



City of Tacoma Sustainable Tacoma Commission Meeting Minutes

Date: December 17, 2020

Commission Members Present:

David Thompson, Grace Hope, Lexi Brewer, Matthew Benedict, Elly Claus-McGahan, Evlondo Cooper, Phil Coughlan, Katin Kendrena, Ashley Sloan, Tony Ivey, Gabe Moaalii

Commission Members Excused:

Nikie Walters

Commission Members Absent:

Emily Pinckney

Others Present:

Commission Support Staff: Jennifer Kammerzell, Liz Kaster, Laura Svancarek, Kristin Lynett, Patrick Babbitt

Public: Dylan Ruggeri, Jane Moore

Call to Order

This meeting was called to order by Commission Vice-Chair Grace Hope at 5:02 p.m., including an acknowledgement of the occupied indigenous lands this Commission conducts its business on. The Vice Chair welcomed Commissioners, staff, and members of the public and shared virtual meeting practices and requirements.

Approval of November 19, 2020, Meeting Minutes

Motion: To adopt meeting minutes as written. Motion made by Evlondo Cooper.

Seconded by: Lexi Brewer

Action: Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion we declared adopted.

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Nikie Walters, Emily Pinckney

Approval of December 17, 2020, Meeting Agenda

Motion: To adopt meeting agenda as written. Motion made by Matthew Benedict.

Seconded by: Evlondo Cooper

Action: Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion we declared adopted.

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Nikie Walters, Emily Pinckney

Public Comment

No public comments were made during this agenda item.

Staff Updates

Patrick directed Commissioners to share their pronouns on a shared document in an effort to help staff and Commissioners communicate to and about each other. This supports the Commission's efforts to be inclusive.

Kristi informed Commissioners that the Sustainability Small Grants program will reopen for applications, due March 31, 2021, at the beginning of the new year. The program had been put on hold in April 2020 as a result of the pandemic and economic crisis. The Commission will receive its first round of applications for review and awards at their April 2021 meeting. The total 2021 program budget will be \$75,000, down from \$100,000 in past program years. The new program budget excludes City of Tacoma general funds, which means all program applications will have to align with Environmental Services Department utility purposes and goals. Commissioners were asked to help inform community members the program is about to re-open.

Staff thanked Commissioners for their work outside meetings, including subcommittees.

Subcommittee Updates

A Commission subcommittee continues reviewing other communities' climate action plans as part of a learning process in which Commissioners will also oversee and make recommendations about Tacoma's climate planning process. This subcommittee did not meet between November and December Commission meetings, and has scheduled a subcommittee meeting for coming days.

Another Commission subcommittee focused on tideflats subarea planning, regulations, and fossil fuel inventory, will be meeting in late December to prepare potential Commission recommendations for staff.

Elly reported that the Port Subcommittee heard from Kristin Ang about recent Port of Tacoma activities and upcoming priorities. They will provide notes to the Commission.

A waste prevention- and recycling-focused subcommittee will be convened in the first or second quarter of 2021.

Commission Business Items

Active Transportation in Tacoma – Jennifer Kammerzell and Liz Kaster, Public Works, City of Tacoma; Laura Svancarek, Downtown on the Go

Liz provided an overview of the Transportation Commission and Bicycle Pedestrian Technical Advisory Committee (BPTAG), which staff coordinate and serve in a similar function as the Sustainable Tacoma Commission.

Liz provided highlights of Tacoma's active transportation work in 2020 and also described the City's approach to this work and potential priorities and strategies for 2021.

In 2020, the City completed infrastructure projects, implemented pop-up traffic gardens, made a micromobility request for proposal, and updated municipal code repealing a bicycle helmet law that impacted people of color and low-income people inequitably. Staff emphasized bicycle helmets remain fundamentally important safety tools. In terms of the City's approach to this work, with the Vision Zero goal the City seeks to eliminate collisions causing serious injury or death by 2035. Walking and biking programming and investments will prioritize equity, including low-income communities and communities of color. Data proves that these communities are the most common pedestrians or bicyclists and are also disproportionately impacted by a lack of safety. Many community members depend on these types of transportation. Connectivity of infrastructure with transit systems is another priority for the City.

