

MINUTES

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

February 15, 2012
5:30 p.m.

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

Mr. Skov called the February 15, 2012, meeting of the Sustainability Commission to order.

1. Opening – Agenda Review, Approval of Minutes

Mr. Skov reviewed the agenda. There were no changes.

Mr. Skov called for corrections to the January 18, 2012, minutes.

Mr. Bonnett, seconded by Ms. Wolling, moved to approve the January 18, 2012, minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously, 10:0.

2. Public Comment

Zach Stark McMillan, University of Oregon Climate Justice League, expressed concern about the impact of trains carrying coal on Eugene citizens. He believed such trains would add tons of coal dust to the air each day. Coal producers continued to want to make money from coal mining and hoped to export coal to Asia. He said Eugene needed to do what it could to stop that and help move the United States beyond coal to clean energy. He suggested that if the commission did not wish to recommend a resolution to the council it could write a letter to the City Council saying coal trains passing through Eugene constituted a threat to environmental safety and public health.

Mr. Zelenka asked Mr. McMillan for input about what the City Council could do other than object to such trains. He recommended that the Climate Justice League contact the organization Climate Solutions, which was working on related issues at the regional and national level. Mr. McMillan maintained that the State had the power to regulate such trains and the resolution would send a signal to Governor John Kitzhaber.

Ms. Vynne noted that the commission was working on a letter to the council sharing information about coal trains and possible options for action. She invited information about community ordinances from Mr. McMillan or other actions the commission could recommend.

Tom Giesen said he authored an op-ed for *The Register-Guard* advocating the City’s Climate & Energy Action Plan (CEAP) be turned into an implementation document. He was concerned that the plan had no clear path to implementation and was a symbolic plan. He believed such symbolic plans engendered cynicism. He said the City must accomplish the goals of the plan. He recommended a multi-step process

that would begin with securing the funding for implementation. He anticipated it would require millions of dollars to create changes throughout the community. The plan would be a model or a pilot project for the entire United States. He promised to return with allies and a plan.

Mr. Zelenka disagreed with Mr. Giesen's characterization of CEAP and said the City was working to implement the plan. Mr. McRae was a full-time staff person working on plan implementation with the full support and backing of the City Council and City Manager. Mr. Zelenka said that Mr. McRae was hired at a time when employees were being laid off, which demonstrated the City's commitment to the plan.

Mr. McRae offered to share some of his activities with Mr. Giesen.

Mr. Giesen reiterated his contention that CEAP was symbolic because there was no implementation plan. To reduce emissions by 40 percent before 2020 would require a major transformation in the culture and infrastructure. He believed the plan was a fine first step but not enough.

Doug Black, Neighborhood Leaders Council Committee on Sustainability, invited the commission to the Green Neighbors Fair to be held later in the month. He requested the commission's sponsorship and financial support. While the commission had no funding to offer, it invited Mr. Black to send an e-mail to Ms. O'Sullivan officially requesting the commission's sponsorship, and she would process it with the commission.

3. Items from commission and staff

Ms. Vynne reported the commission was presenting at the Public Interest Environmental Law Conference on March 2 at 2:30 p.m. at a location to be announced.

Ms. O'Sullivan anticipated that the commission and City Council would hear an update regarding the implementation of the City's internal energy and action plan during the spring.

Mr. McRae reported on his recent presentation to the Eugene Water & Electric Board commissioners regarding CEAP, saying the information was well-received and the commissioners expressed interest in knowing what EWEB could do.

Mr. McRae reported that Charles Eisenstein would be in Eugene on March 7 and March 10 and indicated he would provide more information about Mr. Eisenstein's visit via e-mail.

Mr. McRae had attended the recent Food Connections conference and found the information presented at the event insightful and interesting. He learned the food system was enormous, complex, and global, and it was challenging to see the "obvious levers to pull on."

Mr. Zelenka said the City Council adopted a resolution calling on Congress to refer to the states a constitutional amendment to repeal the Citizens United Supreme Court decision. The council had scheduled a work session on a plastic bag ban on March 10 and he planned to propose a model ordinance developed in cooperation with the Northwest Grocers Association. He said the Center for Biodiversity had provided him with a resolution to offer the council encouraging the Environmental Protection Agency to use the Clean Air Act to regulate greenhouse gases. He indicated he would send the commission the resolution for its review and comment.

Ms. Wolling reported that she continued to share the Pedestrian/ Bicycle Master Plan (PBMP) with more neighborhood associations.

In regard to her liaison assignments, Ms. Wolling said the Transportation Community Resource Group held an open house earlier that day on the Transportation System Plan. The Downtown Neighborhood Association was focused on the proposed Capstone development proposal. The development would house 1,200 students and include structured parking for 1,000 vehicles. She suggested that the City require the development to be constructed to LEED standards as a condition of a property tax exemption. She also suggested the commission encourage the construction of fewer parking spaces and that the provision of parking be separated from rent.

