



City of Tacoma Sustainable Tacoma Commission Meeting Minutes

Date: February 17, 2022

Commission Members Present:

Margaret Schwertner, Adam Reichenberger, Matthew Benedict (Vice-Chair), Lexi Brewer (Chair), Nikie Walters, Elly Claus-McGahan, Evlondo Cooper, Emily Pinckney (leaves 6:15pm), Katin Kendrena (joins 5:17pm)

Commission Members Excused:

Gabe Moaalii, Tony Ivey

Commission Members Absent:

None

Others Present:

Commission Support Staff: Patrick Babbitt (Commission staff liaison), Kristin Lynett, Beth Jarot, LaTasha Wortham

Members of the Public: Heidi Stephens, Nicola Graham, Claudia Riedener, Charla Neuman, Barbara Meane

Call to Order & Roll Call

This meeting was called to order by Commission Chairperson Lexi Brewer at 5:03pm, including an acknowledgement of the traditional 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. With this meeting being the second Commission meeting of the quarter, the Commission carried out an extended roll call where Commissioners introduce themselves and share their experiences and knowledge around sustainability in order for the Commission to better understand its collective relationships and assets. As part of the roll call discussion, Commissioners also communicated to staff about programming they hope is included in the upcoming South Sound Sustainability Expo event on April 16, 2022.

Approval of February 17, 2022 Meeting Agenda

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

Seconded by: Nikie Walters

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

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Katin Kendrena, Gabe Moaalii, Tony Ivey

Approval of January 20, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Motion: To adopt meeting minutes 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 Moaalij, Tony Ivey

Public Comment

No public comment was given in meeting. Heidi Stephens, a community member, delivered written (emailed) comment prior to the meeting. Heidi's emails communicated updates about Planning Commission meeting plans and informational materials regarding the South Tacoma Economic Green Zone proposal, which the Planning Commission would take up in coming weeks as part of its larger 2022 Amendment Package proposal to Tacoma City Council and for which the Sustainable Tacoma Commission would consider a letter of support this meeting.

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) January 2022 meeting activities and then delivered new notices to the Commission.

New notices began with important news related to the Tacoma community, including recent State and Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department reporting about COVID-19 case and hospitalization rates as well as tips to stay safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. Other Commission notices included an update that staff have processed and discussed Commission applicants with the Chair of the Tacoma City Council's Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee, which will conduct candidate interviews on February 23. Appointed candidates will join the Commission as Commissioners between March and May. In addition, staff discussed bills related to climate change, greenhouse gas emissions, the Growth Management Act, material management, and waste being considered by the Washington State Legislature that may have implications for sustainability issues in Tacoma. This short legislative session ends in early March and staff will seek to give additional updates at the upcoming Commission meeting. Finally, staff refreshed the Commission on major Climate Action Plan (CAP) implementation 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 strategies for the Commission to remain engaged and supportive during CAP implementation through 2022 and beyond.

Subcommittee Updates

Staff communicated upcoming Commission subcommittee meeting dates, including a Green Economy Subcommittee meeting planned for March 8 and a Waste Prevention & Recycling Subcommittee planned for March 11.

Matthew Benedict also reported that the Environmental Services Commission, which he also serves on, learned more about and discussed the proposed Department of Ecology requirements for waste treatment plants' discharge practices. The City of Tacoma has sued the

Washington State Department of Ecology over proposed requirements. The City, other local jurisdictions in Washington State, and part of the regional scientific community have suggested the proposed requirements would be very costly and may not have a significant benefit to Puget Sound water quality and species' health.

Commission Business Items

Green Buildings Introduction & City Policy – Beth Jarot, Planning & Development Services, OEPS

