



## Climate Action Steering Committee Meeting #5 Summary July 26, 2021, 3:00-5:00 PM

Link to packet and presentations:

<https://www.trpc.org/Calendar.aspx?EID=561&month=7&year=2021&day=26&calType=0>

Agenda Item	Notes
1. Call to Order, Introductions, & Public Comments	<p>Chair Parshley called the Climate Action Steering Committee (CASC) meeting to order at 3:01 pm.</p> <p>Steering Committee members, support staff from Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC), staff from Thurston County and the cities of Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater, provided self-introductions.</p> <p>Chair Parshley requested approval of the agenda.</p> <p>Committee Member Pratt, moved, seconded by Committee Member Swarhout, to approve the agenda.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Motion to adopt the Climate Action Steering Committee agenda is approved.</b></li> </ul> <p>Committee Member Pratt, moved, seconded by Committee Member Swarhout, to approve the June 28, 2021, meeting summary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Motion to adopt the Climate Action Steering Committee’s June 28, 2021, meeting summary is approved.</b></li> </ul> <p>Chair Parshley called for comments from members of the public. There were 3 public comments. Brief summaries follow:</p> <p><i>Melinda Hughes:</i> Thurston County Action Team has a new climate justice mural. It will be located in Olympia near the 4<sup>th</sup> Ave bridge around the roundabout, and painting will begin first weekend of September. A new app a volunteer put together shown information on climate and pollution. Keep an eye on Montgomery County Maryland as they have a very ambitious climate change plan.</p> <p><i>Tom Crawford:</i> Board Chair for Thurston Climate Action Team, Thank you for your work. Last year TRPC staff and consultants reported they would not be able to complete a cost estimate, assessment of tangible and intangible benefits or a schedule for completion of actions for the climate mitigation plan. Everyone found it disappointing and were assured further work would be done using a</p>



	<p>grant from the Department of Commerce, but now he understands this work may not be done. Need to act immediately to provide sufficient funds and or staffing to determine cost, benefits, and schedule for the TCMP actions.</p> <p><i>Thad Curtz:</i> PSE installed smart meters in the area. He was hoping PSE would use the smart meters for time of use pricing as other companies have.</p>
<p>2a. Puget Sound Energy Strategy</p>	<p>Brandon Capps, Puget Sound Energy filling in for Matthew Mauer due to conflicting schedule.</p> <p>Customer Assistance fund 2020-2021 allocated \$38 Million to help customers pay their utility bill. PSE has many other programs to help customers during the Covid-19 Pandemic.</p> <p>By 2045 PSE aspires to be a Beyond Net Zero Carbon energy company. Three ways they aspire to achieve this:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. PSE operations and electric supply</li><li>2. Natural gas sales customer end use</li><li>3. Beyond PSE reported emissions</li></ol> <p>PSE is working to balance energy goals while meeting customer expectations. They believe both wire (electricity) and pipe (gas) will be necessary to meet goals.</p> <p>PSE is starting a Beyond Net Zero Carbon by 2045 advisory group – included in this will be diverse, external community members, partners, technical experts, and others to provide meaningful input.</p> <p>Steering Committee members asked questions about renewable natural gas (RNG), opportunities for partnering on smart meters and electrification, and other topics. Brandon Capps provided the following answers subsequent to the meeting. City of Olympia staff provided additional context notes, which were approved to be added to the meeting summary at the August CASC meeting:</p> <p><b>Tye Menser-</b> In our plan we have updated municipal codes to require electric appliances and ban natural gas in new buildings. How would this help you achieve your goals?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Removing natural gas appliances increases the demand for electric appliances, which can draft from more carbon intensive resources like coal-fired generation.</li><li>• A complementary gas energy system also offsets the need to build additional electric transmission and distribution facilities that are difficult to permit and site.</li></ul>



**Additional context note:** Coal-fired electricity will soon be phased out for Washington customers. Under the Clean Energy Transformation Act (CETA), passed by the Washington State Legislature in 2019, electric utilities are required to eliminate coal as a fuel source by 2025, become greenhouse gas neutral by 2030, and provide 100 percent renewable energy to Washington customers by 2045.

**Carolyn Cox-** Do you have a feel for how closely PSE has been monitoring the TCMP and where you see alignment?

- PSE has and will continue to monitor the TCMP while looking for options to provide the most cost-effective and reliable choices for our customers

**Eileen Swarthout-**How can we better utilize smart meters during peak time, has this been discussed and can we anticipate more specifics?