In order to support active transportation and achieve its safety goals, the City will have to find adequate funding, such as through impact fees or other new funding mechanisms, and make challenging decisions if it is to prioritize active transportation as outlined in Tacoma's 2015 Transportation Master Plan.

2021 Commission Meeting Day/Time – Patrick Babbitt, Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability (OEPS), City of Tacoma

Patrick proposed that the Commission maintain its current meeting day and time: Third Thursdays of each month, meeting from 5:00 – 7:00pm. Patrick outlined the meeting days and times of other relevant Commission and City Council Committee meetings which fit well with this Sustainable Tacoma Commission scheduling. In addition, this scheduling avoids Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. Finally, Commission attendance has been consistently good.

The Commission voted to maintain their meeting day and time through 2021. Motion was made by Matthew Benedict to meet on third Thursdays from 5:00 – 7:00pm through 2021. Seconded by David Thompson. All Commissioners present voted aye, whereas Nikie Walters and Emily Pinckney were absent and did not vote. The motion passed.

Year-in-Review and Year-Ahead Presentation and Discussion – Patrick Babbitt, Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability (OEPS), City of Tacoma

Patrick reviewed the Commission's past year of work, beginning by revisiting the purpose of the Commission to bring "accountability, transparency, and vigilance to the long-term implementation of Tacoma's Environmental Action Plan" as well as "to oversee, coordinate, communicate, and encourage public involvement regarding sustainability initiatives as are consistent with the City's vision and definition of sustainability".

Together, the Commission reflected on annual priorities it set for 2020 and communicated to City Council and management, including prioritizing climate justice; supporting community food projects; sustaining and expanding transportation by foot, bike, and transit; implementing the Urban Forest Management Plan; and preventing waste.

During 2020, the Commission wrote important letters of recommendation, including related to the 2021-2022 biennial City budget, anti-racist and sustainable systems transformation actions the Mayor of Tacoma could support, and decarbonization strategies for the City to pursue

locally and through a state-level legislative agenda. Through its annual priorities and letters of recommendation, the Commission engaged and built relationships with City Council Members and City management staff that will benefit the City through the Commission's work into the future.

In addition, the Commission had several active subcommittees supporting climate planning, COVID-19 response, decarbonization strategies, equity norms and processes on the Commission, and tideflats planning and regulations.

Finally, the Commission expanded from 11 to 13 members in 2020, had excellent attendance, added a Vice Chair, and made additional time in their agenda and adjusted Commission practices to make meetings more welcoming to public participation.

Looking at 2021, the Commission reflected on ongoing Commission work, recent City policies, and discussed potential priorities for the Commission.

Climate Action Planning Update – Kristin Lynett, Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability (OEPS), City of Tacoma

Kristin provided an overview of Tacoma's updated 2019 greenhouse gas inventory, including where community emissions come from in terms of sectors. Tacoma's community emissions have decreased 25% since 1990, though inventory methodologies have improved significantly since then which obscures the trend somewhat. Kristin explained that Tacoma's inventory includes certain scope 1, 2, and 3 data. Scope 2 data refers emissions within city boundaries, whereas scope 3 data includes those outside city boundaries. Only some scope 3 data, such as that from waste generated inside the city and electricity transmission and distribution, was included in this inventory. Out-of-boundary transportation and other indirect emissions from product consumption or embedded carbon was excluded.

If existing plans, laws, and strategies were to remain the same through 2050, the City has estimated with its "business-as-usual" scenario model that emissions would decline only 11% over that time period. Both industry and transportation remain the most important sources of community emissions.

Kristin foreshadowed further discussion with the Commission, including (1) Phase I community engagement results that are still being analyzed and (2) setting a greenhouse gas emissions reduction target for 2050 in the new climate action plan being developed. Staff will return to the Commission's January meeting for an in-depth discussion of these items.

Public Comment

No public comments were made during this agenda item.

Objectives for or before the Next Meeting

- Subcommittee updates
- Sustainability Small Grants Program
- Tideflats letter of recommendation
- Climate Planning update (extended)

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m. with a motion made by Matthew Benedict and seconded by Grace Hope. The motion carried unanimously by present Commissioners. Nikie Walters and Emily Pinckney were absent for this vote.

The next meeting of the Sustainable Tacoma Commission will be held virtually on Thursday, January 21, 2021, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Lexi Brewer, Chair

Patrick Babbitt, Staff / Note Taker