

Climate Impact Advisory Committee
APPROVED Meeting Minutes



Date: June 11th, 2020
Location: Zoom

QUORUM	Y
Members Present	
Kaylee Galloway	X
Casey Harman	X
Erika Lautenbach	
Treva Coe	X
Phil Thompson	X
Ellyn Murphy	X
John Yakawich	
Katherine Kissinger	X
David Kershner	X
Cynthia Mitchell	X
Alex Ramel	
STAFF Chris Elder	X

1) Meeting Began at 5:33 PM

Meeting began with roll call of CIAC members

Public in attendance:

- David Roberts from Kulshan Services
- Christy Shelton from Cascadia
- Angela from Cascadia
- Adrienne Hegedus from Port of Bellingham

2) Review and Approval of Minutes

Phil had a comment on page 2 of the minutes where it said “Based on CETA energy production...” Phil suggested changing the word energy to the word electricity.

Phil motioned to approve the minutes, Katie seconded, none opposed, motion carried

3) Review Final Draft Municipal and Community Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory – Cascadia Consulting Group

Christy explained the report in detail going through each section to allow for adequate time to comment.

Community Inventory

1. Introduction

Ellyn had a comment regarding the waste in the section comparing the prior inventories to having a negative number in the 2000 inventory. Ellyn asked if the 2000 inventory was not calculated as rigorously as in later years, since it didn't account for factors such as transportation.

Christy replied that Cascadia didn't go into the prior inventory in great detail in terms of its methodology so as not to dismiss the prior work since methodologies have changed quite a bit since then. She said they could note at the beginning of the report that the methods we used in this report were more comprehensive.

Cynthia commented on the first page under the local government operations bullet point. Her question was in regards to the sentence relating to efficiency efforts and how they got that language.

Angela explained it was from the 2007 inventory.

Cynthia said she was not comfortable just throwing that statement out there given that they were from a different period in time.

Christy said they could add a note there that the statement was from the 2007 report.

2. Emissions Factors

There are sections for Transportation, waste characterization, and grid electricity. Christy mentioned that in the grid electricity section they showed the fuel mix for BPA compared to the mix for PSE.

Ellyn asked about energy mixes. Pointing out that this graph was different than what PSE reported on their website from 2017.

Angela said that they had to convert the units to use in Clearpath.

Phil asked a question about when you calculate CO₂lbs/MWh

Christy said the emissions factor is based on the electricity they are selling. She made a note in the document that they would look into the mix that PSE reported since some CIAC members thought the value for Hydro should be higher.

Angela said the graph represented what PSE used to generate electricity by generation source in 2017.

Casey said the numbers we represent should include the energy that PSE purchases rather than what they generated.

Ellyn said the pie chart should reflect the values on the PSE website.

Angela said the pie chart could easily be updated to show the full fuel mix including purchased.

Kaylee asked a question about if some of PSE's mix is purchased from BPA if that would be a double counting of BPA's values.

Christy said that it would be fine to have them both there.

Ellyn said what we wanted to know what the fuel mix of what people in Whatcom county are using which is why it is shown this way and it wouldn't be a double counting.

Kaylee asked if we could add a footnote about why PSE's portfolio is showed this way.

3. Community Inventory

Christy described a total emissions estimate for the county broken down with definitions for each section and pointed out that more than half of the emissions in the county come from industrial point source emissions. A second graph was shown without the industrial point source emissions since the county has less control over the industrial point source emissions.

Dave and Phil agreed that having two graphs was useful for showing the breakdown from the counties emissions.

4. Industrial Point source emissions

Christy briefly described this section since we discussed much of this section previously

Discussion relating to industrial point source emissions

Cynthia asked for the difference between the definitions for industrial point source and industrial.

Christy said that major source emitters are required to report separately at the federal and state levels. She said there was some investigation about whether or not there was any double counting going on in the reporting for the major emitters in the county.

Ellyn asked if that was because some of the refineries burn their own fuel not just using the natural gas from Cascade.

Christy said they wanted to make sure the fuel being burned at these major emitters not from Cascade was being recorded properly.

Cynthia asked if counting the gas gen as an output in the point source was double counted because the gas generator feeds into the system and would then be counted when it is used later.

Phil said that would be counted as an electricity emission rather than a point source emission. Therefore, it should not be counted as a point source emission.

Cynthia suggested removing the PSE Whitehorn gen. station from the graph since it represents electricity coming into the grid.

Christy said that they need to circle back with the protocol on how that's handled. Typically, the major industrial polluters are shown separately you might still want to see it even if it means making a note that it is reflected in the PSE emissions factor. The challenge is that the PSE emissions factor is only for PSE not Whatcom County electricity use. The question is are you getting more local pollution from this generating source?

Angela said the numbers they report are just consumption so these reflect emissions in addition to consumption. Angela said electricity emissions were explicitly excluded in the model

Casey had a question about combustion turbine plants in Whatcom county and why only Whitehorn was included when Ferndale, Sumas, and Encogen are much larger emitters.

Angela said that those three plants exclusively have electricity generation emissions and therefore were not counted in this graph.

