

## MINUTES

Eugene Sustainability Commission  
McNutt Room—Eugene City Hall—777 Pearl Street  
Eugene, Oregon

January 18, 2012  
5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Josh Skov, Shawn Boles, Howard Bonnett, Art Farley, Dave Funk, Kathi Jaworski, Rusty Rexius, Sue Wolling, Stacy Vynne, Alan Zelenka, commissioners; Babe O’Sullivan, Matt McRae, City Manager’s Office.

ABSENT: Chris Anglin, Jessica Bloomfield, Steve Newcomb, commissioners.

### 1. Opening – Agenda Review, Approval of Minutes

Mr. Skov called the January 18, 2012, meeting of the Eugene Sustainability Commission to order. He reviewed the agenda. He added the commission’s recommendations to the council regarding the Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan (BPMP) to the agenda as item 8 and renumbered the remaining items accordingly.

Mr. Farley, seconded by Mr. Rexius, moved to approve the December 21, 2011, minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously, 7:0; Ms. Jaworski, Mr. Boles, and Mr. Zelenka not yet having arrived at the meeting.

### 2. Public Comment

**Kayla Schott Bresler**, Lane Coalition for a Healthy Active Youth, Manager of Policy & Advocacy Initiatives, said she believed public health had to be considered at all stages of the policy-making process. She cited statistics regarding local obesity rates and the amount of health care spending attributable to obesity and emphasized the importance of preventing obesity. She asked the commission to bring health, health equity, and obesity prevention into its discussions of issues such as land use and zoning, economic development, food policy, tax policy, and transportation planning. She offered her organization as a resource.

Ms. Jaworski and Mr. Boles arrived during Ms. Schott Bresler’s remarks.

Mr. Skov suggested that the coalition’s communication to the City regarding the South Willamette Concept Plan was also applicable to the PBMP. Ms. Schott Bresler agreed.

**Robert Bolman** shared some bullet points with the commission: 1) meaningful sustainability was a daunting ideal but would be achieved from lack of choice; 2) the longer people waited the more traumatic the transition to meaningful sustainability would be, so it was important to implement dramatic sweeping changes; 3) growth was unsustainable; the best efforts to achieve sustainability would be useless if population was not addressed; 4) when the consequences of a given action were not thoroughly understood it was best to err on the side of caution, or the “precautionary principle”; 5) assuming that business as usual was possible because of emerging technologies was irresponsible; 6) human labor was environmentally neutral and should replace toxic energy-intensive industrial and agricultural practices

were possible; 7) true environmental and social costs must be accounted for if market forces were to govern a sustainable world; 8) get used to the idea that people who prefer comfort, convenience, and prosperity through unsustainable means will be angered by meaningful sustainability. Those in charge will have to bring about dramatic sweeping change for which there may not be wide-spread popular support; 9) the public must be educated for meaningful sustainability to have wide-spread popular support; and 10) humans must learn to believe what was true as opposed to what was convenient to function better as a species.

### **3. Items from commission and staff**

Ms. Wolling reported she had presented the commission's work plan to GEARS, whose members had been quite interested. She had arranged to present information about the PBMP to the Northeast Neighbors, Jefferson-Westside Neighborhood Association, and Goodpasture Island Neighbors. Speaking to the South Willamette Concept Plan, Ms. Wolling said she had attended the public forum on the plan, which was well-attended. She was unsure of the timeframe for the improvements contemplated for Willamette Street.

Ms. Jaworski said she had facilitated Ms. Wolling's contact with the Northeast Neighbors.

Mr. Farley reported that the Food Subcommittee met with the Lynn Fessenden of the Willamette Farm and Food Coalition to discuss local policies affecting food production. The subcommittee learned from Ms. Fessenden that the local market for locally grown organic foods in Eugene was not strong because there was not a lot of demand, and she attributed part of that to the lack of adequate space for a farmers market. He said such a market would help promote local organic foods. The subcommittee also learned that local government was unprepared for the alternative food market and lacked expertise in reviewing plans for things such as grain mills. The subcommittee discussed the importance of developing local expertise and the possibility of creating a zone where such businesses were anticipated. Mr. Farley reported that he had scheduled a meeting with Food for Lane County the following week.

Mr. Boles noted that Ms. Fessenden mentioned the possibility of securing space for a farmers market in the parking lots adjacent to The Shedd. He reported that NEDCO's Sprout! Project in Springfield was moving forward, making it likely that Springfield would have a permanent year-round farmers market location before Eugene did. He believed there was plenty of room for more than one such market.

Ms. Vynne said the Food Subcommittee also met with Kelly Hoell to discuss where the subcommittee could fit in the local food movement. She anticipated the subcommittee would develop a list of recommendations for the commission to review. Ms. Vynne said the Environmental Law Conference accepted the commission's panel presentation, which would be about the Climate & Energy Action Plan (CEAP), specifically the process, progress, results, lessons learned, and policy implications. She said she would provide the commission with the date soon.