Responding to a question from Mr. Skov about how the commission could provide input, Mr. Zelenka anticipated the council would hold a work session on the Capstone proposal and invited commissioners with questions about the development to e-mail them to him so he could pose them to staff. He also suggested the commission could send the council a letter sharing its concerns before the work session.

Mr. Boles expressed concern that the proposal was being fast-tracked and suggested the proposed development was focused on too narrow of a demographic group. Speaking to Mr. McRae's remarks about the complexity of food production, he suggested that one way to simplify the topic was to talk about transportation and focus on local food. He reported he planned to meet with the Lane County Food Policy Council in March.

Ms. Wolling left the meeting for another commitment.

Mr. Newcomb reported that EWEB was working with hazelnut growers in the McKenzie corridor on ways to suppress fungal outbreaks using non-chemical alternatives. EWEB also planned another agricultural chemical pick-up.

Ms. Jaworski said she met with the co-chairs of the Human Rights Commission (HRC) regarding collaboration between the HRC and Sustainability Commission. Commission leadership and staff met with Mayor Piercy regarding the commission's work plan and the range of issues it was discussing.

Ms. Vynne reported on a recent meeting of the Regional Food Initiative, which included representatives from many public and private agencies and organizations. Meeting attendees agreed there was a lot going on and to keep checking in with each other.

Mr. Farley had also attended the conference mentioned by Mr. McRae and discussed the Chamber of Commerce's presentation of its cluster analysis of food's impact on the local economy. Food and wine/beer were significantly sized clusters. The County had lost 7,000 jobs in the economic downturn but food-related jobs were up, although he acknowledged wages were an issue. Mr. Farley reported that a farmer he spoke to did not think people saw the economic or social benefits of local food production, just the cost. He suggested that an emphasis on the increased economic activity from local food production would help overcome that objection.

Reporting on his liaison assignments, Mr. Farley reported he met with a representative of Food for Lane County (FFLC) and learned demand was up about 15 percent and a lack of protein was an issue for the organization. He also learned about the organization's food rescue program. FFLC indicated that anything that helped the local food industry supported the organization because there would be more food, and suggested the potential the City could somehow incentivize donations of food and money for food security.

Mr. Skov suggested a sign of progress was the identification of juvenile Chinook salmon in the Delta Ponds.

4. Local resolution on coal trains

The commission reviewed a letter to the City Council drafted by Ms. Vynne and Mr. Bonnett. The letter outlined the commission's concerns about a proposal for a new coal terminal at Coos Bay to facilitate the export of coal and called on the council to oppose it. Commissioners discussed the message they wished to convey and their concerns about impacts of coal transport. Mr. Bonnett and Ms. Vynne agreed to revise the letter based on the discussion.

5. BREAK

Mr. Zelenka left the meeting during the break for another commitment.

6. Collaboration with Human Rights Commission

Ms. Jaworski reported on commission leadership and staff's meeting with the leadership and staff of the Human Rights Commission (HRC) the previous day. Meeting participants identified West Eugene EmX and Envision Eugene as possible topic areas for collaboration between the two commissions and agreed to start with West Eugene EmX. They also agreed that in some instances one commission would be the advocate and request the support of the other commission, and in other instances the two commissions would act jointly. She anticipated that the leadership of the two commissions would meet soon to outline a process for moving forward with the possible goal of issuing a joint statement to the council regarding West Eugene EmX by end of May 2012.

Ms. Wolling returned to the meeting.

6. CLUTAC

Mr. Skov provided a brief update, reporting the Coordinated Land Use and Transportation Advisory Committee (CLUTAC) had met and developed some comments for the West Eugene EmX proposal that he would share with the commission soon.

8. Work Plan review and update

The commission reviewed a matrix entitled *Work Plan Matrix: Focus Areas and Activities*. Topic areas included EmX, 20-Minutes Neighborhoods, the BPMP, Regional Planning, the Integrated Energy Resource Plan/CEAP, Food Security, and the Triple Bottom Line. Activities in the topic areas were grouped in four categories: 1) Policy advice and communication; 2) Outreach, education, and collaboration, 3) Equity, and 4) Articulate economic impacts. Commissioners updated the status of the listed activities and discussed potential near-term actions.

9. Sustainability Commission recruitment

Ms. O'Sullivan reported that Chris Anglin had resigned from the commission.

Mr. Farley indicated that he would not be continuing on the commission after June 2012.

Mr. Skov encouraged the commission to recruit candidates for the commission's openings.

10. Closing: next meeting, other follow-up

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

(Recorded by Kimberly Young)