Katie asked what the stationary fuel consisted of.

Angela said it could be natural gas or propane.

Phil asked a question about what is left over when you take out point source emissions from the industrial category.

Angela said it was electricity and natural gas.

5. Built Environment

Christy said this category includes additional industrial emitters. They followed the language for the US community protocol and the definitions they used. It is more than just buildings, but doesn't include everything that is not part of the natural environment. This category has electricity and natural gas included in it as well as things like refrigerants. She explained the pie chart

Chris suggested co-locating the residential, commercial, and industrial so that they are near each other on the chart.

Ellyn suggested renaming the category to Buildings since everything being discussed in the section is relating to buildings. So that we could have consistency with our nomenclature

Cynthia said she also supports changing the category name to buildings. And had a question about whether community and county buildings are counted together

Christy said yes, that county numbers are included overall in the total.

Dave had a question about how it is categorized in the Bellingham report, so that we can be consistent. He also asked how the built environment category is defined and we could add a footnote to describe our definition of built environment if it differs from the Bellingham definition. He suggested calling the category "Buildings and Facilities."

Christy said that it is categorized the same way in the Bellingham report. And said they could modify it to make it clear what the section includes.

Christy said they could add another figure to the report to show the relationship between the residential, commercial, and industrial emissions in this section.

6. Transportation

Christy explained the pie chart breakdown of the emissions sources in the transportation category. The majority coming from on-road vehicles.

Ellyn said that the Port of Bellingham might start making their own climate action plan so we might have access to better data in the future.

Adrienne mentioned that the Port is working on their report currently.

7. Agricultural Emissions

Christy said this section includes manure handling and enteric fermentation. Christy said that emissions relating to fertilizer could possibly be added if they were able to get information on it.

Chris said the people he reached out to did not respond. He suspected its because they aren't required to disclose that information.

8. Solid Waste

Christy said this chart on a county wide level is considerably different from what we see when we just look at the government's footprint. The biggest component is waste generation.

9. Water & Wastewater

Christy said this includes the emissions from septic systems, wastewater lagoons, combustion of solids, emissions from five wastewater treatment plants throughout the county.

10. Emissions & Removal from Trees

Christy said that there were some changes recently made to this section based on feedback from committee members.

Ellyn suggested removing the remainder of this section after table 3 since we already have a detailed report from ICLEI and doing so would make this report more readable.

Christy said some of those tables are required to meet ICLEI requirements. But said they needed to confirm what is required before they start removing things.

Local Government Operations Inventory

Phil suggested to add a note that the community operations include government operations.

Angela said that a descriptive paragraph was added to the beginning of the report.

Christy acknowledged the areas that have had a lot of questions such as the buildings & facilities and the electricity generation.

Christy said that the Table 4 could possibly be expanded if they were able to get more information like employee number, square footage, etc. from the facilities manager for the county.

Chris said he would try to reach out and get that information

Ellyn agreed that additional information would be helpful to better show how efficient each building is.

Projected and Targeted Emissions

Christy explained the different graphs that showed different options for reducing emissions and what would happen if we kept business as usual.

Dave asked what the average percentage reduction we would need to get to net zero emissions by 2035.

Angela calculated the numbers in the background and came up with about 70%. She said they would QC the numbers before including them in the final draft of the report.

Chris reminded everyone that this was the last month that we will be working with Cascadia.

4) Work group updates

Ellyn asked if anyone would like to take on the role of secretary for the committee.

Phil asked if the recording of the meeting was available

Chris said yes the recording is available

Dave said we should be identifying ourselves when we make a comment, especially if we are going to be posting the videos online

Katie offered to take on the role

Dave nominated Katie, Kaylee seconded, Katie was approved as Secretary

Ellyn Discussed some plans for next month's meeting and having Cynthia presenting information from the Energy and Buildings work group

Phil said that the Transportation group has five goals and that they are refining their strategies and measures of obtaining their goals. They are currently going through a list of 300 strategies to see if they fit the goals well.

Chris said that the Natural Resources group is going through a similar process to the transportation group. Chris is refining the strategies and Treva suggested organizing the strategies by what type of program they are

Ellyn suggested that our committee could make some YouTube videos about climate change topics. She also mentioned that our committee had another article in the June issue of the Whatcom Watch.

5) Discussion of climate action plan update next steps and timeline

Ellyn said that we will be making a schedule next meeting for the different work groups to present.

6) Public comment:

There was discussion relating to moving the public comment portion to the beginning of the agenda.

Kaylee asked why there wasn't a public comment period in the beginning of the meeting.

Ellyn said that there used to be a public comment period in the beginning of the meetings but people would also have comments on things discussed throughout the meeting and want to voice those comments at the end of the meetings.

Dave thought some members of the public would like to bring things up in the beginning of the meeting but not want to participate in the whole meeting

Ellyn said she was open to moving the public comment period back to the beginning of the meeting.

7) Meeting Adjourned at 7:40PM.

Recorded By: Katherine Kissinger

Staff Contact: Chris Elder – (360) 788-5932