



City of Tacoma Sustainable Tacoma Commission Meeting Minutes

Date: October 21, 2021

Commission Members Present:

Matthew Benedict (Vice-Chair), Margaret Schwertner, Katin Kendrena, Nikie Walters, Tony Ivey, Elly Claus-McGahan, Evlondo Cooper, Adam Reichenberger (joins 5:05pm)

Commission Members Excused:

Lexi Brewer (Chair), Gabe Moaalii, Emily Pinckney

Commission Members Absent:

Ashley Sloan

Others Present:

Commission Support Staff: Patrick Babbitt (Commission staff liaison), Kristin Lynett, James Parvey, Lauren Choi

Members of the Public: Hal Meng, Claudia Riedener

Call to Order

This meeting was called to order by Commission Vice-Chairperson Matthew Benedict at 5:03pm, including an acknowledgement of the occupied indigenous lands this Commission conducts its business on. The Chair welcomed Commissioners, staff, and members of the public and shared virtual meeting practices and requirements.

Approval of October 21, 2021 Meeting Agenda

Motion: To adopt the agenda as written. Motion made by Elly Claus-McGahan.

Seconded by: Nikie Walters

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

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Lexi Brewer (Chair), Gabe Moaalii, Emily Pinckney, Ashley Sloan

Approval of July 15, 2021 Meeting Minutes

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

Seconded by: Elly Claus-McGahan

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

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Lexi Brewer (Chair), Gabe Moaalii, Emily Pinckney, Ashley Sloan

Public Comment

No written comments were delivered to the Commission for the meeting. No additional comments were made by members of the public present.

Staff Updates

Patrick Babbitt (Commission staff liaison) recounted the Sustainable Tacoma Commission's (STC) September meeting activities and then delivered new notices to the Commission. New notices included an update that draft Tideflats Regulations go to Tacoma City Council on November 9 and again for potential adoption on November 16; that the draft Climate Action Plan goes to City Council on November 9 and again for potential adoption on November 30; that Phase III of the Climate Action Plan engagement process has been completed and public input is being processed; and that the Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability requested mid-biennial budget adjustment funds for community food projects, climate justice civic training, a street design manual update for active transportation, a building retrofits solutions study, right-of-way tree planting and maintenance programming, and municipal facilities and community building decarbonization studies. These mid-biennial budget adjustment funding requests were made in line with climate action planning. Discussing other important news related to the Tacoma community, staff shared recent Health Department reporting about COVID-19; Sound Transit virtual open houses for public comments on access to the South Tacoma Sounder Station; and that Make A Splash Grants focused on stormwater projects are accepting applications for funding through October 31.

Staff thanked Commissioners for participating in Climate Action Plan outreach and green economy-focused subcommittees to support public engagement and research what the green economy could mean for Tacoma.

Subcommittee Updates

Patrick Babbitt (Commission staff liaison) is sending When2Meet polls to get Commissioner interest and availability for a Waste Prevention and Recycling Subcommittee meeting and a Green Economy Subcommittee meeting.

Evlondo Cooper shared that a Green Economy Subcommittee met to review the most recent Washington State research about green economy sectors.

No further updates were provided by Commissioners regarding other subcommittee activities.

Commission Business Items

Green Economy Presentation – Patrick Babbitt, Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability (OEPS), City of Tacoma

Commission staff liaison Patrick Babbitt provided an overview of green economy activities at the City of Tacoma and Tacoma Public Utilities. He noted that Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability staff are still inventorying local green economy activities, so more may come to light. The presentation began with discussion of definitions for "green economy", which is a challenging term to define or describe given the breadth of economic activities that are "green" or could be made "more green". He noted that Washington State research focuses instead on

“green skills” across different industries; in addition, the State focuses on key sectors where there is significant environmental concern, including: agriculture, forestry and materials, water, maritime, energy, and transportation. In thinking about Tacoma’s environment and economic sectors, Patrick encouraged the Commission to consider the 2019 Tacoma community greenhouse gas emissions inventory, which identifies consumption, transportation, industry, buildings and energy, and then waste as the largest sources for local emissions. The City and Tacoma Public Utilities’ activities include: developing a Green Economy Strategy study; seeking funds for a food innovation district and food hub feasibility study; developing “blue” maritime innovation; and green hydrogen research and policy. Other upcoming work in the “green economy” could include various Climate Action Plan actions, which are currently still in their draft stages and may be finalized in late November or early December.

