

Climate Impact Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes (approved November 4, 2021)

Date: October 7th, 2021

Location: Zoom



QUORUM	Y
Members Present	
William Bethel	x
Ginny Broadhurst	x
Kaylee Galloway	x
Sue Gunn	x
Steve Harrell	x
David Kershner	x
Katherine Kissinger	x
Ellyn Murphy	x
Imran Sheikh	x
Phil Thompson	x
Eddy Ury	x
STAFF Chris Elder	x

1) Call to Order/Roll Call

2) Review and approval of Minutes from September

Dave motioned to approve minutes changing the final numbers are to “about” due to some slight adjustments in the report

Sue seconded; Motion passed

3) Public Comment

Public in attendance

Jack Wellman, PSE

4) Social Media Campaign – **Katie, William and Steve**

Katie Gave a presentation on different social media platforms and how to use them as a means of outreach for the Committee.

Facebook

Group:

- community aspect
- community members can share posts and ask questions from other group members
- more hands-on management
- most groups require posts to be approved by admins

Page:

- Sharing information quickly, publicly
- only page admins can post
- think of this like a bulletin board

Twitter:

- twitter can be good for pitching your cause to journalists directly
- good for giving live updates on things like meetings

Instagram:

- due to the success of tik tok, Instagram has started pushing “reels” or video posts in their algorithm
- photos, and stories are still good options for your profile
- stories disappear after 24 hours but can be saved as a highlight on your profile.
- Instagram prefers frequent posting a couple times a week
- if you set up your account as a “business account” you can access analytics to help you better target your audience

Tik tok:

- tik tok’s algorithm tailors a “for you page” of videos that it thinks you would be interested in.
- you can post videos anywhere from 15 seconds - 3 minutes
- the more you interact with it, the better the algorithm is able to select videos for you.
- it will automatically show videos that are relevant locationally as well.
- the algorithm prefers frequent posting, daily to every other day.

YouTube:

- good for longer videos
- might be a good option for uploading meeting recordings
- posting schedule can be less often. Around once a month.
- use other social media platforms to get viewers to your channel.
- you can use tik tok and Instagram reels to get people interested in the topic of your YouTube videos

Batch content creation:

- there are apps that can help you manage your social media platforms.
- these include services for planning a post schedule and actually setting up posts in advance and schedule when they will post.
- with this strategy you can plan content and shoot it weeks in advance and have it post throughout the month.

Steve mentioned that he would be up for composing tweets. And that with YouTube that a good strategy would be to do interviews.

Katie mentioned that in terms of interviews to help drive engagement platforms like Instagram and tiktok allow you to go live and they also have the option to go live with other people too and you could set that up as like a live interview or q and a.

Phil asked about how much content would need to be created to utilize all these platforms

Katie said that some content can be cross platform and that you don’t necessarily have to create unique content for each platform which might help cut down on the amount of work you’d have to do to create content.

Phil asked about the target audience for these platforms

Steve said that it would be more to reach younger folks that don't have much connection to traditional media. Steve said that it would be people under 35.

Phil asked if we had an objective mapped out for what we wish to accomplish with a social media presence.

Steve said that his thoughts were to use social media to keep up awareness on climate issues after we are finished with our report

William said that our purpose would be to promote climate engagement in Whatcom County. To the question of which platform, we are suggesting is to do a mixture of multiple social media platforms because they work synergistically as a digital ecosystem

Ginny asked about developing a following on platforms and that we should probably eliminate Facebook. And she suggested Reddit because it doesn't really require building a platform

Ellyn suggested that we write up a plan for a social media strategy. She asked Chris about his opinion

Chris said that we would have to disclose that our account as a committee would not be representing the opinions of the official Whatcom County government and that he will confirm that we can actually have a social media for the committee

5) Q and A Update on Implementation of the Bellingham Climate Action Plan – **Seth Vidaña**, Climate Manager, City of Bellingham

Q: what have you instituted do far in regards to individual measures from the BCAP?

A: -the CPACER program is nearing completion and has been a collaborative effort
-Community solar at Whatcom falls park and PSE
-RFP for climate research with a consulting company to help put together a climate fund
-Introduce an initiative on the ballot for Bellingham climate fund in 2022
-2023 CAP mitigation and adaptation plan for COB
-waterfront development and low carbon power.

