

MINUTES FOR THE CLIMATE & ENERGY ACTION PLAN ad hoc COMMITTEE
Wednesday, October 5, 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 Jim Hartman, Roxane Biegel-Coryell, Stuart Green, Isaac Bevers, Greg Jones, Louise Shawkat, Bryan Sohl, Cindy Bernard, and Marni Koopman were present. Staff member Adam Hanks and consultant Jeff Golden were present. Committee members Claudi Alick and James McGinnis arrived late.

2. Around the Room

Group did an around the room team building answering the question, ‘if you had to pick a color to describe the open house what would it be and why?’ In general, the group was concerned with low turnout but pleased with the discussions had by participants.

Claudia Alick arrived 3:35 p.m.

3. Public Input

Huelz Gutchen – stated he had recently send e-mails regarding double-bundle financing and asked the group to read them. He stated that the potential for carbon offsets to be used in order to make us 100% carbon neutral is obsolete, we need to have more creative ways to solve the problem.

Ray Mollett – thanked the group for the recent open house. He stated that he shares the concerns the group expressed regarding the low turnout and wondered if this was due to the nice weather, the day of the week it was held, or some other factor. He wondered if the committee has thought about what number of citizen participants is necessary to gain community consensus.

Joanne Eggers – stated that Tanya Graham of Geos Institute asked her to read a statement [the full statement is attached to these minutes].

Andrew Cubic – stated he attended the first open house in May and that it scared him into being part of the 10x20 supporters. He learned recently about the state’s electric proportionality of renewable mix and is asking the group to look at a standard mix. We shouldn’t allow the state to limit our use of or production of renewable energy. He stated that John Kennedy said that we choose to go to the moon and then we did. He hopes the committee chooses to aim high and then achieve it.

Robert Block-Brown – stated he agrees with the sentiments stated about the open house, there was good information and good organization but poor attendance. He talked with many people who just didn’t know about it. There was a poor job of advertising and outreach. He is hoping the group has a good way to collect information between now and the end of the process. He has

been working with Adam Hanks on parts of the draft ordinance. He recommends that the group propose creation of a position in the final ordinance. That position needs to be directly under the City Administrator. It needs to be that high level of a position so they can monitor all City operations. The plan and position don't work if the position isn't at a high enough level.

Allie Rosenbluth – stated that she is with Rogue Climate. She too is sad about the lack of attendance at the last open house. This may have been due to a communication error with who was in charge of outreach. She stated that she has concerns with the draft vision statement. There is nothing in the statement about social equity. She read aloud Rogue Climate's vision statement as an example of how to include social equity.

Michael Shore – stated he is scared by the lack of open house attendance and is concerned about how our Police and Fire departments would handle climate-related emergencies like a mega-fire. He stated that putting a chamber under your home to be safe from mega fires is important. He wonders if the City of Ashland has a plan in place to handle employee (in addition to community) safety during mega fires. He also wondered if there is an ability to change land use rules to include the ability to build structures to be safe and shelter in place in emergencies.

Jeff Sharpe – stated that the City is honored to have such a diverse and intelligent group working on the plan.

4. Public Input Summary

Jeff Golden, representing Cascadia Consulting Group, gave an overview of the public input received at and after the recent open house. Group discussed what Cascadia will be doing with the information received and whether Cascadia need anything additional from the group. Golden stated that Cascadia will continue to use the public input to prioritize actions and strategies. Group expressed concerns with using the input too greatly, as it there was such a small number of Ashland residents in attendance. Group discussed what might be missing from the public input. They agreed that social equity issues were likely underrepresented as most attendees seemed to be older, white, and relatively affluent.

Group discussed options for additional public input including discussions with specifically targeted groups, a "road show" to service organizations like Rotary, Elks, etc. or to local religious congregations, articles in the newspaper, and additional information on the City's web and social media pages.

Committee member McGinnis arrived 4:27 p.m.

Group requested that Rosenthal and/or staff member Hanks draft questions to aid in the October 15th discussion. Rosenthal agreed to this request.