- In Thurston County we expect AMI electric meter deployment to be complete in 2022 and Natural Gas meter deployment in 2023 and we intend to roll out usage data options once the entire system is in place.

**Lisa Parsley-**In Thurston County, we develop methane at all sorts of treatments facilities, we should explore those options

- PSE began integrating RNG onto its gas system more than 30 years ago from a local wastewater treatment plant.
- PSE is the first utility in the region (and one of the first in the country) to partner with a pipeline quality landfill RNG project in 2009 and expanding landfill gas further:
  - Today, PSE acquires RNG equal to 1.5% of our sales volume.
  - PSE recently acquired another landfill RNG supply contract which will increase our RNG to 2% in 2021 and grow to nearly 3.5% of our annual gas sales by 2024. (Power Purchase Agreement with Klickitat PUD).
  - PSE is continuing to investigate and pursue more regional RNG supply opportunities

**Additional context note:** Renewable natural gas is not a feasible alternative to fully replace current rates of natural gas consumption. A recent analysis by the Department of Commerce found that renewable natural gas could only supply 3 - 5 percent of current natural gas consumption in Washington.



Source: Promoting Renewable Natural Gas in Washington State, 2018

<https://www.commerce.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Energy-Promoting-RNG-in-Washington-State.pdf>

**Lisa Parsshley-** How do we handle methane production upstream of natural gas at sources of extraction with pipelines when several studies show leakage? How does PSE plan to manage that in conjunction w/ CETA?

- PSE is committed to net-zero methane emissions on our local distribution system by 2022 and continues to evaluate mixing options with cleaner burning fuels.
- The Beyond Net Zero Carbon pledge is a commitment separate from CETA which focuses on de-carbonizing our natural gas portfolio.

**Lisa Parsshley-** Can your pipeline accommodate hydrogen deployment? Wouldn't it be better for energy storage for peak load as opposed to shipping it into people's homes?

- PSE is working to reduce carbon emissions of natural gas in many ways to support clean energy choices of customers. The pipeline infrastructure can be utilized for renewable gas, hydrogen and other low or zero carbon fuels to deliver energy with very low or zero greenhouse gas emissions.
- We successfully conducted our first hydrogen pilot in April (2021) at our Georgetown Training Facility. As a part of this pilot, the team performed a series of tests using 5%, 10% and 15% hydrogen/natural gas blends and compared results to 100% natural gas.
  - For each of these scenarios, they tested the system for leaks, air quality after combustion, gas quality and impact on the appliances used.

**Additional context note:** Analysis by the International Energy Association suggests that natural gas grids can accommodate up to a 20% blend of hydrogen with limited infrastructure modification.

Source: IEA (2020), Hydrogen, IEA, Paris  
<https://www.iea.org/reports/hydrogen>