Works in progress:

-all electric construction ordinance. Modeled after Seattle's city codes

Steve asked about the community solar problems and how did they overcome the legal obstacles. Also, how will you pay for the community fund

Seth said that PSE actually came to Bellingham and proposed this community solar project so he was unfamiliar with any legal issues surrounding the project. He also said that the climate fund would be paid for with a property tax so it would require voter approval.

Phil asked about how they prioritized what to do first?

Seth said that it was a complex process. Because the BCAP was more a list of suggestions rather than a plan that detailed what actions to take and when. They listed the items on a spreadsheet and scored them based on the urgency and the level of unknowns with each item. then the highest tier items were given to the city

council to prioritize. One big factor was carbon reduction per dollar spent and looking at benefits that are connected to the community.

Ellyn asked about established vs completed on one of the documents **Seth** sent out.

Seth said that established means that the action is ongoing and that the completed ones are finished.

Steve asked if **Seth** would agree that establishing an office of climate action in the county would be the most effective implementation strategy for our plan.

Seth said that staffing is so important and that he would benefit from having more staff for his own implementation with COB. **Seth** said that other departments could also use more staff to handle climate issues as well. Since Climate Change is going to start impacting other departments more and more.

Steve also asked about the prioritization process and if he thinks it was too complex.

Seth agreed that it seemed unnecessarily complex but it was the best that the people at the table could come up with. But that it was a huge learning experience to do it himself or in our case it could potentially be a great learning experience for OCA staff.

Q: What are your most important measures to establish this decade?

A: **Seth** said his mantra has been: decarbonization, electrification, and efficiency
Decarbonizing the grid, accessing low carbon power for the electricity.
Beating CETA to greatly reduce our GHG's

Q: What would you like to see the county and COB work on together?

A: **Seth** said that he and **Chris** have regular meetings and that continuing to meet and share information and resources between each other. That is the key to collaboration on these things. Additionally, things like applying for grants jointly to acquire state and federal funds and also transportation coordination.

Sue asked about promoting electric vehicles.

Seth said that is going in the rfp for a consultant to research. But off the top of his head, it would include Adding ev infrastructure throughout the county and consumer education, communication about battery ranges. Seth said he would like to see a purchasing co-op for the city of Bellingham to help lower the cost of EV's, while also encouraging alternate modes of transportation

6) Review Draft CAP Resolution for the Council – **Ellyn**

The resolution submission has been delayed because the previous person working on it at council was a part time worker who has moved on but the current draft was sent out before the meeting.

Phil pointed out a comment to be changed in the resolution. The “7th Whereas” 2021 should be changed to the 2020 legislature

Kaylee proposed in the 9th Whereas, adding in BIPOC to vulnerable communities. And changing some of the wording to say that these vulnerable communities bear a disproportionate amount of climate change impacts. She also suggested referencing upholding the Point Elliott Treaty.

Ellyn said that **Kaylee** could edit the resolution and send it back to her. And that anyone else who has edits can send them to her.

Sue said the last Whereas seems more like an action item

Phil said that the county council is the one who is supposed to resolve

Chris said that adding it under resolve is a good idea.

7) Develop top 10-12 strategies for first year implementation of CAP - All

The committee took a poll to determine the top strategies for implementation of the CAP

