral) but by an earlier deadline so that it’s still a highly aggressive target. Some group members raised concerns that, with the possibility of having the goals and targets in ordinance form, they can’t be entirely aspirational – they need to be based on what we can actually achieve.

#### **McGinnis/Hartman m/s that the plan have a goal of 100% carbon neutral by 2050.**

**Discussion:** McGinnis stated that after hearing the conversation it’s clear we need to have a realistic goal. Hartman stated the hard part of this, or any, goal is the cost. Based on his estimates this could cost as much as 1% of every Ashland resident’s annual income. Alick raised concerns that with this goal we are doing what is easy for the community rather than what is necessary (you shoot for the moon, not for only going part-way).

Sohl stated that Seattle’s plan is carbon neutral by 2050. With our limited growth and small city size we should be able to do better. He would prefer an end date of 2045. Beigel-Coryell stated that in her experience working on SOU’s action plan, carbon neutral is a very difficult goal and possibly not achievable, no matter the end year target. Green stated he agrees with Beigel-Coryell. Having a lower goal doesn’t mean that we can’t make achievements that go beyond the stated goal. There are other ways to be a leader than just having the most aggressive goal.

**Vote: 4 Ayes, 4 Nays, Motion Fails.**

#### **Bernard/Beigel-Coryell m/s that the plan have a goal of 85% reduction by 2050, with the understanding that five-years from plan adoption the goal will be reassessed.**

**Discussion:** Bernard stated we need to make sure the plan is realistic and understandable for the average layperson (this includes most of the Councilors). This seems to be a more affordable and attainable goal. She feels it is worse to set a higher goal and fail than to succeed fully on a more

realistic goal. Beigel-Coryell stated it will be easier to get the plan adopted if the goal is achievable. The goal can always be changed or moved higher with new technology, data or community will.

Group discussed whether the goal needs to be achievable or should be our “shot at the moon.” Alick raised concerns that the group is lowering the goal only because they are afraid of other people’s reactions. She doesn’t think that it’s the role of the committee to be afraid. Hartman stated that he hopes the goal will inspire others, which seems to require a more aggressive goal than 85%.

Beigel-Coryell stated that if the goal doesn’t contain consumption she would be okay with a higher target but including consumption means we can never reach 100%, even 85% is probably beyond our ability. Rosenthal stated he can’t support this target because it wouldn’t be inspiring to the community or others.

**Vote: 3 Ayes, 5 Nays, Motion Fails.**

Group discussed inclusion of consumption in the target. No other community currently has consumption in their targets because plans need to be focused on things communities can influence or control. Most of consumption is outside of a local community’s sphere of control. Hartman stated that consumption can be included and reduction achieved, but only through offsets. Some of the group had concerns about use of offsets. Group mostly agreed that consumption reduction is important but don’t know if/how it’s possible to control or set a reduction goal.

**Sohl/Bernard m/s that the plan have 100% reduction in sector-based emissions by 2047, with interval goals occurring every five years, starting in 2022.**

**Discussion:** Sohl stated that he is proposing this but is still interested in how we can engage the citizenry in consumption reduction.

**Vote: 8 ayes, 0 Nays, Motion Passes.**

**Alick/Sohl m/s to have the plan include a goal of reducing consumption-based emissions by 50% by the same dates and interval review years as the sector-based targets.**

**Discussion:** Sohl stated he is concerned about how to get these reductions with out fully understanding how to track them or how much is within our control. McGinnis stated it’s premature to determine reduction numbers without full understanding of the issue. It would be better to determine this goal later in the process after further study.

**Alick/Sohl both agreed to withdraw the motion, so long as the topic is addressed later in the process.** Group agreed further discussion is necessary. **Motion withdrawn.**

Hanks stated that Cascadia is working to get better consumption-related numbers and reminded the group that just because there is no specific goal doesn’t mean there can’t be consumption-related actions in the final plan.

- Retain the option to include the purchase of carbon offsets as a contributing solution.

Group discussed the desire to focus on local offsets. Hanks stated that most local offsets can't really qualify because you can't count the reduction twice in a single community (no "double-dipping" on reduction calculations). Group generally agreed to, "retain the option to include carbon offsets, if we can't achieve goals/targets by any other means."

- Include specific City operations goals/targets – both in overall GHG form and fossil-fuel specific.

Group all agreed to this goal.

- Base year for the plan is 2015.

Group all agreed to this goal.

- Intermediate targets in five-year increments, starting in 2020.

Group agreed that, based on previous discussion related to the overall goal, this should start in 2022. Additionally, they mostly agreed that these intermediate targets don't have to necessarily line up perfectly with the budget cycles as the City should always be pre-planning for upcoming targets.

- Plan should include action for goals/targets to be adopted by ordinance (no recommendation yet on whether the ordinance adoption should come before or after the plan approval).

Group discussed the timeline for the ordinance. Some thought the timeline should be determined based on Council's reaction to the goals and targets (i.e. if they are fully supportive of the draft goals, the ordinance can come before, if they raise concerns it probably should come along-side or after the plan). Some felt that the group needs to be very clear with what is involved in an ordinance (what are the specific details? what are the penalties for failure to achieve the ordinance? how challenging is the ordinance to update? etc.) Hanks stated that, despite the repeated statement of it being, "legally-binding" there is no way to legal bind a community to an action plan. An ordinance does mean, however, that Council has to acknowledge the ordinance with regard to how decisions are made. McGinnis stated that the next open house is in September, it might be good to have this as part of the discussion related to that open house. Group agreed to continue discussing the ordinance possibility and potential timeline at future meetings.

- Goals/targets ordinance should match the plan goals/targets (even with the fact that the goals will include consumption).

Based on the previous discussions the group agreed to continue to discuss the ordinance, and asked that the part of the statement in parenthesis should be deleted.

### **5. Review of Cascadia's Goals/Targets Document**

Group discussed with Cascadia (via speaker phone) that there was confusion with the labeling of figure 1 as presented. They requested that it be labeled better, or have further explanation.

### **6. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be August 17, 2016, at 5:30 p.m. in the Siskiyou Room. Group requested that the following topics be on the agenda:

- Discussion of the next open house
- Discussion of ordinance possibility and timeline
- Discussion of how to deal with consumption-based emissions
- Discussion of how Council reacted to the goals and targets at their update

### **7. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 5:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Diana Shiplet, Executive Assistant