

**Climate Impact Advisory Committee**  
DRAFT Meeting Minutes



Date: February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019  
Location: RE Store, 2309 Meridian St, Bellingham

QUORUM	
Members Present	
Seth Fleetwood	X
Casey Harman	X
Tim Miller	X
Treva Coe	X
Eric Grossman	X
Ellyn Murphy	X
John Yakawich	X
Sharon Shewmake	
David Kershner	X
Gabriel Westergreen	X
Alex Ramel	X
STAFF Chris Elder	X

**Meeting Began at 5:37 PM**

The meeting began with Introductions by both committee members and guests.

**Public Comment:** Several comments were received regarding proposed changes to County Code relating to GHG inventory requirements for fossil fuel development projects. Additional comment read aloud and provided in writing included below.

Good evening, my name is Adam Lambe, I'm a Field Rep with Laborers Local 292.

As you are all aware, the changes that the Whatcom County Council is working on regarding Cherry Point are very concerning to those of us who live and work in Whatcom County. We as members of LiUNA! Local 292 and our affiliation with the Building Trades, are not climate change deniers. Our issue with the Councils revised comp plan (Jan. 15<sup>th</sup>) and submitted resolutions to the Jan. 15<sup>th</sup> Comp Plan is the lack of Transparency of written documents, and supporting data for written language, or understanding of cause and effect of language in the future.

The lack of transparency, and input from all stake holders in the community, is very unfortunate. All the stake holders must be involved in this process. We as the ones who do this work, the cleanup, the environmental upgrades to process, the decommissioning of worn out, or outdated equipment, should and must be involved in this process.

All who are involved in the process regarding Cherry point, must work as hard on maintaining transparency and the integrity of the process as they are in pursuing their respective policy agendas.

Thank you very much,

**Meeting minutes:** Motion was made to accept the January 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting minutes with edits to public comment supplied by Treva Coe. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Cherry Point amendments**

Chris provided background on the county council's January 29<sup>th</sup> resolution regarding Cherry Point amendments. Our committee does not have an official role to comment on the resolution, although the committee had been working on a proposed GHG amendment in earlier meetings. It appears the council may want the committee's input. Currently the resolution is going to the Cascadia Law group, then to Planning Commission. Alex suggested a draft ordinance would likely come to the committee after the planning commission.

Alex discussed the reasoning for the ordinance. The idea is to provide more public review for major changes to large fossil fuel facilities at Cherry Point by requiring a conditional use permit. Small projects are not supposed to come under scrutiny. Alex stressed that the idea is to hold large fossil fuel projects to a higher standard, and does not necessarily mean the answer will be "no." There are issues with the current draft that will likely change as it goes through the process.

There was a bill in the state legislator on a similar topic- bill 1597. Chris mentioned there is some confusion about the proposed changes to the Comp Plan regarding Cherry Point permitting. Blue is the "Todd Donovan" changes, yellow are comments and notes on the previous draft. Alex suggested not to put too much stock in the color code.

Seth asked the committee and the guests what the most controversial sections of the proposed GHG analysis code changes appear to be:

Lynn Murphy, PSE, asked about point 6 on page 6– how can 100% offsets be done only in Whatcom County?

A Philips 66 representative also commented that they have a concern on the verified offset. Also SEPA requires reasonable offsets, not 100%, and the house bill is trying to make the SEPA requirements similar across the state. Ellyn pointed out the language specifies preference, but does not require it. Apparently there is confusion on the language.

Lynn pointed out that the proposed language specifically requires mitigation of electricity. Why not any other industry or product? Alex said that it's because electricity is typically included in a greenhouse gas analysis.

David asked about bill 1597 and if it would require analysis of lifecycle GHG emissions from unrefined fuels. He said it would be good to know more about the way the state is going on this.

Casey brought up a question regarding page 5, point2 – emission from electricity. What if upstream emissions are already mitigated? The committee may consider this in a future meeting

Tim mentioned his concerns that our changes should be thoroughly vetted.

Casey asked a bit about point 6, whether language could be added to allow the submission of an alternate mitigation plan.

There was a discussion and decision to add the proposed changes to the GHG analysis language to the next agenda, but to be very clear in the agenda whether the committee plans to vote on the issue.

### **Committee Budget and Scope of Work**

Seth mentioned that council did not authorize the committee to hire an FTE. The money can be spent on a contractor. Seth suggested to Chris that we put together an RFP for a greenhouse gas analysis inventory to move the process forward.

Chris suggested the majority of the consulting work should be spent on the inventory, and likely the money will not go to furthering the adaptation portion of the climate action plan. Discussion then centered around structuring an RFP. It was suggested to break the requests into 3 separate line items – providing a 2018 emissions inventory, providing an updated 2012 inventory, and helping to complete the climate action plan. A small group of committee members will help Chris to develop the RFP.

Claire mentioned the city of Bellingham is planning to hire a consultant to perform a media campaign and invited the Whatcom committee to join. The consultant would help with “branding” and getting a message out. Tim supported the idea. Claire said there isn’t a hurry, they are performing the RFP.

Seth asked about the benefit of doing the 2012 emissions inventory. The decision is to include it in the RFP and make the decision once we have the numbers.

### **Forest and Urban Trees Update**

Chris provided an update on the meeting with ICLEI to develop a protocol to include forests in the land management strategies for CO2 sequestration. US forest service has data collection across the US, Whatcom County has 200 sites. Currently trying to determine how to use the data.

The benefit to Whatcom County is free data and forest emission inventory.

### **Ellyn’s Survey Proposal**

Ellyn presented a Community Outreach/Research project to the committee. Community outreach is in our charter and we have the opportunity to both assess current progress on County activities related to climate action and collect new ideas regarding the preparation and adaptation for, and the prevention and mitigation of, impacts of climate change. The proposal is to interview key staff in the County as well as other stakeholders, such as County Advisory Committees, PUDs, civil organizations and industries.

Because this will be a time-consuming activity, we will enlist volunteers from the community to participate in the interviews. Ellyn asked the committee members to review, edit, and propose new questions in the draft proposal and to identify additional organizations to interview. She needs this information by Thursday, February 14<sup>th</sup>.

Alex moved that the committee adopt the Community Research Project presented by Ellyn, which passed on a voice vote.

### **New Business**

Seth announced Climate Reality Project – presentation February 28<sup>th</sup> at Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship. Presentation by author on The Clean Energy Age.

Casey brought up the topic of wind energy permitting in Whatcom County. A presenter at the Bellingham Climate Task Force on Wednesday February 6<sup>th</sup> mentioned that the Whatcom County requirements are very onerous. Alex mentioned that there is a plan to address this but the council has not taken it up and suggested the Chair send a request to the County Executive for an update on the wind energy permits. It was moved and approved to have the Chair of the committee request an update from the county executive on this topic.

David was asked about presenting an overview of the Climate Advisory Committee to the Marine Resources Committee. Unfortunately they meet at the same time as this committee. David will investigate further.

John updated the group about a partnership with Western Washington University, Joel Swisher at the Institute for Energy Studies.

Next meeting location to be at the RE Store. Next meeting is March 8th, 2019.

Meeting adjourned at 7:48 PM.

Recorded by W. Casey Harman, Secretary

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