



City of Tacoma Sustainable Tacoma Commission Meeting Minutes

Date: January 20, 2022

Commission Members Present:

Margaret Schwertner, Lexi Brewer, Matthew Benedict, Elly Claus-McGahan, Evlondo Cooper, Nikie Walters, Emily Pinckney, Tony Ivey (joins 5:05pm)

Commission Members Excused:

Katin Kendrena, Gabe Moaalii

Commission Members Absent:

Adam Reichenberger

Others Present:

Commission Support Staff: Patrick Babbitt (Commission staff liaison), Kristin Lynett, Leah Michaelson, Lauren Choi

Members of the Public: Heidi Stephens

Call to Order

This meeting was called to order by Commission Chairperson Lexi Brewer 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 January 20, 2022 Meeting Agenda

Motion: To adopt the agenda as written. Motion made by Evlondo Cooper.

Seconded by: Matthew Benedict

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

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Katin Kendrena, Gabe Moaalii, Adam Reichenberger

Approval of December 16, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Motion: To adopt meeting minutes as written. Motion made by Emily Pinckney.

Seconded by: Matthew Benedict

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

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Katin Kendrena, Gabe Moaalii, Adam Reichenberger

Public Comment

No public comment was given in meeting. Heidi Stephens, a community member, delivered written (emailed) comment prior to the meeting requesting that the Commission consider developing and adopting a letter of support for the South Tacoma Economic Green Zone proposal before the Planning Commission in February to March 2022.

Staff Updates – Patrick Babbitt, Office of Environmental Policy & Sustainability (OEPS), City of Tacoma

Commission staff liaison Patrick Babbitt recounted the Sustainable Tacoma Commission's (STC) December meeting activities and then delivered new notices to the Commission.

New notices included an update that staff are processing Commission applications due January 19, with candidate interviews tentatively set for February 23. In addition, Commission Officer elections will be held in February, following nominations this meeting. Patrick shared Commission feedback delivered through the optional, anonymous Commissioner survey for staff. Feedback included a desire to promote public engagement with and through the Commission; improve Commission networking opportunities; prioritize community input from the climate action planning process; and continually educate members about how to participate on the Commission. Finally, feedback suggested the Commission consider developing networking and outreach subcommittees. Staff added some priorities for Commission performance and improvement, including goals for staff to provide extra support to Commissioners as renewal occurs as members leave and new members join in coming months and for the Commission to develop a couple of recommendation letters by May 2022.

Discussing other important news related to the Tacoma community, staff shared recent Health Department reporting about and tips to stay safe during COVID-19.

Patrick then provided an update on Climate Action Plan (CAP) implementation. He refreshed the Commission on major processes and timelines, including those related to the CAP's 10 "jumpstart" actions planned for 2022 implementation, City Departments' 2022 Resource Conservation and Climate Plan actions, and biennial budget process, which spans spring-winter 2022. Staff communicated progress on Sustainability Office-led CAP actions and communicated strategies for the Commission to remain engaged and supportive during CAP implementation through 2022 and beyond.

Subcommittee Updates

Staff will support Green Economy and Waste Prevention & Recycling Subcommittees in coming weeks. The Green Economy Subcommittee meets January 26, whereas the other subcommittee is still scheduling its meeting.

Commission Business Items

Sustainability Small Grants Applications – Leah Michaelson and Patrick Babbitt, OEPS

Leah provided an overview of the Sustainability Small Grants program and discussed the role of the Commission in reviewing applications and awarding funds to eligible and worthy projects with staff support.

Leah walked through the two grant applications from Tacoma Tree Foundation (“Tacoma Tree Stewards 2022” project) and Permaculture Lifestyle Institute (“Visioning Sustainability 2022” 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 noted that it generally supported the goal and scope of the Visioning Sustainability 2022 project, but it also concurred with staff that the application did not provide sufficient information about how the project would be implemented and whether sufficient benefits would be delivered for Environmental Services Department utilities and the public. As a result, the Commission worked with staff to identify areas to gather more information from the applicant as it considered a conditional award.

The Commission vote is outlined below:

Small Grants Application Decision – Tacoma Tree Foundation’s “Tacoma Tree Stewards 2022” Project

Motion: To award this grant application with full funding (\$5,000) with standard Sustainability Small Grants program requirements, including that any in-person activities follow COVID-19 health safety protocols from public health agencies, including Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, Washington Department of Health, and Centers for Disease Control.