Ms. Vynne had also talked to former commissioner Teresa Brand about her liaison work and Ms. Brand offered to provide the commission with bimonthly reports about work being done by the Lane Transit District (LTD) that might be of interest to the commission. She had learned from Ms. Brand that LTD was finalizing the contract for a car share program for Lane County it hoped to have operational by March and was establishing a stakeholder group to advise LTD on bicycle parking facilities.

Ms. Vynne said she had discussed the potential of a carbon tax with representatives of the Portland metro area who indicated the subject came up in 2009 when Portland produced its climate and energy action plan, but because of the economy no one was bringing it up. They were interested in seeing what Eugene

did in that regard. She had attended a webinar earlier that day through the Yale Environmental Center and heard a professor from British Columbia discuss that province's carbon tax. The professor predicted both the United States and Canada would implement a carbon tax sometime in the next 15 to 20 years.

Mr. Boles noted that the Food Subcommittee was next meeting with the Lane County Food Policy Council on February 7 at 4 p.m. at Oregon Research Institute.

Mr. Farley reported that the University of Oregon car share program was now operating. He said it cost \$25 to register for the service but the subscriber received an immediate \$40 credit for the car, which could be reserved online at the rate of \$7/hour, including gas. Commissioners agreed that the two car share programs were a sign of progress.

Mr. Rexius recommended the commission look into the work the company Better Place was doing in Israel to establish infrastructure to serve electric vehicles.

Mr. McRae reported that he would present to the EWEB commissioners on the CEAP and proposed vulnerability assessment at 5:30 p.m. on February 7. He invited commissioners to attend the meeting.

Ms. O'Sullivan reported that the City decided against participating in the Sustainability City Year Program at the UO because of the City's already broad and well-functioning partnerships with the UO and because of the \$250,000 cost. She said over the past two years alone the City had a total of 45 sustainability-related partnerships with the UO at a cost of about \$157,000. Those efforts involved many interns and multiple faculty/student contacts. After further examination, staff concluded the SCY model did not fit well with the City's needs at this time. Ms. O'Sullivan had met with the SCY staff from to share that feedback and found they had heard similar input from other potential applicant cities and the organization was considering restructuring program offerings due to a lack of takers. She will continue to talk to the program about a scaled-down effort or one that might be different from the current model.

Mr. Boles asked Ms. O'Sullivan to send the commission the lists of partnership projects she mentioned. Ms. O'Sullivan agreed. She said they involved the Sustainability Office, Equity and Human Rights Center, Neighborhood Services Program, Planning and Community Development, and Transportation.

Commissioners discussed the City's participation in the SCY Program and acknowledged the extra work load that program participation required. Commissioners agreed the City could participate in the future.

Mr. Skov suggested another sign of progress was the recent news report that obesity rates in the United States were leveling off. Mr. Boles asked Mr. Skov to send the commission a link to the article with that news. Mr. Skov also suggested that the fact the Keystone XL Pipeline was put off was another sign of progress.

Mr. Funk noted as a sign of progress that electric vehicle chargers had been installed at The Arcade. Ms. O'Sullivan said she would provide the commission with a list of charger locations in the next staff report.

#### **4. Local resolution on coal trains**

The commission discussed the request it received from the Climate Justice League at the UO to recommend the City Council pass a resolution opposing coal trains coming through Eugene to reach a proposed coal terminal in Coos Bay. Commissioners acknowledged the symbolic nature of the resolution and the fact the City had no jurisdiction over anything rail-related.

The commission agreed to form a committee to produce a resolution for the commission to review in February, and further agreed to include representation from the Human Rights Commission on the committee. Mr. Bonnett volunteered for the committee. Mr. Skov sought other volunteers and agreed to approach the HRC regarding its participation. Ms. Vynne also volunteered, and Mr. Rexius agreed to review the resolution before it was presented to the full commission.

#### **5. BREAK**

#### **6. Collaboration with Human Rights Commission**

Mr. Skov emphasized the additional impact that joint statements made by the Human Rights Commission (HRC) and Sustainability Commission could have. He anticipated that he and Ms. Jaworski would meet with the chair and vice chair of the HRC to discuss the possibility of issuing joint statements with sensitivity to the culture of the HRC and to share the Sustainability Commission's timeline for input to the council.

At Mr. Skov's request, the commissioners broke into small groups and reviewed and revised example statements developed by Mr. Skov, Ms. Wolling, and Mr. Farley.

Mr. Zelenka arrived.

