

**Climate Impact Advisory Committee**  
APPROVED Meeting Minutes



Date: January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Location: RE Store, 2309 Meridian St, Bellingham

QUORUM	Y
<b>Members Present</b>	
Casey Harman	X
Tim Miller	X
Treva Coe	X
Eric Grossman	X
Ellyn Murphy	
John Yakawich	X
David Kershner	X
Gabriel Westergreen	
Alex Ramel	
STAFF Chris Elder	X

**1) Meeting Began at 5:33 PM**

**2) Address to Committee by Satpal Sidhu**

Satpal Sidhu started the meeting off by saying a few comments. He apologized that he was not able to make the previous meeting. He stated that he appreciated the work by the committee and volunteered to help find additional applicants. He then turned to discuss a couple of initiatives he and others are working on.

- 1) To plant 1 million trees in Whatcom County. He mentioned this was not a county-funded project, but he's leading the charge by community members. He plans to talk with the refineries and car dealerships about supporting the effort. Satpal believed it must involve students as well, and that whoever planted the trees needs to tend them for five years.
  
- 2) To perform an environmental audit of county operations. This includes more than just CO2, and Satpal mentioned he may need help to determine what types of meaningful data needs to be collected. This would be a county operation and funded accordingly. He said he would like to know if there is another county or jurisdiction that has a template that we could use. Based on the data the county can determine what changes need to be made.

Eric Grossman asked about adaptation to Climate Change – How did Satpal rank adaptation versus mitigation in terms of importance? Eric elaborated that some of us are really concerned about adapting to the hazards coming to us related to climate change, for example, flooding and sea level rise. Satpal replied it was important, and behaviors needed to change to help the climate – for example, turning out the lights when not in use, and possibly eating less meat.

### **3) Minutes**

- a. Eric moved to approve the minutes with public comments attached, seconded by John.
- b. Motion carried with Tim’s abstention due to not being at last meeting.

### **4) Christy Shelton Government Operations 2017 Green House Gas Emissions Inventory**

Note that the Powerpoint presentation is on the website, and so it is not captured as part of the minutes. Any “off topic” conversations and questions are included here however:

Christy provided a presentation on the preliminary findings of the 2017 greenhouse gas inventory.

Claire asked whether the City of Bellingham emissions, including commuting, will be included in Whatcom County emissions community data. Christy answered that normally yes, all emissions in the county would be included, unless other guidance is provided.

Casey asked about electricity emissions - wasn’t the county on the Puget Sound Energy Green Power Program? Christy and Chris Elder replied that the county apparently only had a few accounts that were on green power in 2017. Whatcom County has since signed on to the Green Direct program from PSE, which took effect in July of 2019. Therefore, the greenhouse gas inventory associated with electricity will drop precipitously in the next inventory.

John requested that energy usage intensity be added. The data showed the 311 Grand Ave address had 57% of the green house gas emissions for county operations, combining gas and electricity, and John wanted to know if more context could be provided.

Eric asked if the data was pretty straight forward to find – Christy responded that no not really, each data piece has its challenges.

Casey asked if third party contractor emissions doing county work are included. Christy and Chris responded that they are not, and John asked if that could be highlighted. Casey further asked Chris about including some of the contractors, especially for work that the county does internally as well as contracting out. For example, Public Works chip seals both internally as well as contracting some of that out. Chris responded that yes, that he would look into it and see if he could get contractor numbers.

David asked Clare Fogelsong (in the audience) about how city contractors were counted as part of the city emissions. Clare thought it was part of the community emissions data, and was not included in the city operations inventory.

David asked if the 2007 climate action plan had facility by facility emissions data that could be used to check if the magnitude of each facilities recent emissions data is likely accurate. Christy replied that they haven't used the 2007 plan for that, but she thought they might look into it.

David asked about the business as usual forecast – what target year is it going out to. Christy said it was not decided yet. 2035 and 2050 are common. 2045 is the Clean Energy Transformation Act target date, and Chris Elder thought it might be best to use 2045 for consistency with the state.

John reiterated that he would like to see additional data and context (benchmarks) with the various emissions data in order to provide a fuller picture of the emissions. Christy said it is difficult to benchmark against other counties, because each county has a different level of operational control. She gave the example that some counties control water and wastewater and Whatcom County doesn't.

#### **5) Working groups**

Discussion then moved onto the Working Groups. Ellyn and Dave have already met as part of their working group and laid out their scope of work. None of the other groups have met.

Treva asked about the priorities for the working groups and the timing for completing the Climate Action Plan update.

It was agreed that the primary focus of working groups currently is to update the Climate Action Plan, with a goal to complete it and provide it to council by the end of August 2020.

One key point that was reiterated in the conversations repeatedly was staffing: how much staff is needed to execute the Climate Action Plan. The CIAC was reminded to consider staffing recommendations to council as we move into updating the plan. There is a supplemental budget process if additional resources are needed this year. Also to keep in mind, the current year is a budget year for 2021, so providing input to council is important. Chris Elder mentioned that creating new staff positions can be difficult.

#### **6) Vacancies.**

A number of committee members have resigned, or are not renewing their terms including Sharon Shewmake, Gabriel Westergreen, Eric Grossman, and Seth Fleetwood. There are currently six new applicants for the four vacant positions. The terms of Casey Harman, Tim Miller, and Dave Kershner are also ending, but they have reapplied.

#### **7) New Business**

- a. Casey mentioned the Colstrip 1 and 2 shutdown in early January.
- b. David reported on the last Lummi Island Ferry Advisory Committee meeting – the committee and Public Works is considering a diesel battery hybrid ferry that could reduce carbon emissions versus a conventional diesel ferry..

**8) Public Comments**

- a. No public comments

**9) Next meeting**

The next meeting will be February 6th, 2020 at the ReStore Facility at 5:30.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:25 PM.