Motion made by Elly Claus-McGahan.

Seconded by: Tony Ivey

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

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Abstained: Lexi Brewer

Absent: Katin Kendrena, Gabe Moaalii, Adam Reichenberger

Small Grants Application Decision – Permaculture Lifestyle Institute’s “Visioning Sustainability 2022” Project

Motion: To award this grant application with full funding (\$4,500) with standard Sustainability Small Grants program requirements, including that any in-person activities follow COVID-19 health safety protocols from public health agencies, including Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, Washington Department of Health, and Centers for Disease Control, and additional conditions; additional conditions include the requirement that project planners are able to satisfactorily answer or clarify details around staff and Commission questions related to project goals, metrics, partners, venues, planning timing and processes, administrative/overhead costs, budgeted materials, and benefits to Environmental Services Department utilities. Motion made by Lexi Brewer.

Seconded by: Evlondo Cooper

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

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Katin Kendrena, Gabe Moaalii, Adam Reichenberger

Commission Rules of Procedure – Patrick Babbitt, OEPS

Patrick provided a brief overview of the purpose of and elements in the Commission's Rules of Procedure, which function as bylaws. Reviewing and potentially updating the Rules of Procedure is an annual process for the Commission. Staff recommended only minor, insubstantial changes. Chair Lexi Brewer recommended that a Land Acknowledgement be added to the list of regular meeting items, since the Commission is already regularly practicing this. The Rules of Procedure will be subject to final discussion regarding updates and potential approval by motion in the next Commission meeting.

Climate Civic Training Program – Patrick Babbitt, OEPS

Patrick introduced the Climate Civic Training Program, which at this stage is a working name for a program based on Climate Action Plan Action 4. CAP Action 4 commits the City to supporting frontline community members and organizations to develop their knowledge and skills as local climate justice leaders. Since CAP adoption on November 30, 2021, staff have reviewed similar programs and models to build this program on. Staff have also engaged local organizations, grassroots efforts, and community members about their experience in civic engagement and to get their input on the program. The program is tentatively scheduled for implementation in late 2022, after the program is designed with final stakeholder input, a potential contract is put in place, and community participants are recruited. The Commission requested updates on this program and more opportunities for input as it is developed.

Officer Nominations – Patrick Babbitt, OEPS

Patrick discussed the process for Officer nominations, which is an annual Commission process. Patrick recounted qualifications for and expectations of an Officer, which are detailed in the Commission's Rules of Procedure. He also outlined what responsibilities look like on a week-to-week and month-to-month basis. Commission Officers Lexi Brewer and Matthew Benedict shared their perspective on what it takes and looks like to be an Officer. Commission members discussed potential nominations and their willingness to be nominated, and came to a vote:

Officer Nominations

Motion: To nominate Lexi Brewer, Matthew Benedict, and Evlondo Cooper for election during the regular February 17, 2022, Sustainable Tacoma Commission 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: Lexi Brewer, Matthew Benedict, Evlondo Cooper

Absent: Katin Kendrena, Gabe Moaalii, Adam Reichenberger

Public Comment

Heidi Stephens asked that the Commission consider adopting a letter of support for the South Tacoma Economic Green Zone proposal being considered by the Planning Commission. Chair Lexi Brewer

requested that Heidi draft a letter or other informational materials for the Commission's consideration. Staff have reviewed the proposal and will provide context to the Commission.

Objectives for or before the Next Meeting

- Staff Updates, including CAP Implementation
- Subcommittee Updates
- Extended Roll Call & Commission Networking – Discussion
- Officer Elections – Discussion
- Rules of Procedure Approval – Discussion
- Puget Sound Energy Natural Gas Service Decarbonization – Presentation (tentative)
- Green Building Certification – Presentation (tentative)
- Subcommittees: Green Economy, Waste Prevention/Recycle Reset

Adjournment

There being no further business, the Commission adjourned at 7:05pm.

Adjournment of January 20, 2022 Meeting

Motion: To adjourn the meeting. Motion made by Evlondo Cooper.

Seconded by: Margaret Schwertner

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

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Katin Kendrena, Gabe Moaalii, Adam Reichenberger

The next meeting of the Sustainable Tacoma Commission will be held virtually on Thursday, February 17, 2022, from 5:00 to 7:00pm.

Lexi Brewer, Chair

Patrick Babbitt, Staff / Note Taker