Group discussed whether a statistically valid number of residents giving public input was necessary. Group determined that while getting input on the plan is still important, it is more important now to get support for the plan before going to Council. The plan is just the start of

this process, there is no way to make everyone happy but the group (and whomever continues this process) need to continue the conversation with the community. They need to continue to get input and support even after the plan is approved. McGinnis stated that it is the responsibility of this committee to make decisions in the best interest of the community. Koopman stated that at this point the group needs more targeted responses from those who have not yet been involved. Group agreed there has been input and discussion from those who already support doing a plan but what is lacking is hearing from those who are opposed or unsure about the need for a plan. Rosenthal requested that the group continue to offer suggestions on how to get the plan information out to those who have not yet been involved and staff will continue the already started process of targeting specific community representatives/sectors for input.

Jones requested that Cascadia inform the group as to their plans for advertising and future public input as agreed upon in their contract.

5. Vision Statement

McGinnis stated that during his small group discussion of actions and strategies they were concerned that the vision statement lacked specific focus. Hartman stated he would like to see the vision statement broken into simple action statements to motivate people and keep educating the public simple. Green stated that vision statements shouldn't include specifics - it should only be a zoomed-out view. Bevers stated any reference to social equity is missing from the current vision statement.

Group discussed ways to potentially word-smith the current statement but determined they did not have enough time for a full discussion at this meeting. Group agreed to send draft statement options to staff for inclusion in the next packet and to have this discussion at the October 15th meeting.

6. Next Meeting

The upcoming meeting schedule is as follows:

October 15, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

October 19, 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

November 2, 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.

10. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Diana Shiplet, Executive Assistant

My name is JoAnne Eggers and I am a member of the Board of Directors of the Geos Institute, which helps local leaders make decisions about climate change that are good for people and nature. Tonya Graham, our Executive Director, was planning to talk with you today, but has been called out of town for a family situation and has asked me to deliver this message in her place.

This committee and the City Council are facing some very important questions – the answers to which will set the trajectory for our local efforts to address climate change for many years to come.

The primary question at this point is how aggressive do we want to be in reducing greenhouse gas pollution in Ashland? On one hand it's a very simple question. Leading scientists tell us we need to get the atmospheric concentration of carbon down to 350 parts per million. That means initially becoming carbon neutral so we can stop the rise of that number. But that's not enough. Collectively we need to become a carbon sink, taking up more carbon than we emit. That is the global context within which this decision is being made.

Ashland citizens understand the danger of climate change and clearly are up for doing something serious about it. We can tell by how many people showed up at the Ashland Climate Challenge kickoff last November and the enthusiasm with which citizens are providing input to this process. As our ClimateWise team has traveled around the country helping communities address climate change, we have not often seen this level of local commitment and energy.

Few communities have set the goal of being carbon neutral in the U.S. To our knowledge, none have set the goal of being a carbon sink. Ashland could help anchor the bold side of this spectrum by setting either of these goals. We know there are concerns that we don't know exactly how to reach either of these goals or how to measure them. But someone has to figure it out. And Ashland ought to be part of that early scouting contingent brave

enough to go into uncharted territory and send word back to those who will follow. It's simply who we are.

Fortunately, human beings are good at the impossible. We have traveled to the moon. We jet around town in personal road rockets, some of which now pretty much drive themselves. We communicate with people all around the world in real time.

In the early 1900s, the Wright Brothers decided to build a flying machine that many people thought was simply not possible. But they set a goal and kept at it – even though keeping at it meant hurling themselves into the sky in a contraption that they knew they couldn't really control. They risked crashing many times to reach their goal. And then they shared what they learned so that those coming behind them could build on their success.

Fortunately, we don't have to be that brave. We don't have to put our lives on the line to reach this goal. But we should understand that their success was due to their courage in setting a make or break goal and their commitment to making it happen. They didn't say that in their spare time they would tinker around and see if they could build a flying machine. They said that they **WOULD BUILD** a flying machine. That's the kind of courage Ashland needs to exhibit in this decision.

Since not all communities will commit or be able to deliver on a bold goal, those with strong community support like Ashland need to set the pace. Let's set a bold, meaningful goal and show our commitment to it by passing an ordinance to make the Climate and Energy Action Plan fly.

That way, when our grandchildren ask us what we did once we knew about climate change, we can look them in the eye and honestly say that we simply did what needed to be done to protect their future.