	<p>While many experts suggest that hydrogen will likely play a role in our energy future, particularly for difficult to electrify applications, there are still challenges associated with the production of hydrogen as an alternative to natural gas.</p> <p>Most hydrogen used today is extracted from natural gas through an energy intensive process that emits large amounts of carbon dioxide ("gray hydrogen"). Carbon capture and storage has been proposed as an alternative to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with hydrogen production ("blue hydrogen"). However a recent lifecycle analysis of blue hydrogen, found that that greenhouse gas footprint of blue hydrogen may be 20% greater than directly burning natural gas, as a result of fugitive methane emissions during production.</p> <p>Source: Howarth, R. W., &amp; Jacobson, M. Z. (2021). How green is blue hydrogen?. Energy Science &amp; Engineering. <a href="https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ese3.956">https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ese3.956</a></p> <p>"Green hydrogen" can be produced by splitting water and hydrogen through electrolysis. The production of green hydrogen is also very energy intensive, and in most places there is not yet enough renewable energy to produce large amounts of green hydrogen.</p>
<p>2b. State Climate Legislation – Jessica Bateman</p>	<p>Representative Jessica Bateman provided an update on climate-related state legislation from the most recent session of the state legislature.</p> <p>In the 2020/2021 session, several climate-related bills were voted in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clean Fuel Standard</li><li>• Climate Commitment Act</li><li>• Plastic Waste Reduction – <a href="#">SB 5022</a> (bans polystyrene in packaging and food containers as of 2023 and 2024, and sets recycled content standards for many plastic products)</li><li>• Heal Act</li><li>• Clean Cars 2030 (electric vehicle target)</li></ul> <p>Some legislative bills that didn't pass may be considered again next session, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Healthy homes and clean buildings</li><li>• Climate change in GMA</li><li>• Protecting Salmon in planning processes</li></ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Solar (a bill Rep Bateman co-sponsored)</li> </ul> <p>Rep Bateman is very interested in talking about the link between emissions and land use, and finding ways to instead of car-oriented communities, have people-oriented communities. Also interested in hearing more about building code changes or funding/budget allocation needs for local climate priorities.</p> <p>The Steering Committee members would be interested in having a follow-up session in September/October (fall) with Rep Bateman and potentially other members of the 22<sup>nd</sup> delegation.</p>
<p>3. Committee Business 3a. Long-term Governance Agreement – Allison Osterberg and Michael Ambrogi, TRPC</p>	<p>Allison Osterberg and Michael Ambrogi guided the Steering Committee on a discussion of elements of the Long Term Governance Agreement.</p> <p><i>Purpose/Goals</i> The Steering Committee approved the following goals for the agreement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To maintain <b>momentum</b> for local climate action.</li> <li>• To develop efficient <b>regional solutions</b> for reducing sources of greenhouse gases in ways that help all partner jurisdiction.</li> <li>• To provide <b>accountability</b> on progress toward achieving regional climate targets.</li> <li>• To <b>build public support</b> for climate action, and <b>coordinate outreach</b> on climate mitigation activities.</li> </ul> <p><i>Work Program</i> Steering Committee members expressed support for developing an annual work program that targets regional priorities. This could include developing model policies, centralized guidance, training, or contracting out for additional research or specialized work. The Multijurisdictional Staff Team will meet to develop options for the CASC to consider at a future meeting</p> <p><i>Membership</i> Most Steering Committee members indicated a preference for maintaining the existing 4-party membership (Thurston County, Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater). There is interest in inviting some other parties in a non-decisionmaking or advisory role. Concern that having too many people at meetings will dilute ability to be effective. Question: how big are groups in other regions that include ex-officio members?</p>



	<p><i>Monitoring</i></p> <p>Michael Ambrogi presented a staff recommendation for a monitoring and assessment program, which would include both:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• an online portal for a general audience that would be updated every 1-2 years and track greenhouse gas emissions and a limited set of additional key performance indicators</li><li>• a more detailed report directed at staff and subject matter experts that would be updated every 3-5 years and include more data and analysis to inform future climate planning (such as updates to the TCMP)</li></ul> <p>Committee members supported this proposal overall, but would like monitoring program include tracking the status of strategies and actions, rather than just indicators. They also would like to see the more detailed report be completed every 3 years, given the short time to the targets.</p>
4. Standing Items 4a. Jurisdictional Info Sharing	<p>This item was curtailed to allow additional time to discuss the Long-term agreement options. Lacey shared some update slides that are posted with the meeting materials.</p>
5. Adjourn	<p>Meeting was adjourned at 5:05 pm.</p>



## Meeting Attendance

### Steering Committee Present Online:

Lisa Parshley – City of Olympia, and Chair  
Pamela Braff – City of Olympia staff  
Yen Huynh – City of Olympia alternate  
Cynthia Pratt – City of Lacey representative  
Carolyn Cox – City of Lacey alternate  
Jessica Brandt – City of Lacey staff

Eileen Swarthout – City of Tumwater  
representative  
Tye Menser, Thurston County  
Jennica Machado, Thurston County staff  
Brad Medrud – City of Tumwater staff

### Public Present Online:

Thad Curtz  
Tom Crawford  
Jenn Bass  
Joseph Hiss  
Randy Young  
Gregory Quetin  
Eliane Wilson  
David Hoffman

Peter Moulton  
Joel Carlson  
Aloha Kakou  
Melinda Hughes  
Brandon Capps  
Jessica Bateman  
Wayne Olsen

### Staff Present:

Allison Osterberg, Senior Planner  
Marc Daily, Executive Director  
Burlina Lucas, Administrative Assistant  
Dorinda Merrill, Office Assistant III  
Karen Parkhurst, Planning and Policy Director  
Michael Ambrogi, Senior Planner

**Next Meeting:** August 23, 2021, 3-5:00 PM

Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan Coordinator:

Allison Osterberg

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Link to project website: <https://www.trpc.org/Climate>

TRPC website: <https://www.trpc.org/>

*Meeting summary is prepared by Dorinda Merrill, Office Specialist III, Thurston Regional Planning Council  
This summary is not verbatim. A recording of this meeting is available upon request or available at  
<https://www.trpc.org/966/Meeting-Materials>.*