



COMMUNITY CLIMATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

August 20, 2014

Present: Joep Meijer, Francois Levy, Dave Cortez, Brandi Clark Burton, Todd Hemingson, Paul Stinson, Mary Dodd, Roger Duncan, Kaiba White, Jere Locke
Phoned in: Al Armendariz, Mitch Jacobsen, Justin Murrill, Pam Reed, Kevin Tuerff
City of Austin Staff: Zach Baumer, Lewis Leff, Karla Taylor
Citizens: Scott Johnson, Bruce Melton
Meeting recording: <https://www3.ci.austin.tx.us/p48904949/>

I. Public Input

Bruce Melton: Climate Change Now: Climate Policy in the Twenty-teens: Emissions Timing

- Joep: our scope is Travis Co.; what sources of pollution would fall within your short term emissions you speak of?
 - Coal emissions; oil creates 2.5 times more warming than coal in short term time frames so addressing oil at rate 2.5 times greater than coal is a solution. Natural gas burns more cleanly than coal and in short terms creates even more warming; addressing natural gas and fracking would be important too.
- Does transportation fit in?
 - Its oil - we have 40 percent emissions from that sector. IPCC made a policy stating that we need to go strongly negative on emissions; we have to start removing carbon from the atmosphere; we may not be able to do in the short term but supporting national policy is something we can do by increasing national and international work on policy change.
- Francois: This is good background info. But given the committee's charge, what would be more useful would be detailed and specific recommendations this committee should consider. Are you familiar with the links for public comment on our webpages? We'd encourage you to post your articles in that area so that everyone in the committee can see those in interested. It's a page for public input so everyone can see that info.

Scott Johnson

- Transportation policy, air quality, is driven by ozone; suggests that those people be integrated early in this process, and actions within the Ozone Advance plan. It was formalized last year and is being implemented. Suggests combining a regional and a local plan (this plan and the Ozone plan). Encourages group to consider that idea.
 - Joep: If you have specific recommendations, let us know.

II. Briefings/ Presentations

- **Cost of Not Cutting Emissions: Jere Locke- Texas Drought Project**
 - Will provide links at a later date. National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration said that changes that happened until 2009 are largely irreversible; these include surface temperatures and are irreversible for 1000 years after emissions stop. There's no time for settling on what's politically possible. We need to decide what's necessary and if council and others demand some sort of scaled down proposal okay, but we need to share this news with them.



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- Royal Society's report: Joe Roam(?) was assistant director of US Dept of Energy. 4 degrees by 2060 he described as hellish. So our main task is to set short term emission cut targets; we already have zero emissions by 2050 but we don't have that much time. So our short term goals are the key and they have to be substantial. Int'l negotiations are a mess but in Austin because we own our utility, we can do something quite different that will inspire people elsewhere to do what they need to do. Jere will send something from Hansen; he said basically fossil fuel emissions through 2012 are 370 gigatons of carbon and is increasing by 10 gigatons each year. We need to plan accordingly.
- Joep: Advocating pricing carbon and whatever money you collect is returned to people so they net out. You establish a price on carbon; theory is that if you price carbon, you start with 25 dollars a ton and in 10 years there will be no emissions left because of pricing mechanisms. Creates more jobs in renewable energy and by returning money to the community, the price of fuels and money will go up over time. Money is returned as dividend to households and if they spend it on renewable energy, they're at zero emissions in a few years. Connects urgency to solutions. Offers how to share how he has gone to negative emissions and how it can be done city wide.
- Zach: Jere, is part of what you're proposing, adaptation and taking action to prepare for those changes?
 - That has to happen, unless we mobilize it the way Hansen thinks we should, we're going to hit 2 degrees. Adaptation AND cutting emissions to the lowest level is what we need to do. There's a path ahead, if we would just choose it; a path to maybe even cut off 2 degrees; if we would build huge solar fields and utilize area around El Paso; these are options.
- **Federal Regulations related to GHG Emissions: Terry Johnson & Rob Lawrence- EPA**
 - Joep: Is there any money involved for states to do this work or a performance requirement for states to comply overtime?
 - There's no money; in some cases they'll pay off through efficiency programs; each state is diff. They may have appliance buyback programs. Up to each state.
 - People have to submit a plan in 2017 and it'll be evaluated if it's sufficient. Must start reporting by 2020. So they have to show how they'll implement it. Not anticipating anyone waiting until 2029. Rob from EPA - some states have scheduled power plant retirement in the next decade and others at another time so the interim allows states some flexibility to commit to their plans.
 - Joep: Terry, it appears that the way that the rule is crafted is there is an equation that has emissions in numerator and generations in denominator, in terms of reaching state goal, it doesn't matter if power company or municipality, it doesn't matter when they came online (except hydro), you get credit for it.
 - Even if it's after 2012, it still counts towards your compliancy goal. That's for the state as a whole; it's a state plan. It has to be federally enforceable.
 - The president's climate action plan includes transportation. Components like increasing fuel economy standards for 2018 model vehicles. There's a component for developing next generation energy for transportation on biofuels and batteries.