Sustainability Small Grants Applications Review & Awards – Matthew Benedict (Vice-Chair), Sustainable Tacoma Commission; Patrick Babbitt, Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability (OEPS), City of Tacoma

Matthew Benedict (Vice-Chair) and Patrick Babbitt (Commission staff liaison) walked through the two grant applications from St. Vincent de Paul (“Thrift Is Hip” project) and Foss Waterway Seaport (“Seaport Pollinator Garden” project). Commissioners communicated questions and concerns for applications. Commissioners discussed whether they thought they would approve both awards, to what degree, and with what necessary clarifying questions or conditions. The Commission vote is outlined below:

Small Grants Application Decision – St. Vincent de Paul “Thrift Is Hip” Project

Motion: To award this grant application with \$500 for advertising of secondhand services and full funding (\$5,000 total), if staff confirm the purpose of the vouchers and second chance employment activities and whether they sufficiently contribute benefits to the Surface Water and Solid Waste utilities.

Motion made by Elly Claus-McGahan.

Seconded by: Evlondo Cooper

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

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Lexi Brewer (Chair), Gabe Moaalii, Emily Pinckney, Ashley Sloan

Small Grants Application Decision – Foss Waterway Seaport “Seaport Pollinator Garden” Project

Motion: To award this grant application with full funding (\$5,000) with standard Sustainability Small Grants program requirements and encouragement to collect and use rainwater if and where possible. Motion made by Tony Ivey.

Seconded by: Margaret Schwertner

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

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Lexi Brewer (Chair), Gabe Moaalii, Emily Pinckney, Ashley Sloan

Proposed Tree Code Updates Letter – Tony Ivey and Matthew Benedict (Vice-Chair), Sustainable Tacoma Commission; Patrick Babbitt, Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability (OEPS), City of Tacoma

Tony Ivey developed draft content for a proposed Commission letter communicating the Commission's support for and any recommendations related to Municipal Code updates related to trees proposed by staff. Staff will be going to Tacoma City Council in November with their proposed tree code updates. Tony and Matthew Benedict (Vice-Chair) worked with Patrick Babbitt (Commission staff liaison) to walk through the letter and discuss content to add based on Commission feedback. Commissioners adopted the letter as written, with final formatting, edits, and specific additions to be made in line with the draft and in-meeting recommendations.

Draft Climate Action Plan Recommendation Letter

Motion: To approve the letter as written with general edits, formatting, and specific substantive additions to be completed in line with Commission recommendations before delivery. Motion made by Elly Claus-McGahan.

Seconded by: Margaret Schwertner

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

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Lexi Brewer (Chair), Gabe Moaalii, Emily Pinckney, Ashley Sloan

Public Comment

No public comments were made.

Objectives for or before the Next Meeting

- Staff Updates
- Subcommittee Updates
- Tacoma Urban Watersheds Plan – presentation (tentative)
- Transportation Impact Fees – presentation (tentative)
- Green Industries and Jobs for Tacoma – presentation (tentative)
- Subcommittees: Green Economy, Waste Prevention/Recycle Reset

Adjournment

There being no further business, the Commission adjourned at 6:51pm.

Adjournment of October 21, 2021 Meeting

Motion: To adjourn the meeting. Motion made by Elly Claus-McGahan.

Seconded by: Nikie Walters

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

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Lexi Brewer (Chair), Gabe Moaalii, Emily Pinckney, Ashley Sloan

The next meeting of the Sustainable Tacoma Commission will be held virtually on Thursday, November 18, 2021, from 5:00 to 7:00pm.

Matthew Benedict, Vice-Chair

Patrick Babbitt, Staff / Note Taker