1. In addition to establishing and funding the Office of Climate Action , what is the most important action to complete in the next few months?	Vote	%
a) Hire a Climate Manager and data/information specialist.	7/11	64%
b) Appoint an interim Climate Manager and hire an outside consultant to jump start the OCA (build online tools and infrastructure to implement projects).	3/11	27%
c) Review, prioritize, organize, and assign the strategies and actions in the Climate Action Plan to specific County departments and staff.	1/11	9%
d) Develop a communication strategy for the Office of Climate Action and start soliciting community support.	0/11	0%
2. What is the single most important strategy/action that the County must implement by the end of 2022 for Electricity to meet the goal of reducing communitywide emissions 95% by 2050?	Vote	%
a) Advocate passage of virtual net metering at the state level to encourage widespread development of community solar and battery storage to lower electricity costs for consumers.	4/11	36%
b) Investigate expansion of PUD 1 clean electricity to accelerate renewable energy availability and growth in Whatcom County.	1/11	9%
c) Update the County's wind energy code and review land use code for large-scale solar installations to encourage local development of these renewable resources.	2/11	18%
d) Collaborate with the state and local utilities to identify and facilitate needed transmission and distribution investments in conjunction with a distributed energy resources (DER) action plan.	4/11	36%
3. What is the single most important strategy/action that the County must implement by the end of 2022 for Buildings to meet the goal of reducing communitywide emissions 95% by 2050?	Vote	%
a) Work with communities in the County to identify public buildings, such as schools, community centers, government buildings, etc., for potential community solar/battery microgrids that can serve as resilience hubs.	4/11	36%
b) Commit to net zero carbon emissions for County buildings and facilities to lead by example and demonstrate their value to local builders and residents.	1/11	9%
c) Develop new financial tools and incentives that will accelerate electrification of existing buildings and the installation of distributed energy resources for climate resilience.	6/11	55%
d) Move away from kilowatt hours and therms saved to carbon emissions reduced as a measure of the success energy efficiency upgrades.	0/11	0%
4. What is the single most important strategy/action that the County must	Vote	%

implement by the end of 2022 for Industry to meet the goal of reducing communitywide emissions 95% by 2050?		
a) Encourage <i>bp</i> and require any new industrial facility to use 95% clean electricity from PUD 1, BPA, or via contracts on the open market.	2/11	18%
b) Start a dialogue with <i>bp</i> management about how they intend to reduce their GHG emissions - possibly by participating in EPA's EnergyStar program.	6/11	55%
c) Collaborate with PUD 1 and the Port of Bellingham to reach out to known green hydrogen producers to build a new green hydrogen facility at Cherry Point.	1/11	9%
d) Promote the research, development, and collaboration needed to build a hydrogen electrolysis facility to create green hydrogen in Whatcom County.	2/11	18%
5. What is the single most important strategy/action that the County must implement by the end of 2022 for Transportation to meet the goal of reducing communitywide emissions 95% by 2050?	Vote	%
a) Implement the regional trail network as identified in the Regional Trail Plan/Comp Plan/Bike-Ped Plan for commuting and recreation and create a county-wide non-motorized plan, especially in UGAs of cities to enhance bicycle and pedestrian commuting.	3/11	27%
b) Install publicly accessible electric charging stations at all county government facilities and underserved locations. Require EV charging stations at new commercial and industrial complexes.	5/11	45%
c) Institute biannual surveys of County staff to understand their commute behavior and institute changes to improve their ability to use alternatives to single occupancy vehicle commuting.	0/11	0%
d) Work with WTA and school districts to replace old buses with electric buses and help provide the necessary charging infrastructure	3/11	27%
6. What is the single most important strategy/action that the County must implement by the end of 2022 for Waste to meet the goal of reducing communitywide emissions 95% by 2050?	Vote	%
a) County-wide ban on single use plastic containers and utensils used by restaurants.	1/11	9%
b) Make curbside food and yard waste recycling mandatory for single and multi-family residents who do not have access to on-site composting capability and provide smaller trash containers at reduced cost.	4/11	36%
c) Institute recycling requirements for construction sites through the building permit program.	3/11	27%
d) Collect the data necessary to evaluate the scope of the waste program in Whatcom County and prioritize actions.	3/11	27%
7. What is the single most important strategy/action that the County must implement by the end of 2022 for Land Use to meet the goal of reducing communitywide emissions 95% by 2050?	Vote	%
a) Develop and use a climate-resilient and climate vulnerability assessment regulatory framework for all development actions in the County (residential, commercial and industrial).	0/11	0%
b) Require a climate-focused risk assessment using future climate scenarios for all new County infrastructure (e.g., roads, bridges, building, emergency services, etc.) and invest in green infrastructure.	6/11	55%
c) Use science-based future climate scenarios to identify and protect riparian corridors, floodplains, shorelines, wetlands, and migration corridors using code	0/11	0%