After the small group discussions, commissioners shared their reviews for the benefit of the full group. Mr. Skov asked the commission how it wished to proceed with the joint statements. After brief discussion of the commission's options, Ms. Jaworski suggested that she and Mr. Skov share the results with the HRC representatives and have a dialogue about next steps. The commission agreed.

#### **7. Food policy**

Mike Sullivan of the Eugene Community Development Division and Sarah Mizejewski of Lane County joined the commission for the item. Mr. Sullivan provided an overview of local efforts related to food policy which he felt was better described as food initiatives. These included implementation of the Joint Elected Officials' (JEO) Regional Prosperity Plan, an economic development plan that focused on targeted industry clusters to encourage economic development and job growth, including generalized manufacturing. A subsequent plan analysis by a Chamber of Commerce consultant identified food manufacturing as a potential cluster.

Continuing, Mr. Sullivan said the partners to the plan, which included Eugene, Springfield, Lane County, and the Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce, would further refine the cluster analysis and develop strategies to support promising clusters. It appeared that food manufacturing would be one of those clusters, and Mr. Sullivan anticipated that staff, with Lane County taking the lead, would engage local

growers, producers, and manufacturers to better understand the local industry and confirm the statistical analysis that had occurred. He described some of the outreach that had occurred to date.

Ms. Mizejewski said Lane County was very interested in talking with current businesses in food production about their interests and what assistance local government could provide. She reported on Lane County's work with the company Camas Country Mill, which wished to establish a wheat mill in Lane County to reduce distribution costs. Staff had previously identified a lack of milling infrastructure as a local concern. Lane County had used grant dollars to assist the company in establishing the mill, which opened in April 2011. She emphasized Lane County's interest in such projects.

Mr. Sullivan invited suggestions for "low-hanging fruit" where strategic investment, programmatic support, or policy support would help "connect the dots" and create an environment for private investment.

Ms. Jaworski suggested that the City could address the difficulty of permitting some of the types of agriculture-related production without forcing it to industrial land. She wondered if any analysis had been done about ways to increase food production in the urbanized areas of Lane County and what land use regulations would require revision to facilitate that. Mr. Sullivan did not know if permitting was a problem for the industry and said it would require more discussion with industry representatives. He believed the City could provide some regulatory relief or policy tactics to incentivize such development.

Mr. Bonnett recalled that many people approached the commission when it was first established to talk about food in terms of food resiliency as climate change occurred. He did not want to lose that element of the issue. He suggested beer as a possible targeted food cluster, and the promotion of the growth of plant products needed for beer manufacturing, such as barley and hops. Mr. Sullivan agreed, and noted the role the City played in helping to fund the Ninkasi Brewing Company. Speaking to the issue of food resiliency, Mr. Sullivan assured Mr. Bonnett that topic had not been lost.

Mr. Boles advocated for discussion of a focus on a network of small food production facilities that avoided risk. He also suggested staff consider how the community could reestablish a local cannery. Mr. Sullivan recalled that the operator of the last cannery, Chiquita, indicated to the City that it was closing its facility because local food sources had dried up. Mr. Farley said discussion with the Willamette Farm and Food Coalition indicated that many growers wished to hire a cannery for a small period of time, which was a different business model than that used by Chiquita. He suggested the same approach could be taken to a mill.

Mr. Skov believed the City and County could play a critical role in facilitating the establishment of a permanent, viable farmers market. He suggested there were other, "fuzzier" things the City and County could do to create a business environment that led to the community becoming identified as a good place to be a food entrepreneur. Mr. Skov also suggested that the issue of local food production be tied to CEAP where possible.

Mr. Sullivan anticipated he would return to discuss the topic again with the commission. He envisioned that the strategies resulting from implementation of the JEO plan would produce policy issues the commission might wish to discuss.

Mr. Boles expressed interest in knowing more about how one created agriculture-based jobs, not just in processing but in production; what were those labor needs, and how were they being met?

## **8. Letter Regarding Pedestrian/Bicycle Master Plan**

The commission reviewed and revised a letter to the City Council drafted by Ms. Wolling regarding the recommendations of the City's draft Pedestrian/Bicycle Master Plan (PBMP). The majority of the commission's comments focused on the need for adequate maintenance funding for active transportation modes.

Mr. Skov advocated for a work session with the council on the PBMP and also urged the commission to make its voice heard through public comment at council meetings. Commissioners expressed support for Mr. Skov's suggestion for a work session.

Ms. Jaworski, seconded by Mr. Funk, moved to send the letter to the council prior to its retreat on February 10 and to circulate the draft electronically before sending it. The motion passed unanimously.

**8. Local carbon tax**

This item was postponed for a lack of time.

**9. Closing: next meeting, other follow-up**

Mr. Skov adjourned the meeting at 8:31 p.m.

*(Recorded by Kimberly Young)*