Beth Jarot is an OEPS staff member embedded in the Planning and Development Services department of the City. She serves as the Resilient and Green Building Specialist. She outlined her work with these work groups, the wider Environmental Services department, and Tacoma Public Utilities. Beth identified numerous policies related to building performance, health, and resilience, including the 2030 Climate Action Plan, and the City's approach to encouraging green buildings through changes to Municipal Code, City policy, and City processes; collaboration with partners; and other encouragement. Tacoma's land use Code provides incentives for certified green buildings, like height or density bonuses, and the City's permitting process offers prioritized review for them. The City has also benefitted from participating with internal and external groups to discuss Code improvements, decarbonization efforts, and efforts to reduce or reuse construction and demolition material waste. In addition, the City works to educate community members, developers, and staff about green building benefits and opportunities through local project tours, lunch-and-learn events, permitting information, a webinar series, an emailing list, and other online resources. Recently, the City partnered with the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department to hire a Health and Resilient Buildings Associate to promote healthy, climate-safe rental housing. Future efforts include improving Municipal Code further; providing technical assistance with the new energy code; piloting multi-family building retrofits and related workforce development efforts; supporting the second phase of Home in Tacoma project policy work; developing programming to divert food waste in multi-family buildings; and coordinating on Municipal Code with State Building Codes.

South Tacoma Economic Green Zone Proposal Letter of Support – Patrick Babbitt, OEPS; Lexi Brewer and Matthew Benedict, Sustainable Tacoma Commission

Patrick provided a brief overview of the South Tacoma Economic Green Zone (STEGZ) proposal, which is being considered in the Planning Commission's wider 2022 Amendment Package recommendations to be delivered to Tacoma City Council in coming weeks. The proposal concerns protection of the South Tacoma aquifer and nearby communities from pollution as well as promotion of cleaner industry in the South Tacoma area. The economic green zone work will require a multi-year planning and community engagement effort to consider potential changes to Municipal Code and Tacoma's Comprehensive Plan. However, with Planning Commission and Tacoma City Council support, the 2022 Amendment Package will direct staff to immediately begin reviewing land use Code for amendments to the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District. The Commission considered a letter of support for the STEGZ proposal, with the following results:

Adoption of the Draft Letter of Support for the South Tacoma Economic Green Zone Proposal

Motion: To adopt the draft letter of support for the South Tacoma Economic Green Zone proposal 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: Gabe Moaalii, Tony Ivey, Emily Pinckney

Rules of Procedure Review – Patrick Babbitt, OEPS

Patrick discussed 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 and the Commission recommended two significant changes to the Rules of Procedure, including an update to regular business items (adding the Land Acknowledgement, which has become a standard Commission practice) and language allowing the Commission to base its quorum on the total number of appointed, active Commissioners (matching language for other Commissions in Tacoma Municipal Code). The Rules of Procedure were put forward for approval by motion with the following results:

Adoption of Drafted Updates to the Commission’s Rules of Procedure

Motion: To adopt the drafted updates to the Commission’s Rules of Procedure as written. 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: Gabe Moaalii, Tony Ivey, Emily Pinckney

Officer Elections – Patrick Babbitt, OEPS

Patrick discussed the process for Officer nominations and elections, 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. Lexi Brewer, Matthew Benedict, and Evlondo Cooper confirmed their nominations and willingness to be considered to serve as Co-Chair for the following 12 months. Each nominee discussed their interest in serving and qualifications. Commission members discussed nominees and voiced their votes, resulting in the following motion to elect two Commission Co-Chairs:

Officer Elections

Motion: To elect Lexi Brewer and Evlondo Cooper as Co-Chairs to serve the Sustainable Tacoma Commission for the following 12 months.

Motion made by Matthew Benedict.

Seconded by: Elly Claus-McGahan

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

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Abstained: Lexi Brewer, Evlondo Cooper

Absent: Gabe Moaalii, Tony Ivey, Emily Pinckney

Public Comment

No public comments were made.

Objectives for or before the Next Meeting

- Staff Updates, including CAP Implementation
- Subcommittee Updates
- Puget Sound Energy Natural Gas Service Decarbonization – Presentation (tentative)
- Green Building Certification – Presentation (tentative)
- Earth Month & Expo Event Updates – Presentation (tentative)
- Green Economy Study Scope of Work – Presentation (tentative)
- Subcommittees: Green Economy, Waste Prevention/Recycle Reset

Adjournment

There being no further business, the Commission adjourned at 7:10pm.

Adjournment of February 17, 2022 Meeting

Motion: To adjourn the meeting. 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: Gabe Moaalii, Tony Ivey, Emily Pinckney

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

Lexi Brewer and Evlondo Cooper, Co-Chairs

Patrick Babbitt, Staff / Note Taker