changes and acquisition of voluntary conservation easements.		
d) Incorporate climate change in every chapter of the Comprehensive Plan, i.e., consider climate vulnerability, GHG mitigation, climate resilience, salmon recovery, net ecological gain and other actions identified in CAP and incorporate throughout the Comprehensive Plan.	5/11	45%
8. What is the single most important strategy/action that the County must implement by the end of 2022 to meet the goal to build climate resilience in our Water Resources and Fisheries ?	Vote	%
a) Analyze WRIA 1 water supply using the LENS groundwater/surface water model and projections of future water supply based on climate science.	1/11	9%
b) Create a County-hosted public database that includes environmental measurements that are routinely collected by various organizations in the County.	2/11	18%
c) Prioritize restoration, function, and protection of wetlands and headwater areas to improve base flows through acquiring land fee title and through acquisitions – significantly increase funding pathways and staff capacity.	4/11	36%
d) Actively develop and implement solutions that resolve water supply issues in an agreement between tribes, farmers, municipalities, Dept of Ecology, and other parties.	4/11	36%
9. What is the single most important strategy/action that the County must implement by the end of 2022 to meet the goal to increase carbon storage and build climate resilience in Agriculture ?	Vote	%
a) Collaborate on R&D for drought- and heat-resistant agricultural crops.	1/11	9%
b) Promote renewable energy in agricultural areas that can reduce emissions from farms and provide farmers with new income.	4/11	36%
c) Establish a carbon credit program to incentivize farm management practices that maximize soil carbon storage to increase water and nutrient availability.	3/11	27%
d) Rezone rural areas as agricultural and compensate owners for possible lost income	1/11	9%
e) Expand and fund the Conservation Easement Program to discourage urban development on farmlands.	2/11	18%
1. What is the single most important strategy/action that the County must implement by the end of 2022 to meet the goal to increase carbon storage and build climate resilience in Forestry ?	Vote	%
a) Expand the Conservation Easement Program funding and staff capacity to preserve forest resource lands for carbon storage potential, forest ecosystem resilience, and forestry economy enhancement.	4/11	36%
b) Set up a carbon credit market in the County to encourage and reward forest landowners for enhancing carbon storage and sequestration.	3/11	27%
c) Implement demonstration projects that protect forest lands from conversion, plant climate resilient species and climate resilient reforestation techniques that ensure long-term forest health and preserve watershed health and function	4/11	36%
a) Expand the Conservation Easement Program funding and staff capacity to preserve forest resource lands for carbon storage potential, forest ecosystem resilience, and forestry economy enhancement.	0/11	0%
2. What is the single most important strategy/action that the County must implement by the end of 2022 to meet the goal to increase carbon storage and build climate resilience in Ecosystems ?	Vote	%
a) Implement long-term monitoring to assess the impact of climate change on	2/12	17%

ecosystem health.		
b) Increase funding and staff capacity for the County Conservation Easement Program and develop a carbon credit market.	4/12	33%
c) Avoid destruction and replacement of wetlands based on connectivity to hydrologic system, migration corridors, and refugia that allow shifts in species distribution.	4/12	33%
d) Designate climate migration corridors for wildlife and development management requirements eliminate or significantly reduce development and land use conversion.	2/12	17%

8) Old or New Business

New Business: **Eddy** mentioned a county council meeting on the 12th concerning Cascade Natural Gas's franchise permit.

Ellyn encouraged anyone to make personal comments regarding this matter

Sue said that this issue might fall under our purview to write a letter to county council as an advisory committee.

It was determined that **Eddy** would draft a letter on this matter and it would be sent in on Monday October 11th.

Dave asked if we needed to vote as a committee for this?

William motioned to approve drafting a letter to the county in regards to the CNG permit renewal to reduce the timeline for renewal to 5 years rather than the currently proposed 25 years

Sue seconded

Eddy said that he will send out a draft before submitting the letter

Kaylee asked about the timeline for outreach and public comments.

William said to list it out in a word format

Ellyn said that edits to the resolution need to be submitted soon

Dave said we should wait and not rush into it.

Kaylee said that it might be helpful to wait until next CIAC meeting to allow for time to reach out to community members and editors to show a strong support for the CAP.

9) Adjourn

Next meeting scheduled for November 4 th , 2021

Recorded By: Katherine Kissinger, contact kissinger.katherine@gmail.com for edits to the draft.

Staff Contact: Chris Elder