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- Joep: do you know of new implementation of technology relevant to our semiconductor industry in Austin?
 - Phase down hydrofluoric carbon emissions; proposing that EPA would identify climate friendly chemicals that complete the stratospheric ozone layer.
- Chart shows 10% residential and commercial. Is that for oil and gas and heating? Is 32% electricity you propose, how does that get distributed to industry and commercial and residential? Or is it not a concern since you're looking at production?
 - We are really looking at generation point. Nothing other than demand reduction.
- Zach: are there other rules in play for landfills and methane?
 - Landfills, oil and gas, mining; some sectors are looking at methane releases; working on capturing landfill gas and putting it into use as opposed to flaring it.

III. Continuation of Scope and Boundaries Discussion

- Is it realistic within our scope to consider any other scenario for how we can measure net zero rather than the three that were presented? The third way has some benefits in that looking at what City proposed and what we can actually control. The City does own the majority of what it generates. The third options acknowledge that we can't control everything and that we don't generate in a year everything that we consume. We have the most control over the third bar and it lines up historically with what we've controlled. So does group think we should include outside factors or call it City of Austin, or Austin, or Travis County...? Community wide means everything that lives in Austin. AE makes plans for future generation; they are looking at the areas they serve. Take AE data and acknowledge it's not a true reflection but it's too difficult to fine tune it. What about including UT or others holding within the city? For generation accounting, yes.

IV. Technical Advisory Group Mini-updates

- Electricity and Natural Gas
 - i. Already discussed what the boundary looks like. They want to acknowledge that the peak load issue is something to consider, but recognize that net zero is applied to an annual average.
 - ii. The group appointed on Doug Lewin from SPEER to be the head of that group.
 - iii. They talked about offsets and they'd like offsets to be done locally, state of TX.
- Transportation
 - i. Covered presentation from Billy Fields about long term projections and how economics play into that. His conclusion was that getting off of oil for transportation would be hard w/out economic signals but technology is changing quickly and focusing on positive benefits of not having vehicles seems to be a good strategy. The land use piece is a key point that keeps coming up; tied to these recommendations heavily.



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- ii. City's Transportation Dept. did full inventory of all City plans affecting transportation. And GHG-reducing actions catalogued and next steps are that this framework is what group agreed is the way to define future strategies. Moving towards brainstorming those actions. Largely based on best practices from other cities.
- o Industrial Fugitives:
 - i. All three companies have been completely open about information. Zach met with them and Freescale and Spansion came and presented on what were their emissions, where are they coming from, what are they planning in the future. Air permitting, GHG permitting, and title five permitting covered;
 - ii. Lime / cement factory: Zach can't get through to them. CAPCOG is trying to do outreach to White Lime and perhaps we can coordinate with them.
- o Waste
 - i. Kevin: GHG waste is one of the smallest areas where we're getting emissions. Coming from methane. Had TDS and Waste Mgmt. present and one interesting point is that TDS, the numbers that EPA estimates, they're based on an average landfill but theirs separates green waste from the landfill so they think their numbers are far off from actual numbers. It's a challenge to figure out though. Waste Management has been doing active recovery of methane and are successfully capturing and turning methane into energy and selling it back to Dell. They know some emissions escape. In maximizing recycling and trying to hit 90% materials out of landfills needs to happen.

V. Future Work Sessions

- o Discussed meeting in a few weeks; a half-day work session with everyone. Each TAG has gotten updates on other city's plans so moving forward the next two meetings should have significant TAG updates and TAGs will start to fill out strategies and actions and what those may result in over time. Need to figure out who key stakeholders are. Will inform TAGS of the plan. Consensus that this is valuable and we can fit it in. Like suggestion of having prioritized list of actions to take; getting there will be hard. This work session would happen around end of September. Doodle poll to figure out date.
- o Brandi Clark Burton asked to be officially invited onto the Steering Committee and as backup liaison for TAGS; she was accepted.